

Shetland *arts*

2020 - 2021: Quarter 4

Report of activity relating to Priority Areas of Activity Statements

Case Studies: Shetland Youth Theatre Connections, Show Us Shetland, Perimeter

Interim Key Performance Indicator Statistics (appendix)

Notable variances between Target and Actual KPIs (appendix)



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Priority Area: Youth Arts

Shetland has a vibrant Youth Arts scene provided by a range of individuals and groups. We will support and contribute to this provision, create and sustain engagement, and nurture creativity and talent through an annual programme of access-level cross-artform workshops, artform specific "intensives", high-quality music and drama productions and subsidised access to events and activities.

Q4 in numbers

0 Concerts / Screenings / Exhibition days
0 Audience attendances
32 Development Sessions
225 Participations

Q4 saw our **Youth Companies** move back online. **Shetland Youth Theatre Company** spent the term working with **Stephenie Pagulayan** towards a **National Theatre Connections** production. The first term saw the group working on casting, getting to grips with the script of **Tuesday** and working on read-throughs of the script. They returned to Mareel in person in March for a week's intensive rehearsal leading up to the filming of their production ready to share and submit to NT Connections.

Film Crew Jnr and **Snr** resumed working online with **Keiba Clubb**, building on their filmmaking and editing skills.

The **Youth Trad Big Band**, led by pianist **Harris Playfair** and fiddle player **Margaret Robertson** resumed in March with online sessions designed to teach young musicians new approaches to jazz and traditional music together with providing tutors with the opportunity to explore new ways to deliver music education online.

During Q4 we supported **Document Scotland** to offer young people the opportunity to work with them to capture their lives in Shetland, from a very personal perspective (See Case Study). Despite the challenges of taking photographs during lockdown, the work showed their individual and unique talents and together built a fascinating picture of what their lives are like today. With no need for prior experience or professional photographic equipment, the young people were encouraged to find new ways to tell stories through their pictures, while giving a glimpse into their worlds during these strange and challenging times. They presented their work at an online showcase in March, alongside Shetland work by established documentary photographers.



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Priority Area: Education & Learning

Our Education & Learning programme is diverse and offers provision at all levels. From the highly successful schools outreach work run from Bonhoga, through to our formal education programme delivered under contract and in partnership with Shetland College UHI, and informal opportunities such as regular cross-artform workshops, business development, masterclasses and Creative Insight events.

Q4 in numbers

0 Concerts / Screenings / Exhibition days

0 Audience attendances

367 Development Sessions

1,142 Participations

The majority of Q4 has been spent in lockdown for all our students but learning has continued online via video conferencing and the use of virtual learning environments. This has been a challenging time for staff and students and real time participation from students has had poor uptake with most students choosing to complete work in their own time using non-synchronous resources posted online.

3rd year Skills for Work (SFW) students have been working on existing film footage and music recordings produced before the COVID lockdown limited access to Mareel. With the schools going back in April, the S3 SFW students will be returning to Mareel to complete practical elements of their coursework. We are predicting a high pass rate for the course.

4th year SFW students completed their course online during the lockdown. Despite the limitations of lockdown the students successfully produced this promotional video aimed at next years intake of SFW students <https://fb.watch/56ozJI3Z-O/>

NC Creative Industries and **HNC Music** Students have found the second lockdown particularly hard and there has been a noticeable dip in attendance of online classes. The Mareel team have been understanding of students' individual needs, and have adapted the teaching to try and accommodate all students. This has resulted in requests for a lot of individual 1-2-1 sessions with students; although time consuming, has meant that students have received the necessary support to help them through trying times. Students returned to Mareel for one day a week at the end of March for practical coursework that could not be completed online.

BA Applied Music students are used to working online as these are networked courses delivered through VC across numerous UHI campuses. Students have missed having access to Mareel for performance opportunities and have all expressed interest in performing at a student event in Mareel as soon as is practical.

BA Film students completed an online residency with participants from all over Scotland working online to produce and edit live event recordings under 'real world' timescales and conditions.



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MA recording and production students all submitted their first two assignments on time and are currently working on implementation of their recording projects. The online nature of the course has meant that COVID restrictions have had limited impact on the course delivery.

MA Film and Creative Practice students completed the 'conceptualisation' part of their module and are scheduled to begin work on their films over the Easter holiday.

Priority Area: Arts & Well-being

The value of arts to personal and community development is becoming increasingly recognised in Shetland. We will continue to develop our Arts & Wellbeing work through the support of groups which use the arts as a vehicle to wellbeing, providing activities for individuals in care settings and providing free access to events or activities for individuals who have been referred by medical, care or support professionals.

