



2014/15

Pyramid of Arts is a group of around 100 people, with and without learning disabilities, who work together to explore and develop their creativity, and to make great art for a wide public.

This has been a challenging but also a fantastic year for Pyramid of Arts, with many changes but a great amount of success building on our past achievements.

Like any arts organisation we have faced financial challenges this year, with a long term reduction in donations and increased competition for funding having hit us hard. However the office team and D1 (see page 19) have responded by writing a huge number of funding bids, to existing and new funders, and have been successful in 80% of those bids. Many of our members have taken part in sponsored activities, including a large

group successfully completing the Yorkshire Three Peaks. Most significantly, we introduced membership fees for groups from January 2015 and have increased our income through Development Teams. This is a hugely valuable contribution from the members and will contribute a great deal to the future stability of the organisation.

We were also notified in December 2014 that we had been successful in securing funding for three years from the National Lottery, through the Big Lottery Fund. This brings greater financial security,

as well as the return of our much-missed high support programme, High-Rise. With our existing groups, High-Rise groups, Development Teams and projects in Aspire Fulfilling Lives Centres, Pyramid will have more groups, with more members, than ever before. Such growth in such hard times is testament to the fantastic work and passion of everyone involved: volunteers, members, freelancers, office staff, trustees and old friends alike. It also demonstrates how high a regard Pyramid is held in by our many funders, partners and stakeholders across the city.

In between all this, our groups have continued to meet and work their magic, creating a Giant Foot of Knowledge; Sinister Santas and cider-swigging Red Riding Hoods; time-travelling rickshaws with questionably explicit decorations; tapestries and werebadgers. The work of our artists has been displayed in festivals and events in Luxembourg and Germany, as well as across Leeds, in the Howard Assembly Room and at Light Night, Breeze and Holocaust Memorial Day. The reputation of the organisation and its artists continues to grow.

James Hill (*Director*)



Our Trustees

Alex Croft
 Clare Enston
 Felix Odeh (Treasurer)
 Gloria Lindh
 Liam Hirst
 Ros Lehany
 Sonia Kitchen (stepped
 down July 2014)
 Thomas Chalk (Chair)



Our Core Team

Alison Herbert (Finance
 Administrator, left June 2015)
 David Maccoby
 (Administrative Assistant)
 James Hill (Director)
 Mindy Goose
 (High-Rise Project Coordinator,
 started April 2015)
 Robert Rae (Cleaner)
 Sarah Kennedy
 (Operations Coordinator)
 Sukhvinder Sond
 (Groups Coordinator)



Core Workers, Artists & Volunteers

Alex Fergus
 Alice Clayden
 Alison Herbert
 Anna-Marie Milton
 Annie Nelson
 Antonia Ions
 Bryan Tweddle
 Carmen Wray
 Carolyn Stiff
 Cassy Oliphant
 Charlotte Fitzpatrick
 Christian Braime
 Coral Shepherd
 David Maccoby
 David Morley
 Dawn Carey-Jones
 Edward Mortimer
 Emma Marriott
 Fran Rodgers
 Gareth Lamb
 Halema Khatun
 Iain Wilson
 Iman Meghraoua
 James Heselwood

Jenny Laskowsky
 Jody Fitzgerald
 Jon Foulger
 Jonathan Turner
 Judith Kennedy
 Kate Woodfield
 Kerry-Ann Jackson
 Kim Faircliffe
 Leire Garcia
 Lilly Lavorato
 Matthew Bellwood
 Natalie Kyrkos
 Ogi Damjanovic
 Oyidiya Ndukwe
 Paul Ashton
 Paul Hutchinson
 Penny Lewis
 Pete Hudspith
 Pippa Woodhams
 Sandy Holden
 Seb Munday
 Sonia Kitchen
 Sophie Dickinson
 Tom Bailey
 Tom Dransfield
 Verity Wong
 Vicki Scott
 Wendy Robinson
 Zoe Anderson



Funders

Arts Council England
 Big Lottery Fund
 Greggs Foundation
 Grundtvig (EU Lifelong
 Learning Programme)
 Humber Learning Consortium
 Leeds City Council
 LYPFT Arts and Minds Network



Donors

Many thanks to Dr Jane
 Ginsborg, Richard and Carla
 Cadiz-Aravena, Patricia Braime,
 Stage Freight and everybody
 who took part in sponsored
 events or donated. Special
 thanks to the Piggott family
 and all those who have
 donated to Pyramid in
 memory of Julia.



