

Pyramid of Arts

Annual Report

2010/2011

*Celebrating
21 years*





Message from Steve (Chair)

It has been a hectic and challenging year for Pyramid of Arts. We managed to bring our offices and stores together at Barkston House, a move that has improved the office space and enabled us to support more activities.

Our Art work continues to inspire and engage people across the arts community in Leeds. Our projects highlight the abilities of people with learning difficulties who are often marginalised and, at times, invisible in the locality. The high profile City Centre festival, Light Night Leeds was a particularly significant opportunity. I am delighted that we have been invited to take part in Light Night 2012.

A highlight of my year was presenting certificates of achievement to all artists and crew who produced “Captain Black Widow and the Washed-up King” a swashbuckling adventure with pirates, princesses and adventure galore. I am sure all who saw it will agree that it was a ‘tour de force’. And don’t worry if you missed the live performance; a DVD may be purchased at reasonable cost!

We are particularly proud that we are now able to continue our work with aspiring artists who have profound or severe difficulties. We have recruited staff and completed training. What started as a small project in one of the Day Centres is set to evolve in to a ground breaking experience for all involved.

On a personal note, I have been a trustee for some years. As I have been around since the inception of Pyramid of Arts, I think it is time to hand the reigns over to other people. I wish all the trustees all the best for the future.

Steve Ward

Cover Story: Light Night 2010

Thanks and farewell to Oxford Place after 15 happy years. Our Light Night installation “Flocks” reflected the safe fold provided by Oxford Place Methodist Mission, and our need to spread our wings to secure the future.



“Fantastic art! yes...”

But look closer - there's so much more going on” says Pyramid of Arts’ Creative Director, Julia Piggott.

“Many different people join Pyramid of Arts. We work together to:

- Communicate our ideas
- Share our experiences
- Develop our skills
- Celebrate our successes
- Learn from our mistakes
- Support everyone to join in
- Build lasting friendships



Over 21 years we have built strong foundations for an arts community that is respected for great art work and that will last for a long time.

Working together, we will make a real difference to arts in the city”

The second star to the right and straight on to Goole!

where we have been making friends with the company of Castaway. Their recent production, Peter Pan, was designed by Pyramid artist Christian Braime. Anna Webb, Castaway’s dance leader, has been co-opted to work in our High Support programme. Further collaborations are in the pipeline.

Who's who?

Office staff:

Sukhvinder K Sond
(Project Co-ordinator for Adult Social Care)

Jane Kenington
(Project Co-ordinator for High Support)

Alison Herbert (Finance Administrator)

Sarah Kennedy (Administrator)

David Maccoby (Admin Assistant)

Trustees:

Steve Ward (Chair)

John Lehany (Treasurer)

Gloria Lindh (co-opted
16th December 2010)

Felix Odeh (co-opted
16th December 2010)

Jonathan Sutton

Trainers:

Tom Bailey

Chris Brumpton

Cath Murphy

Julia Piggott

Andy Pope

Bankers: Co-operative Bank PLC, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester, M60 4EP

Insurance Brokers: AON, Capital House, 1 Houndswell Place, Southampton SO14 1HU

Registered Auditors: Thomas Coombs, 29 Clarendon Road, Leeds LS2 9PG

Donors & Supporters: Thanks to all who have donated money this year, including Overmarsh Engineering, Richard and Carla Bickers, Stephen Harvey. **Pyramid connections** Pyramid of Arts regularly takes part in Involve (Forum for cultural opportunities for Young people with disabilities), Arts and Minds development group, Tenfold (formerly known as the Leeds learning disability Forum). It also attends events and open meetings run by Arts Council England and Leeds Arts Partnership Board. It has membership of West Yorkshire Playhouse community connections, Voluntary Action Leeds, Leeds Play Network and NCVO.

Special thanks to: Jonathan Jarembowski for mentoring, arranged through the Media Trust. Jean Weston, Marcus Rapley & Carl Allport for technical support for Captain Black Widow

Creative team

core workers:

Julia Piggott
(Creative Director)

Kasia Baczkowski

Tom Bailey

Christian Braime

Sandy Holden

Pete Hudspith

Pippa Julings

Judith Kennedy

Penny Lewis

Sven McLean

Anna-Marie Milton

Seb Munday

Tom Napper

Cassy Oliphant

Rachel Pickering

Wendy Robinson

Kate Woodfield

artists:

Matthew Bellwood

Martin Currie

Chris Gardiner

Cath Graham

Shirley Hopkinson

Jack King

Maria Santos

Mark Stammers

Douglas Thompson

Bryan Twedde

Anna Webb

Our Programmes:

What we do:

All Pyramid groups are led by professional artists and arts workers. Teams have members with and without learning disabilities. Each person works alone or collaboratively, according to the levels of skill needed to complete the task. Groups can take up to three years to reach maturity.

