

CARNIVAL ARTS PARTNERSHIP – ABOUT THE PROJECT

'Movements & Mobilisation' project 2018

Main aims were to:

- Share and advance practice around inclusive parade choreography and carnival making skills
- Encourage broader participation by disabled people, those of South Asian descent and schools
- Raise aspirations around the quality of Gloucester Carnival's parade
- Raise Gloucester Carnival's national profile and relationships to support future plans



How we did it:

- Easter intensives: local artists shared skills / did workshops with carnival specialists Shademakers UK & Manuela Benini, as well as agreeing the artistic vision
- A creation week: all artists worked collaboratively (with participants and volunteers) on a core parade piece; creating costume, structures and choreography
- Carnival courses with artist residencies in local school / community groups to create 3 additional parade pieces
- Forging partnerships and future plans with local groups and Carnival Network South partners, including visits to other Carnivals and hosting a post-Carnival sharing of practice and learning event
- Diversifying our volunteer pool
- Producing 2 short films to support promotion to more school and community groups locally, and through which to share our learning and developments around inclusive practice nationally

Local groups involved:

- Art Shape (Adult Education) Guildhall Drama Group
- Inclusion Gloucestershire
- Kamala Nruithyam school of Bharatanatyam
- Kingfisher Playgroup
- Tredworth Junior School
- VIA Integrated Community Dance Co.
- Widden Primary School



LEARNING FROM 'MOVEMENTS & MOBILISATION'

WHAT 'MOVED'?	WHAT STILL NEEDS A PUSH?
Disability & Cultural Awareness / Confidence	
Learnt through extended framework of artists / professionals with understanding in different areas	Demands on budget in other areas & unavailability of other disabled professionals = only 1 professional disabled dancer
Learning & respect around South Asian arts reported	No prior understanding re. symbolic significance of colours. Need culture-specific awareness training / facilitated dialogue for all at the outset when working with a new community (to carnival).
Increases in confidence reported re. inclusive practice / understanding	Some approached the project with the charity model of disability in mind; need disability awareness training for the whole team at outset
South Asian dance teachers reported positive experience of working inclusively	Steep learning curve for those unused to working collaboratively &/or on subsidised/carnival projects
Non-South Asian dance collaborators reported they felt enriched by engagement with traditional forms	One section of the choreography needed to move further away from the original, traditional version to work inclusively in a parade context
Visibly increased inclusion of both disabled people & those of South Asian descent on Carnival day	Use the imagery / film & experience to open dialogue with other South Asian groups / leaders
Skills Development	
1 st opportunity to work intensively together	Need to give more structure to mentoring
More understanding of each other's skills reported	Use enhanced understanding of each others' skills to design future roles enabling artists / team members to play to their strengths
Learning reported amongst all parties (individual artists & participating groups / individuals)	Some artists weren't able to fully utilise new skills due to limited capacity (to make or create choreo) and/or aptitude/interest
All on dance team enthused & inspired by Universal Design approach	Most expressed desire for another project to fully embed / practice the approach
Skills & theory from Shademakers broadened thinking around function of Carnival & specific skills greatly appreciated	Build on the fact artists benefited most from working alongside Shademakers (rather than remote mentoring)
Skills & resources of Matthew West greatly appreciated	Needs sustained investment to continue to raise ambition/scope of structure-making Need space / resources over longer timeframe
Sense of Community / Pride in the City	
Strong partnership with HCA – local Indian community engaged on several levels (on CAP, professional, community & volunteer teams)	Need to find ways of building on / sustaining engagement via the HCA and other local S Asian groups
Increased pride in / feeling more a part of Gloucester	Capitalise on "good feeling" for next carnival
Large number of very diverse participants	Engage with other communities
Raised Aspirations / Inspiration	
Significant raise in personal & carnival artistic ambitions	Use experience to set artistic bar higher for individuals and carnival in future. Need more opps. to research/go & inspiring work in other Carnivals
Very visible spirit, enthusiasm & energy on Carnival day	Use quotes, film and images to "sell" and inspire more community / school groups

