



Shetland *arts*

2015 - 2016: Quarter 1

Report of activity relating to Priority Areas of Activity Statements

Case Studies: Youth Arts: Shetland Youth Theatre and Shetland Youth Arts Festival

Key Performance Indicator Statistics (appendix)

Priority Area 1: Youth Arts

This includes the groundbreaking work we do with Shetland Youth Theatre and the support of groups such as Maddrim Media and the Shetland Young Promoters Group. It will include innovative projects designed to increase the engagement of young people in the arts, such as Youth Arts Panels, and exchange programmes with organisations outwith Shetland, encouraging Shetland youth to engage with and help shape cultural events in Shetland.

**5 Concerts / Screenings
/ Exhibition days**

**513 Audience
attendances**

**47 Development
Sessions**

1096 Participations

It's been an exciting period in our support for youth arts and this quarter's Case Studies (see below) focus on two projects which have engaged and benefitted Shetland's young people; Shetland Youth Theatre trip to Inverness to take part in the national Theatre's "Connections" drama festival in April and the Youth Arts Festival held in Mareel and other venues in May.

Priority Area 2: Education & Learning

Program of activities aimed at skills development for creative industries practitioners as well as evening classes aimed at increasing accessibility and participation in creative activities. The Gallery Education Programme will work with schools to encourage access to and engagement with our exhibition programme. We will also facilitate peer review and support by and for practitioners at all levels of participation and a range of formal learning opportunities in partnership with UHI.

**1 Concerts / Screenings
/ Exhibition days**

**87 Audience
attendances**

**205 Development
Sessions**

1778 Participations

June saw the end of the academic year with the Vocational Pathways courses in Video Production and Sound Engineering, NC Music, HNC Music, BA Applied Music and the MA Digital Production module all drawing to a close for our 47 students. A significant milestone was reached in the 2014/15 with the first international students studying with Shetland Arts via video link from Mareel.

The Bonhoga Education Programme received a grant of £9,210 in May from the Start programme of the Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts to develop creative activities and professional development sessions, in line with the Curriculum for Excellence, to accompany the exhibitions. This is in partnership with SIC Creative Links and will involve fostering relationships with five Shetland schools. June 2015 saw three informal learning opportunities led by Fraser Taylor to accompany his show at Bonhoga, which opened on 6 June. These were: 'Exploring Drawing' an experimental drawing workshop for people of all ages over 12, a CPD (Continuing Professional Development) event for artists and teachers and a gallery talk open to everyone. All were well attended.

Priority Area 3: Arts & Well-being

We will continue to lead in our partnership work in space2face, the restorative justice and arts programme. We will continue to advocate and support the provision of arts and cultural activities for older people in care settings, in partnership with Alzheimer Scotland, local and national arts professionals and Shetland Island Council's Social Care staff. This work will be in line with and contributing to international research in these areas.

**NA - Concerts /
Screenings / Exhibition
days**

**NA - Audience
attendances**

**48 Development
Sessions**

131 Participations

The space2face restorative arts project, in partnership with the Community Mediation Team (CMT), reached the end of its Creative Scotland two year funding in May 2015. In response to a talk given by the project coordinators to the Rotary Club in Shetland, the club donated £1,000 to enable it to continue until further funding is found. During this quarter, space2face continued to work with individual clients, an all girls' group and additionally expanded into a schools' project and work with returning prisoners. Space2face uses the arts alongside restorative approaches to work with people of all ages who are involved in conflict or harm in their lives. It provides space for participants to look at what has happened, how it has affected them and others, and what they need to be able to move on with their lives in a safer way.

The Arts in Care Settings with Older People strand of work continued to be jointly developed with five Shetland artists. Seven care settings have expressed an interest in being involved in creativity sessions which will start next quarter and will be run in partnership with Global Yell. In addition, Luminate (Scotland's festival for creativity and ageing) have agreed to fund up to £2500 towards an exchange of artwork between the care centres during October 2015.