YoYos

The YoYos is a group for young people aged 8 to 18. They meet every week and work in all art forms. This year, the YoYos worked with the Youth Group on *The Deciding Machine* (see page 7). The group then went on to create *Jalicks*, for the Breeze Arts Festival 2015.

“We started the project by visiting *The Wood Beneath the World* and creating stories whilst weaving webs between the trees. It was a great success and the group loved the atmosphere under the Town Hall. Then we combined elements of our story with the group’s interest of playing board games. This in turn morphed into a giant game, similar to snakes and ladders but with props that appear in the stories the groups wrote. We’ve been painting, making props and using our imaginations to create interesting stories and have come up with something that we think you’ll really enjoy playing.”



The Deciding Machine by the YoYos & Youth Group



Young Adults & Youth Group

Young Adults is a group for people aged 18 to 25. They meet every week and work in all art forms. Our Youth Group and the Young Adults merged in January 2015.

In the summer term, the Young Adults developed a taste for acting and dramatisation and decided to write and produce a play. The play is called *A Hawaiian Adventure* and is a heroic tale featuring singing, dancing, a complex love triangle and even a volcanic eruption!

Meanwhile, the Youth Group collaborated with the YoYos to build *The Deciding Machine*, an immersive game based around ideas of choices and their hidden consequences. It was showcased at Trinity Leeds as part of the Breeze Arts Festival.

In January 2015 they began work in *The Wood Beneath the World*, in the basement of Leeds Town Hall. The group created masks, props and stories for a schools workshop, delivered in the run up to Christmas.

They then moved on to exploring the tropes and archetypes of fairy tales, developing visual and audio components of a machine that could produce new stories based on these. *The Story Machine* will be completed in early 2016.



The Giant Foot of Knowledge in The Wood Beneath the World



Ribblehead

Ribblehead is for people aged 25 and above. They meet every week and work in all art forms. The group began the year by devising a participatory project for the Love Arts Conversation which ended with conference attendees creating a giant foam city, attached to a cloud, which floated high above the audience in The Light Shopping Centre.

In the run up to Christmas the group devised an anarchic live performance for *The Wood Beneath the World* in which a boozy Red Riding Hood was tempted to tear down the forest and build a cider factory, Prince Charming was transformed into a terrifying werebadger, and Santa Claus finally saved the day. The group ended the year by creating giant puppets for the online storybook, *Cecil and Pixie, the Story So Far*.



Cecil and Pixie, the Story So Far



Eden

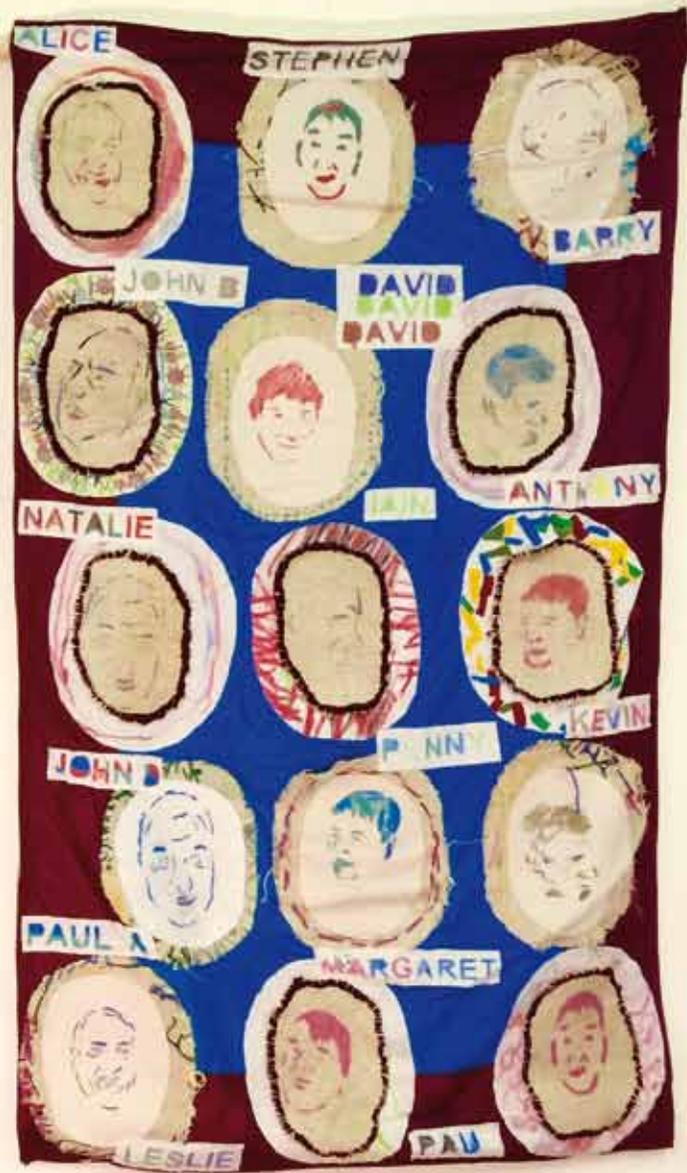
Eden is for people aged 40 and above. They meet every week and work in all art forms.