Creation of Re-useable Products	
Reusable costumes	Ran out of time to create (partly, not enough skills vol support & travel between spaces ate into making time)
Trains can be reassembled / base re-used for different structures	Investment in storage / place to store structures immediately after Carnival still needed
Cross-organisational Relationship Development & Artistic Collaboration	
Schools/community groups want to stay involved	When working with different groups in same parade piece, need more time together to work on choreography as one group
Dedication & enthusiasm of core team & partners recognised	Frustration that not all could be involved from the outset &/or in all opportunities due to budget / scheduling challenges
Great warmth, trust & respect in dance team (want to keep working together)	Need year-round opportunities to share practice / train & to bring through next generation artists
All artists reported wanting to work with someone / others again	As above
Artistic Quality	
Positive audience feedback re. parade pieces	Many voiced disappointment at no activity in the Park
Produced a visually cohesive series of parade pieces for Carnival day	Needed all (makers & dance team) at initial visioning as planned (not feasible due to artists' availability clashes) All volunteers (walking with parade) should be costumed / integrated
Greater colour coordination than usual	Not able to control elements of the colour palette in core piece as some felt very strongly re. wearing their own traditional dress & make-up
Produced some well-integrated choreography with effective 'translations' (that enabled disabled participants to perform equally well) in studio & some sections (e.g. Park finale) worked well on the day	Choreo didn't all transfer well into parade. Need to integrate groups from outset (rather than work with them separately). Need more 'creation' & 'translation' time so choreo is set sooner (enabling more rehearsal / refinement). Also, control pace of parade (be at front?) and rehearse on the actual terrain (inc. inclines)
Visually impressive structures: ship, train, backpacks / costumes	Need artistic director with enough paid capacity to stay closer to artistic creation process (with deadlines met, e.g. for prototypes, enabling AD input / quality control) Need more skilled volunteers / assistant makers
More ambitious in professionalism of parade pieces	Need artistic direction that keeps overview of both performance & making elements. Streamline team / roles & responsibilities
Able to draw on music mixing skills / experience of existing team members	Only 1 piece had adequate sound system; not enough £ for live musicians as planned; music mixes created late in process; need larger music budget / post-holder with lead responsibility. Potential to engage with community musicians earlier through schools.
Raised Profile	
Enabled skills & strengths of specific local Carnival artists to be recognised	Needs dedicated marketing agent (separate to summer season SoMAC publicity) to capitalise on all opps, plus artists' & partners' potential promotional reach
Packs distributed to all participants / artists	Needs more city-centre / visible publicity where there's footfall & increased social media activity
Films x 2 produced that will support local and national promotion & engagement	No further paid capacity left to drive distribution of the films

CARNIVAL ARTS PARTNERSHIP – ABOUT THE MEMBERS

The Carnival Arts Partnership has been running since 2012. We work to engage and embed skills within 5 – 6 community and school groups per annum. We also support the learning and development of a diversity of local emerging and established artists (including those who face disabling barriers), with a key focus on inclusive Carnival practice.



Art Shape drives sectoral change, working through projects, partnership and participatory / artist and leadership development courses to improve access and progression routes through the arts for people who face disabling barriers.

Art Shape has been working for over 25 years to impact positively on the wellbeing of individuals and communities across Gloucestershire and to enrich the local cultural offer through nurturing and celebrating diversity.

www.artshape.co.uk



Global Arts Inc Ltd

Global Arts Inc is dedicated to delivering community-led arts projects and initiatives. They offer bespoke workshops, schools programmes, youth arts mentoring, work experience and arts, health and wellbeing workshops for all ages and abilities.

They aim to expand the understanding of the diverse cultures that exist within our local community by promoting unity through the language of the arts.

www.globalartsinc.co.uk



The Hindu Cultural Association (Gloucester) works towards mutual harmony and integrity between Eastern and Western communities. Their work includes education around: language, environmental issues, enhancement of cultural awareness and good citizenship classes for children. They also provide social activities (encouraging physical and mental well-being), meet community needs (e.g. health / environmental), promote community cohesion and musical talent and celebrate cultural festivals throughout the year.

[@thehca](https://www.instagram.com/thehca)



Marketing Gloucester promotes the City as a great place to live, work, study, visit and invest; locally, nationally and internationally. The team:

- Organises award-winning events and festivals
- Engages with businesses and investors
- Implements programmes to develop pride of place amongst residents
- Works through partnership (e.g. with Gloucester City Council, gFirst LEP, Cotswolds Tourism)

www.marketinggloucester.co.uk



Team M.S.B. promotes and advances urban dance, and associated artforms, through its regular battles, events and collaboration with organisations that share its aims.

Locally, Team M.S.B. engages and signposts young people to opportunities in dance and urban arts through workshops and strategic partnerships.

[@MStylesBattle](#)

Producer & Development Associate: Cath Wilkins

Cath is a strategic consultant, project manager, evaluator and fundraiser specialist in inclusive practice and dance. She is co-Director with Suzie Birchwood of Dance Unstuck, set up to advance a teaching / choreographic approach that creates more universal access to training and/or performance for a broader diversity of dancers.

Cath was Director of GDance for 10 years until 2016, a national leader in inclusive dance production and training, through which she co-founded alongside colleague Helen Crocker The National Inclusive Dance Network (latterly known as the Dance for Change Network). Formerly, she was General Manager/Producer at Shobana Jeyasingh Dance, following 7 years with funding bodies NESTA and Arts Council England.