The Arts in Community Care Setting work stream has been in an advanced stage of planning and development throughout this quarter. Work so far has included discussion and consultation with partners and with creative practitioners; identifying suitable practitioners to deliver activity; activity planning; liaising with creative practitioners and care settings in order to develop suitable timetables for delivery.

Priority Area 4: Development & support

The support of individuals and groups is integral to our work and includes arts practitioners and creative industries micro businesses, audience development and our formal and informal education work. It also includes staff and volunteer development.

**NA - Concerts /
Screenings / Exhibition
days**

**NA - Audience
attendances**

**16 Development
Sessions**

910 Participations

Evaluation and Development meetings with recipients of a Visual Art and Craft Award continued and the project was successful in obtaining £12,000 towards continuation in 2015-16. The remainder of the funding will be sourced, as in previous years, from SIC Economic Development. The scheme offers Shetland visual and craft artists, through a competitive process, a professional development bursary for the creative development of their work. The scheme is part of a Creative Scotland national devolved funding scheme.

The quarter has also seen the continuation of work in support of individual artists, creative groups and Creative Industry businesses, in terms of creative practice, funding and financial advice, and providing freelance opportunities.

Priority Area 5: Programme, Commissioning & Curation

This will include the programming of our cinema (in partnership with City Screen), gallery, theatre and auditorium (a range of local, national and international promoters including Shetland Folk Festival, and DF concerts); Wordplay and Screenplay, our highly successful book and film festivals; the Shetland International Guitar Festival, curated by Martin Taylor; and Fiddle Frenzy, curated by Bethany and Jenna Reid. We will also develop creative residencies in partnership with local and national bodies (including Scottish Chamber Orchestra, National Theatre of Scotland, Scottish Book Trust) and extend our regional, national and international reach through the development of a variety of festivals and events, including a Northern Isles Book Festival, in collaboration with key partners in Orkney and Shetland and the hosting of a one off Nordic/Tartan Crime Noir Conference in November 2015.

**993 Concerts /
Screenings / Exhibition
days**

**38,360 Audience
attendances**

**59 Development
Sessions**

1325 Participations

Mareel hosted two music festivals in this quarter; the Shetland Folk Festival in April and the Jazz Festival in June. Other notable music events held in Mareel included Dean Owens and the Whiskey Hearts, The North Ness Boys, Bruce Molsky, Admiral Fallow, The New Rope String Band, Them Beatles and Lau. In the majority of cases the event in Mareel allowed for further events by visiting artists to take place in rural locations. Informal music events In

Mareel included Student Showcase concerts, Cafe Bar Open Mic nights, DJ events and Singer Songwriter session.

The Garrison Theatre hosted the annual Young Fiddler of the Year competition, this year with over 100 entrants.

In terms of drama the award winning multimedia touring theatre production of 'Last Dream on Earth' took place in Mareel in April and received a very positive critical response. Shetland ForWird's production of 'Tell Wis' proved to be immensely popular with 3 sold out shows at the Garrison Theatre in June.

Mareel's cinema offering continued to attract large audiences with a broad mix of Hollywood, Independent and locally produced content.

Shetland Arts' exhibition programme continued with two exhibitions at Bonhoga Gallery. This quarter began with "Malakoff - Shetland Open Winners", which featured new work created by the four winners of the 2013 Open, using local marine engineering firm, Malkoff as their starting point. The lower gallery in Bonhoga also featured an exhibition of the Shetland Bairns Open - photography on the theme of "Industry". The quarter closed with "Shadowed Valley" by interdisciplinary artist, Fraser Taylor, which grew out of his sabbatical, exploring the history of Weisdale - the "Shadowed Valley", of John J Graham's novel of that title. A new exhibition was also hung in the upper cafe bar, Mareel. "Eye Can Draw" features work created using eye tracking technology, by Dawson Murray and Jackie Smith. Both artists have multiple sclerosis and have benefited from the development of this technology as a means to re-engage with direct drawing, as part of a project at Dundee Contemporary Arts Print Studio.