This year they created a textile piece, *Through the Net*, for *The Reality of Small Differences* exhibition; painted backdrops of fantasy lands for our *I Want To Know* project and built a portal to Luxembourg in the basement of the Town Hall for Light Night.

The group's final project of the year was a response to the Jerwood Drawing Prize exhibition at The Tetley. "We visited the exhibition twice to examine, discuss and react to the work. Back at Pyramid, we explored different approaches to mark making and process, inspired by chosen works from the show. Individual sketchbook studies were developed into larger works, culminating in a large collaborative drawing united by a flow of liquid blue paint." A selection of drawings from this project will be exhibited at The Tetley in July 2015.



Through the Net



Elders

Elders is for people aged 55 and above. They meet every week and work in all art forms. This year they produced *Keep the Memory Alive*, a three part tapestry for Leeds Town Hall to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day.

“The project focused on how we remember people. We started thinking about how possessions can be inextricably linked with individuals. We thought about the massive number of people who died and discussed how each person was an individual with their own lives, hopes and dreams. Their possessions, precious or commonplace, would have held meaning for each person and can remind of us of who they were. The first hanging contains shadowy crowds, figures and piles of luggage. In the second, images are becoming more distinct. In the third, we see people’s faces, surrounded their marks, and we are reminded that each person who died was unique, just as every member of Elders is unique.”

On Holocaust Memorial Day, Leslie Swithenbank joined The Lord Mayor and other dignitaries on stage at the Town Hall to light a candle and read a commitment in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.