- **New programme**
Visual Art / Sound / Movement



Open to people with profound disabilities and complex needs, care staff and people who have limited or no arts experience

Purpose: an introduction to the rich sensory world of the creative arts.

We've been keen to set up High Support groups for some time and after much planning and organising, the groups got underway in March with enthusiastic attendees. The Visual Art group took the theme of the sea – using sand and sounds to provide a multi-sensory experience. The Sound group was hugely popular and started as they meant to go on, using different aspects of sound and tone, volume and beat to develop listening skills – hearing new types of music was a favourite! The Movement Group eased in slowly with body awareness exercises, finding ways of moving using imaginative props and making sculptures with parts of the body. All three groups off to a magnificent start!

High Support Groups age 19+

● Youth programme (14-25)

Open to all young people, particularly those with complex learning disabilities and autistic spectrum disabilities

Purpose: personal development. Provides a broad range of experience so that people can demonstrate where their arts interests and talents lie.

Youth Group ages 14-18

The Youth Group enthusiastically focused on a live performance of their self-penned show, *Captain Black Widow and the Washed-Up King*, getting involved in all aspects of staging a production. As well as a live performance, the show was filmed and premiered at Seven Arts Centre, Chapel Allerton, Leeds to a packed house. Funding for this project was provided by the Clore Duffield Foundation through its Clore Performing Arts Award.

Following an exodus to the Young Adults group in November, the remaining young people tried their hand at making work and selling it at Christmas fairs. But the weather was against them, and, whilst three young workers gained valuable experience and a good time was had by all, the profit margins were not as hoped for! The spring has been a somewhat frustrating waiting game. A successful project proposal was sent in to the Breeze International Youth Festival and we were able to recruit new members in March.



Young Adults News



Projects 2010 to 2011

We have had a very busy year.... We got the title for our film "Dance the Jitterbug to Bramley". So our next task was to find a film artist to work with. We interviewed six filmmakers and after taster sessions with each artist, the group chose Martin Currie. In early summer we completed a short Zombie movie.

We then took a short break from the film to help with "Flocks". We made the people on the steps of the chapel. After Light Night, several people joined us from the youth group. We welcomed them by creating a bus invitation, and introducing them to "Dance the Jitterbug to Bramley".



Dance the Jitter Bug

Douglas Thompson came work with us to help us to make ideas for a storyboard. We learned acting, made games, and drew ideas for characters. Now we have a story... so we are choosing people to be those characters, helping them to learn their lines and play their parts. We have worked really hard and are very happy with our story for the film.



● Adults programme (25+)

Open to all adults who have an active interest in the arts.

Purpose: regular on going opportunity to develop further skills, exhibition opportunities and contact with the professional arts community.

Ribblehead Group age 25+



We took our puppets to the Beeston Festival – our first public exhibition. Then we wanted to find a proper name. As Pyramid prides itself in making LARGE things, we made models of LARGE buildings such as the Taj Mahal and the Gherkin. After much making, and a vote, the model of RIBBLEHEAD VIADUCT won. Our name was born!

We then built a HUGE model of the viaduct, too big to keep. So we took photos of it. Throughout the spring term, artist Kate Woodfield helped us use these photos in a variety of ways on fabrics, making cushions, a quilt, cards, and giant photos mounted in arches. A highlight of the project was a trip by train to Ribblehead itself, in the Dales, where we had a pub lunch, and decorated the viaduct with our very own Ribbleweb...





This was the final year of funding from LankellyChase Foundation and the group pulled out all the stops to make it a triumph. We completed the initial designs for the Animal Bridge – a large arch with sculpted animals on it, destined for Meanwood Valley Urban Farm. We visited the farm and made drawings and models of the animals. The bridge will be completed and installed next year.



The most visible bit of our work this year has to be Arthur – the giant sheep who stood guard over the Headrow on Light Night. We had great

fun making him from willow and latex covered paper. We really enjoyed working in the barn at the farm as we could chat to farm visitors about our project as we worked.

