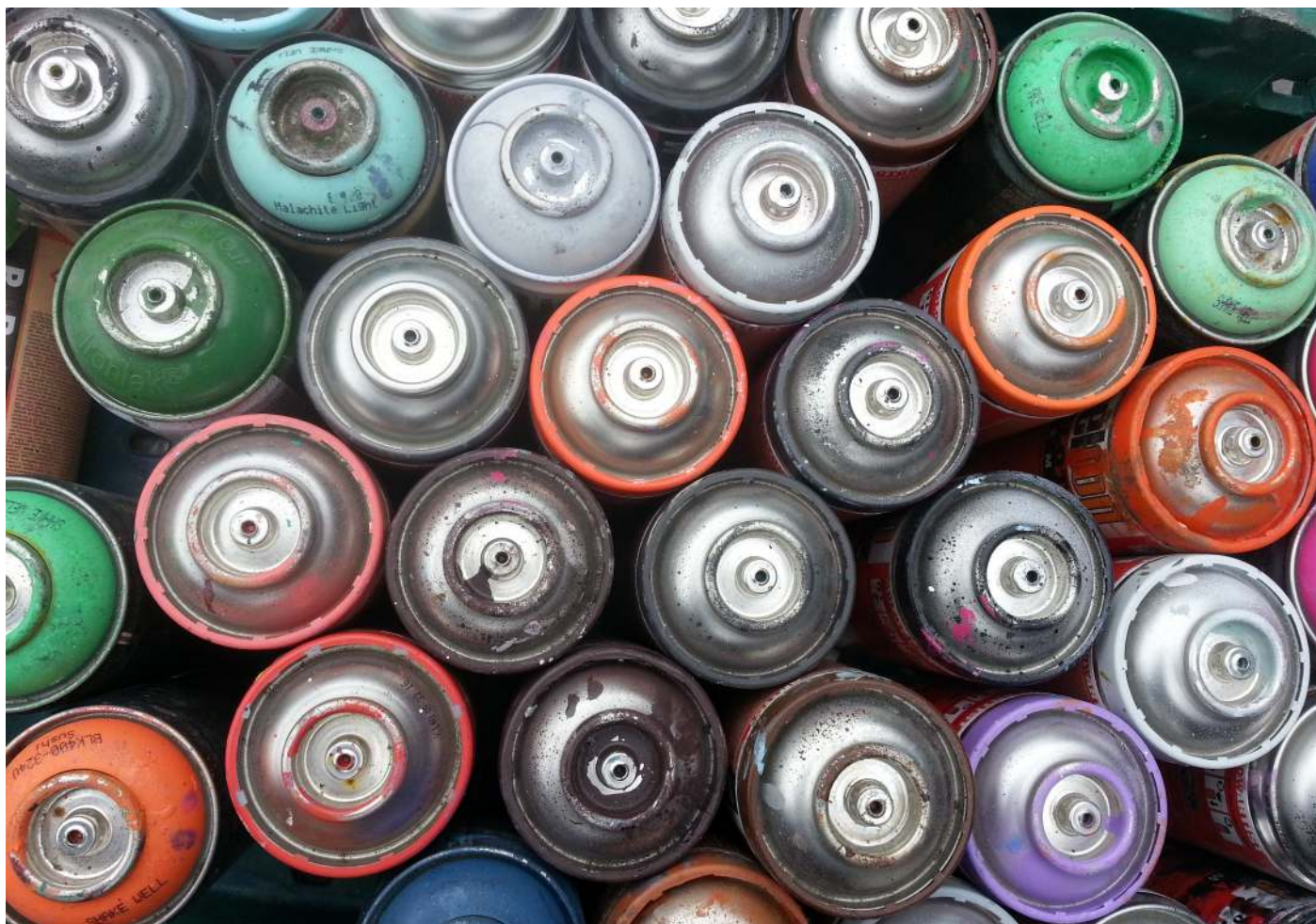




# annual report

## 2016/17





Welcome to Pyramid of Arts' annual report for 2016-17. This year we delivered 814 sessions and took part in many public events, with thousands of people seeing our work. There were 135 people with learning disabilities regularly attending our activities, supported by a team of 36 volunteers and 45 professional artists.