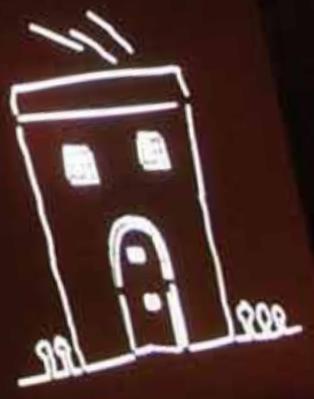
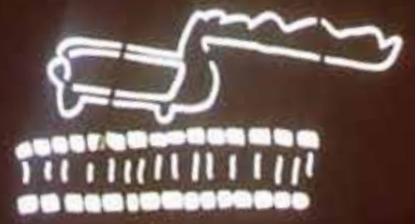
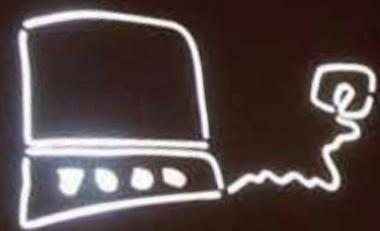
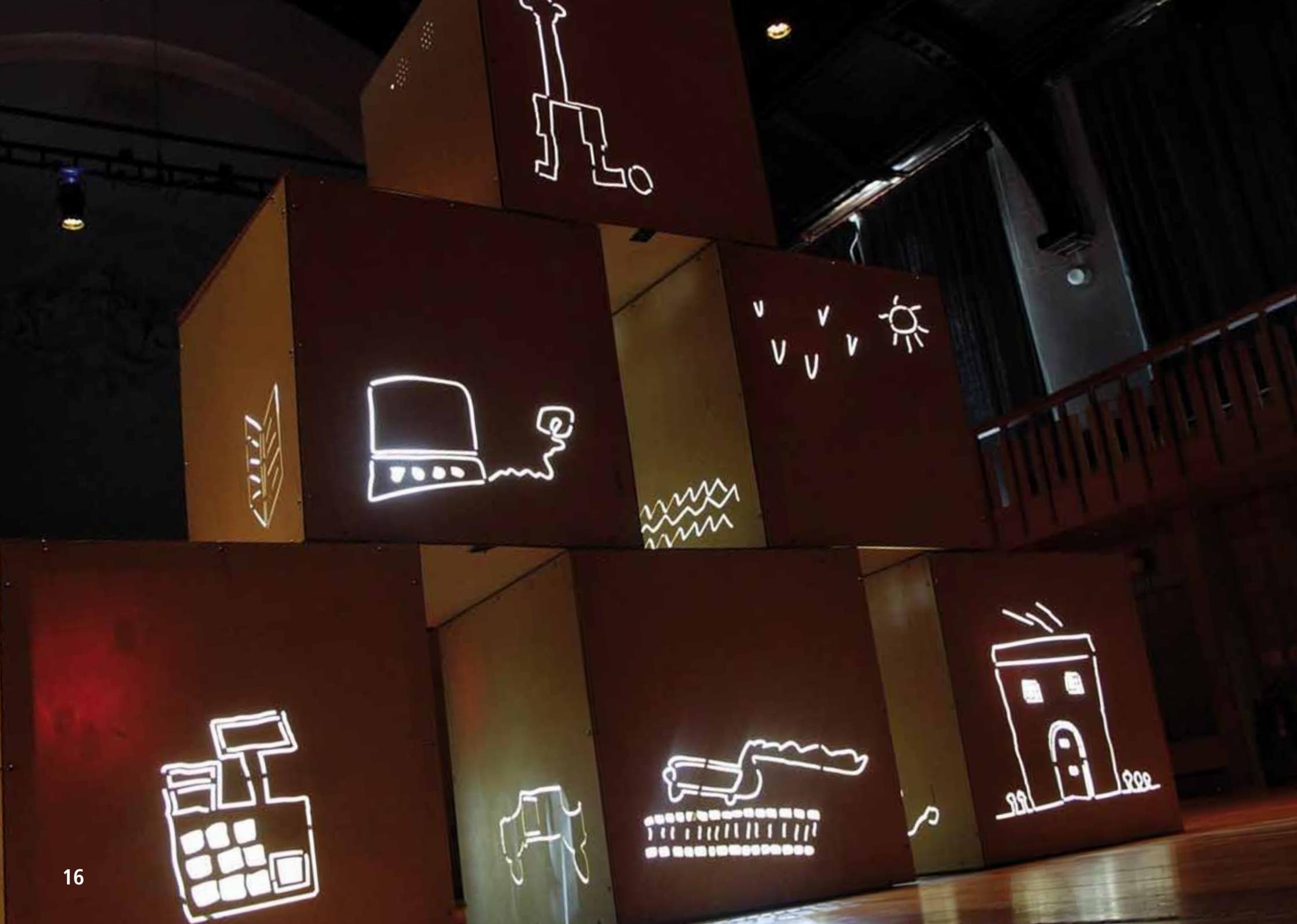
Singing Group

"Our members cross all ages and abilities. The songs that we sing cross all genres, from gospel (*Down By The Riverside*)' rock and 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*). We celebrated the festive period by filming a video to our rendition of *Must Be Santa* which you can view here, <http://tinyurl.com/poasanta>."

The group meets fortnightly and is led by a professional musician. No previous experience is required, just enthusiasm!



Still from the video for Must Be Santa



Beam Team

Beam Team worked together this year to produce *ideaLeeds*, an immersive audio-visual sculpture in which six large wooden boxes cast light and sound themed around different elements of city life. The boxes can be moved around by the audience to compose their ideal version of a city.

The boxes were displayed to several thousand young families at Breeze on Tour, and then in the beautiful surrounding of the Howard Assembly Room (pictured). *IdeaLeeds* was also selected to appear as part of the Nuit des Lampions festival in Wiltz, Luxembourg. Three of the artists travelled over to Luxembourg in September to install the work and see the festival. The boxes then returned to Leeds to appear as part of our installation on Light Night.

Although Beam Team then disbanded, two members have gone on to develop their skills in Development Teams (see pages 18 and 19).





Colour drawings from Development Team Taster Sessions

Development Teams

Our Development Teams are pairs of members working together to further a particular creative interest. Each team is made up of a professional artist and a member with learning disabilities who support each other to develop their work. The interests of the groups range from carpentry to writing business plans.

D1

Liam Hirst works in D1 (Business Development). He attends for a full day each week to shadow our Director, James, and has been instrumental in some of our funding successes for the year. Liam has learned a lot about our internal operations and in January 2015, he joined our Board of Trustees. He is also the first Pyramid member ever to apply for and get a grant as an individual artist from the Arts Council's G4A scheme.

D2

In August 2014 we ran a short D2 painting project where three Pyramid members, Alicia, Mick and Sonia, worked with artist Sandy Holden to produce self-portraits. We plan to offer D2 projects in future.