The Pelagic Sculpture Partnership, comprising Shetland Catch, Shetland Fish Producers' Organisation, Lerwick Port Authority and LHD. In association with Shetland Arts, they have just begun the commissioning process for a site specific artwork for Lerwick harbour front. The sculpture will reflect and celebrate Shetland's long association with the pelagic fishing industry. The artist will be appointed through a competitive process and, if not a resident, will be expected to spend 10 weeks of his or her time in residency in Shetland researching the subject and taking part in workshops with the community. The project is sponsored by the four businesses partners with match grant funding of £40,000 from Arts and Business Scotland. Shetland Arts sourced the funding and is managing the project. The artist will be appointed in August 2015 and the sculpture complete by June 2016.

The first quarter has seen the confirmation of funding from the Scottish Book Trust Live Literature Funding and work to engage a storyteller, to run a residency in Shetland Primary Schools in September 2015 in partnership with SIC Creative Links.

Work has continued in respect of planning and preparation for Shetland Noir - liaising with other festivals of Crime Fiction, especially Bristol Crimefest and Bloody Scotland; ongoing discussions and communication with crime fiction writers and other delegates; development

of the festival programme, in discussion with partners and participants; securing sponsorship and other funding; arranging and booking travel and accommodation for festival guests.

Priority Area 6: Recording, Broadcast and Intellectual Property

Maximising Mareel's digital production facilities (principally for music and video recording and broadcast), we will provide opportunities for musicians and producers to generate revenue and Intellectual Property. Shetland Arts will continue to create, protect and monetize it's own Intellectual Property assets in partnership with Shetland Arts Intellectual Property Community Interest Company.

**NA - Concerts /
Screenings / Exhibition
days**

**NA - Audience
attendances**

**34 Development
Sessions**

107 Participations

Mareel's recording studio has had a busy few months, in particular with popular local country gospel group "The North Ness Boys" recording their new album. The group spent much of April laying down tracks with mixing sessions extending into May.

Music and Video students made heavy use of the recording studio and video production facilities as the final deadlines for end of academic year submissions approached in June and the studio hosted Anderson High School's annual two day recording session as part of 'Activities Week'.

Case Study: Shetland Youth Theatre

Remote by Stef Smith at National Theatre Connections Regional Festival, Inverness

12 -17 April 2015

Shetland Youth Theatre has participated in Connections on many occasions over the years and considers it to be of vital importance in embracing groups from peripheral areas into the core of an event of international importance.



There was a company of 21 young people (aged 11 – 19) involved in the rehearsal process and performances in Shetland. The company worked intensively over 5 weeks and performed three times to appreciative audiences. The show was very well received by the visiting assessor Russell Bolam. Because the youth theatre only meets during projects, workshop activity (skill development sessions) are included in the rehearsal process. The company has an inclusive policy that guarantees

participation to any young person who can commit to the rehearsal schedule. Due to this policy and other activities that make demands on young people, the make-up of the company is quite fluid, with a mixture of returnees and new faces. This places demands on the rehearsal process but keeps the company fresh and vibrant. For this production six participants were new to the group.

Because it has been three years since our last participation in Connections, involvement was a new experience for all but three of the company. This generated a huge enthusiasm and excitement amongst the group. They were totally engaged with the play, the process and the festival and were delighted by the presence of Russell ('coming all the way up here') and by his appreciation of the production.

The trip to Eden Court Theatre in Inverness was a huge success. Because of holiday dates, there had only been minimal rehearsal sessions before travel but these were invaluable. The company picked up on some of the suggestions made in the show assessment report. Due to two members of the company being unavailable for the Inverness dates, additional changes had to be made. Rehearsing these changes refreshed the production and Eden Court making a rehearsal space available meant that the quality of the Inverness performance surpassed that of Shetland. This meant that instead of merely recreating a

piece, the whole project had a momentum and trajectory that kept the company focussed on the piece as well as on the excitement of being away.