We were proud to take the lead in delivering the first full BEYOND Festival, which celebrated all the great work by artists with learning disabilities in Leeds and the organisations that support them. We were successful in securing £28,000 from Arts Council England and the two week festival featured the work of 350 artists and 36

organisations (including work from four European partner organisations) spread over 27 events in 13 venues.

As you will see, this year we yet again collectively devised, designed and created a huge amount of high quality work which we exhibited and performed to a total audience of around 20,000 people.

Huge thanks to everyone who took part, supported us and made this such a successful year!

Sarah Kennedy  
Temporary Director  
(parental leave cover)



### Office Team

James Hill (Director)  
 Mindy Goose (High Rise  
 Project Coordinator)  
 Sarah Kennedy  
 (Operations Coordinator)  
 Sukhvinder K Sond  
 (Groups Coordinator)

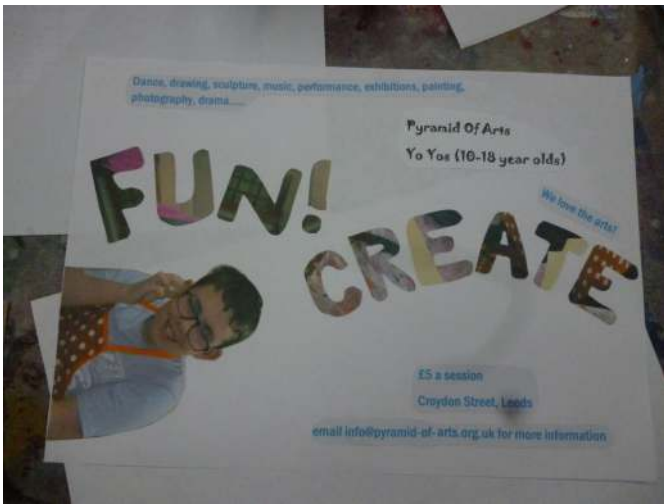
### Our Trustees

Andrew Marshall  
 Clare Enston  
 Felix Odeh (*resigned  
 October 2016*)  
 Gloria Lindh  
 Liam Hirst  
 Ros Lehany  
 Thomas Chalk (Chair)

### Donors

Many thanks to our  
 regular donors Dr Jane  
 Ginsborg, Richard and  
 Carla Cadiz-Aravena,  
 Patricia Braime, Thomas  
 Chalk and Irene Hill.

Thanks also to members  
 and staff who raised  
 money through sponsored  
 events throughout the  
 year.



## YoYos

(Tuesday evenings, aged 8+)

The YoYos designed their own range of publicity materials to promote the group, experimenting with different visual techniques and then creating a montage. We used events such as the Christmas pantomime at the Carriageworks and the Big Bookend Festival to start distributing the leaflets.

The YoYos then devised and wrote a story, *The Magic Pantry*, about the adventures of Asda Girl, Daniel le Fox and Infinity Man. They made character puppets and designed sets which were then photographed for the book. It will be published in January 2018.





## Eden

(Thursday mornings, aged 25+)

The Eden Group started the year exploring different textile techniques such as rag-rugging, weaving and felting. After working on individual pieces, the group worked collaboratively to produce a tactile textile sculpture which was exhibited at the Swarthmore Centre.

Next was an experimental term, exploring sounds at home and outdoors. The group then linked these sounds to colours and created an installation based around different environments, including outer space and underwater. Sound recordings were coupled with the visuals for an abstract live sound art experience, attended by family and friends.

Pyramid has an excellent working relationship with The Tetley Centre for Contemporary Art, and we were delighted when they commissioned the Eden Group to produce a new range of merchandise. The group experimented with different printing techniques, and visited Awesome Merchandise to learn about the manufacturing process. Items are now available to buy in The Tetley, and some of the work produced is on show there until December 2018.



## Legends

(Wednesday mornings, aged 55+)

The Legends had a musical year, both playing and making instruments. The group developed confidence in their singing, playing and rhythm and made instruments such as rain sticks and ocean drums using recycled materials.