D3

William Stapleton has had a very busy year in D3 (woodwork, props, technical support). Working with Ogi Damjanovic, he spent several months honing his carpentry skills and built the cubes for ideaLeeds (see page 16). He then worked with musician Seb Munday to build a Bongaphone, a giant multi-musical instrument, which we look forward to taking out to events next year.

D4

Andrew Towse joined Pyramid in January 2015 and worked one to one in D4 (digital media) with photographer Jonathan Turner. Andrew has focused on his love of comics and learned about photographic composition and narrative structure through creating a new comic book based on Batman. Andrew is currently working alongside artist Anne-Marie Atkinson and together they created the cover picture for this annual report.



I Want To Know

Our Grundtvig funded I Want To Know European exchange programme continued this year with a return trip to the lovely town of Wiltz in Luxembourg, in order to exhibit *ideaLeeds* at their Nuit des Lampions festival. In October we visited SKID on the shores of the beautiful Lake Constance, making sculpture around the theme of 'wrapping up', in their Naturatelier - outdoors workshop. In June all the partner organisations came to visit us here in Leeds. They met most of our groups and visited some sites in the city, all the while adding to a time-travelling rickshaw, which was used in the city's celebrations for the Grand Depart. On our trips we made many new friends and were inspired by learning about what we have in common, and what we do differently. In total, 26 of our members took at least one trip, and no one will forget the experience!





2015–16

BEYOND

BEYOND is a brand new festival for Leeds, coming in June 2016. The festival will celebrate the work of artists, performers and musicians with learning disabilities from Leeds, and the many organisations which support them. There are hundreds of talented artists with learning disabilities in the city, producing a fantastic range of art. Leeds is also home to many organisations focused on supporting artists with learning disabilities in exploring and developing their creativity, and an associated group of talented individual freelancers who lead that work. We are proud to be involved in this exciting new venture, and look forward to sharing our work at the festival next year.



Ultimate Thunder at the Beyond Festival launch



2015–16

High-Rise

In December 2014, we were delighted to hear that our project High-Rise would receive funding for three years from the National Lottery, through the Big Lottery Fund. High-Rise offers weekly groups focused on sensory exploration, visual art, music and movement to people with profound and multiple disabilities. The project will also support our training programme, both internally and with a course aimed at carers and support workers who would like to better understand the benefits of regular creative activity for the people they support. In April 2015, we welcomed Mindy Goose to the staff team, as our High-Rise Project Coordinator.



High-Rise Visual Arts group

Income

Leeds City Council	
LCC arts@leeds	£5,500.00
LCC Joint Commissioning Service	£20,799.00
LCC Adult Social Care	£39,985.00
LCC Light Night	£704.00
LCC Leeds Inspired	£9,117.00
LCC Holocaust Memorial Day	£300.00
LCC Breeze Arts Festival	£2,750.00
Big Lottery Fund	£2,500.00
Grundtvig	£8,815.00
Gregg's Foundation	£1,000.00
Trinity Leeds Young Talent Fund	£2,920.00
Arts & Minds	£500.00
Arts Council England	£13,084.00
Humber Learning Consortium	£2,227.00
Donations	£4,775.00
Bank Interest	£50.00
Other Income	£18,906.00
Total	£133,932.00

Expenditure

Staff Costs	£101,021.00
Premises & Utilities	£17,373.00
Other project costs	£18,519.00
Office Administration	£7,052.00
Governance Costs	£3,342.00
Total	£147,309.00

This information is extracted from the full audited accounts for the period April 2014 to March 2015.

For full accounts and Trustees' Report please contact:
finance@pyramid-of-arts.org.uk

Bankers:

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

Barclays
PO Box 424, Coventry CV2 2BR

Brokers:

AON, Insurance House, 125/129
Vaughan Way, Leicester LE1 4SB

Auditors:

Thomas Coombs, 29 Clarendon
Road, Leeds LS2 9PG



Many congratulations to Paul Hutchinson, long-standing Pyramid volunteer, who won the 'Volunteer of the Year' Award at the 2015 Tenfold Awards.



Pyramid of Arts Unit 68B, Barkston House, Croydon Street, Leeds LS11 9RT

tel: 0113 234 6040

email: info@pyramid-of-arts.org.uk

website: www.pyramid-of-arts.org.uk





'The I Want To Know Chandelier' created by members of Cooperations, KCAT and SKID for Nuit des Lampions in Wiltz, Luxembourg.'

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