We believe that if the young people are going to maximise the experience available to them, to justify the expense, and to develop from and add to the whole experience, that they should be resident for the duration of the festival. Shetland Youth Theatre (19 young people and 4 group leaders) travelled overnight on the ferry to Aberdeen (12 hours), caught the train to Inverness and stayed in the Youth Hostel for 4 nights before travelling back.

While in Inverness the group members participated in the daily workshops that covered a variety of theatre skills. During these workshops they were tutored by different theatre professionals, and worked with members of other participating youth theatres. The company were also able to see all the other productions.

The company performed on the final night. The timetabling of this was excellent as it kept the group focussed on the activities and the purpose of the trip. The production played to a full house and received a standing ovation. For a group used to the less demonstrative Shetland audiences this was a major event in their lives.

The visit was an invaluable experience for all the participants, putting their work at the centre of a major event, developing individual skills and enabling the company to benchmark its own work against that of other companies. The feedback they received from everyone there was an important aspect of their individual and collective self esteem.

The organisation of the event by Eden Court staff was first class and helped all our young people feel that they had been part of something special.



Some comments from SYT participants following trip to Inverness

'It really helped me with trying to be more socially active and even though it took me a while, it was great to be able to come out of my shell with a lot of people.'

'The National Theatre Connections trip was an extremely useful and fun one. It was refreshing to be able to take part in a drama event with people I knew whilst also meeting loads of new young people some of whom I have kept connection with beyond the festival. The workshops were also very useful for furthering my skills and preparing me for future auditions. It was interesting to see the other productions before presenting our own and through this it was made clear just how high the standard of Shetland acting was. It was lovely to have received a standing ovation from peers from other companies. I am so glad I got to go on this trip and am so proud of the company for making Shetland proud.'

'... it was absolutely awesome being able to perform in a theatre in front of a large audience..... enjoyed doing the make-up workshop and musical theatre.'

Case Study: Shetland Youth Arts Festival

22 - 23 May

Guest Case Study by Martin Summers,
Shetland Youth Services

"70 young people, 18 workshops, 6 art forms, 4 bands, 2 days and 1 gig"

In May 2015 Shetland hosted the first ever Cashback for Creativity Youth Arts Festival was held at Mareel, Shetland Museum and Islesburgh Complex. The weekend saw 70 young people from across the isles participate in a series of workshops including: drama, film and editing, songwriting, music, craft and dance.

On the Friday young people gathered at Mareel. Participants had pre-selected two workshops that they wanted to take part in as taster sessions to allow them to choose which they'd specialise in during the Saturday.

On the Friday evening young people gathered for a live music event organised by the Shetland Young Promoters Group featuring local bands including: AutoPilot, Mis Behavin', FB and the winner of the 2015 Battle of the Bands, Blind Summit. The gig showcased the range of talent on display and musical talent within the isles whilst providing an opportunity for many of the young people to experience their first live gig.

On the Saturday young people could specialise in an art form, and worked with the workshop providers to create a showcase to be shared at the end of



the Festival. This song was created by Singer Songwriter Lisa Ward and the young people participating in the performance and songwriting workshop. This piece was created and recorded within a four hour period, an example of the enthusiasm and hard work of the young people participating. Check out:

soundcloud.com/shetlandyouth/song-writing-workshop-good-things-happen



Colleagues from Skills Development Scotland were also in attendance and provided participants with the opportunity to try out the new My World of Work interactive pod in the upstairs foyer of Mareel. For young people interested in taken their passion and interest in the arts forward as a potential future career, the pod provided relevant information around the skills that they would need to do so.

Feedback from young people, parents/guardians and the wider community has been incredible. This project is a demonstration on how a range of partners can come together to ensure Youth Work opportunities reach the most far flung parts of Scotland through support from Cashback funding.



The project team would like to thank the workshop providers, staff team, partners and funders for their support. The event provided young people the opportunity to learn new skills and show of their creative talent, and we would hope that many of them will now connect into community based groups

to allow their creative talent to continue to flourish.

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