The group then moved on to focus their musical exploration on country and western; identifying commonly used instruments and trying them out for themselves. In addition, they looked at the styles and fashions associated with country music, and produced their own pieces using techniques such as hand and machine sewing; applique; printing and embroidery.

Moving on, the Legends spent a term making beautiful mobiles using clay and porcelain, inspired by the textures and patterns found in organic and natural objects such as leaves, bark, fruit and vegetables. The finished work will be exhibited in February 2018.



## Next Step Pyramid (NSP)

(Thursday evenings, aged 18-25)

NSP used the theme 'What's In a Label?' to create a piece about positive personal labels that they might use to describe themselves. The group learned needlework skills to produce a large embroidered wall hanging, which was exhibited at Left Bank for the BEYOND Festival.

The group also researched the history of Pyramid of Arts as we begin to prepare for our 30th birthday celebrations in 2019. With the help of D3:WS, the group produced a large scale structure of a pyramid to tell our story. The Pyramid will be previewed at our 2017 AGM.

For the Leeds Big Bookend literature festival, the group wrote and illustrated books about themselves which were shared at an event at The Carriageworks. They also looked at films, drama, illustrators and authors, and got creative by making their own paper.



## Ribblehead

(Friday mornings, aged 18+)

*Bringing the Outside In* was a project in which the Ribblehead group explored the local area (Holbeck and Hunslet) and related their findings in a visual art installation and performative tour at The Tetley.

The group's next project used wire sculpture to create 3D models and culminated in a series of three 'flying' sculptures and a pop-up exhibition at the Seven Arts Centre.

Ribblehead then spent a term exploring the concepts of 'power' and 'choice'. The group discussed what decisions were their own, and what was decided for them. The group highlighted that they wanted more engagement with the local community and cultural institutions, including regular visits to seek inspiration for future projects. This project was an early stage of ongoing work at Pyramid to support people to create 'cultural passports' which highlight their creative passions and ambitions and communicate them to decision-makers in their lives.



**High Rise is our programme for adults with learning disabilities and complex needs, funded by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund. We ran weekly sessions in an NHS facility for people with learning disabilities experiencing mental health crisis and six groups for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities: a sensory group, a visual arts group, two movement groups and two music groups.**

This year the movement, music and visual art groups all collaborated for a 'take-over day' at Armley Mills Industrial Museum with the theme *Winter Stories*. Work and videos from the project can be viewed online at <http://tiny.cc/winterstories>

## **High Rise Creative Wellbeing**

Throughout the year, three Pyramid artists worked inside a residential NHS facility for people with learning disabilities in mental health crisis. Our aim was to provide activities which would offer new experiences and a creative outlet for service users as part of their ongoing health improvement.

A large canvas piece was created collectively and exhibited as part of the 2016 Art of Recovery exhibition, where it won third prize in the 'Judge's Choice' category.



## High Rise Sensory

The Sensory Group moved to a new venue, The Vinery (run by Leeds Mencap). The group enjoy using the well-equipped sensory room and have made work such as a tactile rag rug which is on display at the centre for other visitors to enjoy.

We also invested in some musical instruments which create sound by hitting them on the ground, so members can explore the sounds created and the vibrations made. The sensory sessions make great use of tapping into all our senses, including the less common ones. We work with the members on a more individual basis in this group, with each member having an indirect impact on each other.

## High Rise Visual Arts

During the summer term, the Visual Arts group visited Skelton Grange Environment Centre on several occasions. Inspired by the outdoors, the group created fired clay mobiles to hang as a permanent feature in the grounds. Our thanks to Jackrabbits Pottery who hosted the group during the decorating, glazing and firing session.

For *Winter Stories*, the group made drawings for the story of *Peter and the Wolf* which were exhibited in the museum. They also delivered a live performance and told the story, with signing, to a captivated audience.



## High Rise Movement

The groups explored the use of canals in industry in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Leeds Liverpool Canal. The groups visited Kirkstall Abbey and their sessions were documented and displayed at the Abbey during the Kirkstall Art Trail in July 2016.