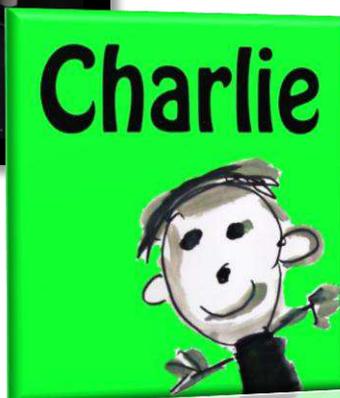
Elders Group age 55+



This has been a packed year for the Elders! After quite a long break we reopened, and we haven't looked back since. First, a musical journey - following a stream as it flowed from its source in the mountains into a river, passing through forests and towns and reaching its end at the sea. Each week we illustrated the highs, lows, storms and calms of the journey through drawing / painting and percussive music.



For "Flocks" we designed and made the flock of sheep, almost life size, each given individuality with their bejewelled eyes. Their picture is on the cover.

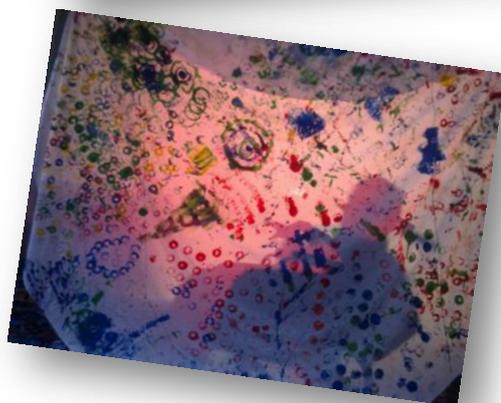


And we've made a book called 'Charlie'.



And we've completed some wonderful weaving with fabrics dyed in the group.

Training & taster days



Much of this year's training has focused on making sure that we have the extra people that we need to support the new High Support Programme. An excellent group of experience artists and core workers completed their training in the autumn. New recruits attended the Foundation course, followed by a fabulous residential training weekend in November.

In a new training initiative, Pyramid trainees were joined by support staff from the Specialist Supported Living Service to take part in a creative arts training session focusing on sensory issues. This provided an opportunity for people to think about the projects ahead and to find a common approach and understanding. Service users and staff then enjoyed three taster days and started to discover what Pyramid is really all about!



Finance

For information on the full Pyramid of Arts accounts, please contact the office on (0113) 234 60 40.

Income	
Arts@Leeds LCC	£6,000
Joint Commissioning LCC	£20,799
Arts Council England	£21,556
ASC "Transforming Lives" LCC	£39,939
Clore Duffield Foundation	£8,533
LankellyChase Foundation	£6,500
The Big Lottery Fund	£42,034
Other small Grants	£945
Bank Interest	£2,330
Other Income	£3,073
Donations	£3,450
Allocation from designated funds	£11,542
Total Income	£166,701

Expenditure	
Project work	£92,660
Management and Development	£51,037
Premises (inc. relocation)	£18,611
Governance	£4,292
Depreciation	£101
Total Expenditure	£166,701





Community connections

Around the Museums & Galleries of Leeds

We were happy to be able to offer an enlarged summer programme in connection with major cultural venues. Everyone benefits when spaces that do not often have learning disabled visitors are able to offer such inspiring opportunities, and we take the opportunity to bring in additional visiting artists to lead these short projects.

Mark Stammers led an exciting exploration of *Sean Scully's work at Leeds Art Gallery*. This exhibition provided inspiration for a dramatic artwork made up of individually painted canvases.

At **Project Space Leeds**, as part of a larger project led by Catharine Graham, people made their own versions of well-known masterpieces by Da Vinci, Warhol and others – the resulting exhibition was very well received.

Greek theatre came to **Harewood House** as a group worked with storyteller Matthew Bellwood to reproduce the story of *Orpheus and Eurydice* in the picturesque setting of the terraced garden. A participatory performance took place at the end of the week.

The resonant qualities of The **Howard Assembly Rooms** were fully exploited, both by the youth group in preparation for "*Captain Black Widow and the Washed-up King*", and by the young adults who completed the filming of the Zombie movie.

The **Leeds Town Hall Postcard Project** was organised by Arts @ Leeds during the winter. Poet Andrew McMillan and artist Hannah Carey facilitated a group to combine words and images to create postcards of the Town Hall for a public exhibition which was held in February.

M&G
2010/11



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