The Movement Groups' contribution to *Winter Stories* focussed on storytelling and the group devised a story, *The Owl and the Polar Bear*, which was performed live in an immersive environment at Leeds Industrial Museum. The audience were invited to follow the performers and become part of the show.

The group then worked in response to an exhibition at The Tetley, *These books were alive; they spoke to me!*, by Dora García. During the visit one of the group members was keen to respond literally to a book entitled *Steal This Book*, and did just that. This gave inspiration to the group for their final sensory performance in The Tetley's City Workshop; travelling around the world on a quest to steal more books!



## High Rise Music

During summer term the music groups explored the theme of elements, writing their own songs, and performing the completed piece at the end of the term. They visited Kirkstall Abbey and the public were treated to the fantastic acoustics of the Abbey as the groups' songs drifted around the ruins.

For *Winter Stories* the Music groups performed their own musical, *The Viking Quest*, to a packed audience. You can watch the whole show on our website.

Next, the groups worked with Leeds Lieder to produce *Step into Spring*, an original piece which riffed on the seasonal theme from a Lieder song, *It Was a Lover and His Lass*. The musical features the sounds of spring, with dancing animals and singing trees and was performed at Yorkshire Dance with baritone Philip Smith and pianist Jonathan Fisher as part of the Leeds Lieder Festival.



## Aspire

We visit three Aspire Fulfilling Lives Centres each week. Each Aspire group has an annual rotation of three art forms: Visual Arts, Movement and Music.

### Bramley

**Music** – The group explored a variety of music from classical to jazz to disco. They recorded their own sounds and performed in ‘call and response’.

**Visual Arts** – The centre is currently exhibiting the group’s work; a giant chess set. They worked with clay to sculpt the playing pieces and squares for the board.

**Movement** – The group explored the stories of *Red Riding Hood* and *Alice in Wonderland* through movement and sensory experience.

### Rothwell

**Visual Arts** – Work is currently exhibited in Rothwell’s garden courtyard. The project used different techniques to create bird prints in a variety of styles.

**Movement** – Techniques in stretching, practicing deep relaxation and using a range of props let the group explore movement in new ways.

**Music** – The group made recordings based on exploring the sounds and music of different countries as they took an audio trip around the world.

### Potternewton

**Movement** - Techniques in stretching, practicing deep relaxation and using a range of props let the group explore movement in new ways.

**Music** – The group explored the theme of ‘elements’, creating sounds that reminded them of earth, wind, water and fire.

**Visual Arts** – Using techniques such as ripping and tearing, scrunching, and mark making, the group filled different coloured materials and fabrics, based on the theme of the ‘elements’ to create giant pod like structures.



## Summer Projects

We ran three short summer projects and produced some great work.

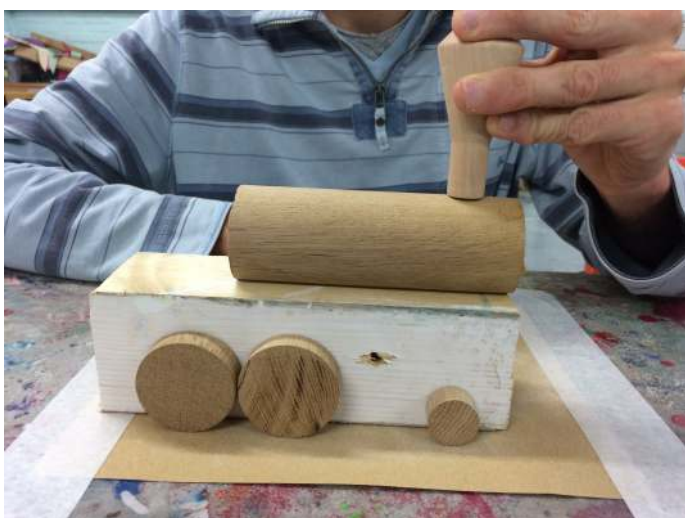
The first two projects were delivered with support from Breeze Arts Festival:

***Totemic!*** was a polystyrene sculpture project which finished with an exciting parade through Leeds city centre and a pop-up exhibition on Brewery Green.

***Summer Stories*** took place at Meanwood Valley Urban Farm and the group made a marvellous short film about the sights and sounds there. Watch online: <http://tiny.cc/summerstories>

***STOP:Motion*** was an in-house short project for members to learn techniques in stop-motion animation. The finished film is also online on our YouTube channel: <http://tiny.cc/stopmotionpyramid>





## Development Teams

Our Development Teams offer 1:1 support for people with learning disabilities with a professional artist. Sometimes this is for people whose support needs are such that group work is not appropriate for them, and for others it is to assist in developing their own individual arts practice.

As of March 2017 we had 10 individuals in Development Teams. D4 (Anne-Marie Atkinson and Andrew Towse) had two separate exhibitions of their work in the BEYOND Festival. We were also successful in supporting members to apply directly to the Arts Council Grants for the Arts funding scheme to support their work.

**D1**

Business  
Development  
in the Arts

**D2**

Visual  
Arts

**D3**

Woodwork  
and  
carpentry

**D4**

Photography  
and digital  
media

**D5**

Music



## Singing Group

The Pyramid Singing Group, led by musician James Heselwood, met every fortnight to sing songs from across all genres, from gospel (*Down By The Riverside*); rock 'n' roll (*Roll Over Beethoven* and *Hound Dog*); country (*Daddy Sang Bass*) to just plain odd (Ivor Cutler's *There's A Turtle In My Soup*). The group performed live in the BEYOND Festival and made a Hallowe'en music video for their rendition of *Minnie the Moocher* which you can watch on YouTube: <http://tiny.cc/minnie>

## Ultimate Thunder

We were also pleased to start providing a regular rehearsal space for Leeds band Ultimate Thunder and have them play at our BEYOND Festival gig night at Wharf Chambers, *BEYOND Belief!*



## Training

At Pyramid we do our best to share what we have learned over the last 28 years, with new members and with the wider world.

All our staff and volunteers are encouraged to complete our *Foundation* training, which explore the social history of disability, and good practice when working with people with learning disabilities. *Explorations* is for community artists and further develops insights into inclusive arts practice.

*Core Worker Training* is the final stage of our internal training and makes sure

that our Core Workers can run groups safely and effectively, and fully understand the 'Pyramid Way'.

We also deliver external training. *Creative Approaches to Everyday Living* is designed for care professionals who are not artists, but would like to use arts activities in their working environments. We teach quick and easy ways to do this, with cheap and recycled materials. We deliver bespoke training packages to external organisations based around good practice when working with people with learning disabilities.

### **Income**

Funds brought forward	£6,807
Donations	£5,684
Grants	£234,466
Other income (inc membership)	£37,786
Bank interest	£24
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£284,767</b>

### **Expenditure**

Salaries and project worker fees	£205,236
Project work	£35,591
Marketing	£7,819
Premises	£18,946
Administration	£11,461
Accountancy and legal fees	£3,173
Depreciation	£1,693
Insurance	£1,162
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£285,081</b>

**This information is extracted from the full audited accounts for the period April 2016 to March 2017**

For full accounts and Trustees' Report please contact:

[finance@pyramid-of-arts.org.uk](mailto:finance@pyramid-of-arts.org.uk)

### **Accountant and Independent Examiner**

Pete O'Hara FCA, 4 Stoneyhurst  
Road West, Newcastle upon  
Tyne, NE3 1PG

### **Brokers**

Endsleigh Insurance (Brokers)  
Limited, Shurdington Road,  
Cheltenham Spa, GL51 4UE

### **Bankers**

Co-operative Bank plc,  
PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street,  
Manchester M60 4EP

Barclays Bank plc, Dundas  
House, 20 Brandon Street,  
Edinburgh EH3 5PP



## Pyramid of Arts

68B Barkston House

Croydon Street

Leeds LS11 9RT

0113 234 6040

[info@pyramid-of-arts.org.uk](mailto:info@pyramid-of-arts.org.uk)

Company limited by guarantee number 4498181

Registered Charity No. 1094134