Q4 in numbers

0 Concerts / Screenings / Exhibition days

0 Audience attendances

9 Development Sessions

144 Participations

Q4 saw a break in our Wellbeing Writing and Choir classes due to tutor availability. The focus this quarter was on the ever popular **Mindful Makkin** with **Helen Robertson**, weekly knitting sessions introducing small and simple new projects weekly with an emphasis on relaxation. This class continued to be very popular, selling out almost immediately to a mix of local, national and international participants.



"Helen is such a lovely, gentle person who made each of the group feel welcome and valued...I've just finished my third, and final, week and am attaching a photo of what I achieved! What you can't see is the peaceful feeling I have now...congratulations to Shetland Arts for such an innovative way of bringing "mindful maakin" and Shetland to the world" (participant quote).

"The premise of the class is very appropriate for someone who has been knitting for a very long time without evaluating the experience as deeply as the art deserves" (participant quote))

Priority Area: Development & support

The development and support of individuals and groups, along with the promotion of excellence and experimentation, is integral to our work. This includes the provision of funding both directly and through signposting, access to equipment and facilities, paid work placements, volunteering opportunities, commissioning productions and providing support and training to allow creatives to access new markets. We will continue to provide numerous paid opportunities for freelance artists, education staff and performers.

Q4 in numbers

31 Concerts / Screenings / Exhibition days

773 Audience attendances

22 Development Sessions

173 Participations

Unlocking our Sound Heritage online workshops continued in January. In these workshops participants explored using the National Library of Scotland Sound Archive as inspiration for creating new spoken word poetry and song. Following on from the workshops each participant has the opportunity to contribute to the recorded piece.

The 2nd round of the **Visual Artist and Craft Makers Awards** took place in March with awards being made to 9 local artists.

In March we launched our **'Upskilling'** training programme for Creative Practitioners supported by the Creative Scotland Performance Arts Venues Relief Fund. There are three strands to this work: Filing Live Performance, Streaming Live Performance and Community Arts Practice.

The **Upskilling: Filming Live Performance** professional development course, led by local film and TV producer **Simon Thompson** is designed to support filmmakers to develop skills relating to multi-camera filming and editing of live performances. 6 filmmakers with professional experience will participate in the training and work together as a 'production crew' to film live bands and drama productions commissioned by Shetland Arts as part of the Refresh Now project (see Programming section)

The **Upskilling: Community Arts Practice** sessions, led by registered music therapist **Alice Ritch**, will facilitate freelance arts practitioners to connect, share their new skills and experiences and gain support from each other. The workshops are designed to strengthen relationships between practitioners, acknowledge and celebrate the work that they do and to give space for people to focus on their own wellbeing practices.

The **Upskilling: Streaming Live Performance** in partnership with pioneering online broadcast company **Inner Ear**, offers performance artists professional development training in the use of streaming equipment and online broadcast channels to help them reach new audiences. Participants will perform at a series of live streamed events later in the year.



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Priority Area: Programming

We offer a varied and engaging programme of events, exhibitions, screenings and festivals across a range of artforms, including film, music, drama, literature, visual art, craft, dance and digital. We also provide spaces and support for other promoters and groups to stage their shows.

Q4 in numbers

74 Concerts / Screenings / Exhibition days
2,115 Audience attendances
1 Development Sessions
54 Participations

VISUAL ART

PERIMETER, our temporary outdoor exhibition space for new work by local artists, continued in January with ***The Last Tree in Scotland***, by Callum Moncrieff. Made from the bleached discards of the seasonal pursuit of gardening, these thinnings took on a new and hopeful form in the Perimeter space, sculpted into a lurching amorphous body that looked like it was caught on the wind. Lit from beneath the work was both dramatic and graceful, a beautiful structure that filled the space, changing throughout the exhibition as it was tweaked and modified by the artist.

In February ***Unknown Caller***, an installation by Fine Art student Claire Davenport, gave a very different feel to the space. The projected animation, made up of over fifty drawings on lined paper, created a short narrative based around the Hillhead phone box. The work evolved through the recent period of lockdown... with restrictions limiting Claire to her local area, she found herself reimagining it in new ways and exploring the streets with a new energy. The repetitive process of walking these 'daily exercise' routes aligns itself perfectly with the repetitive nature of the stop frame animation and resulted in an artwork that was both meditative and mysterious.

This contrasted again with the following (and final) installation in March by Joyce Davies. ***Doun the Hoose***, an explosion of colour and imagery with spoken word accompaniment gave the space a very spiritual feeling of a chapel or shrine. Joyce's journey to becoming an artist began at Well-being classes at Mareel in 2019 and since then she has grown as a writer and visual artist, now with a prolific output. Joyce filled every window pane in the greenhouse space with a painted acetate panel, each connecting to her strong sense of home which holds great meaning for her. The space, lit from within, looked spectacular at night time, like a beacon, and was a fitting end to this season of exhibitions.

Alongside Perimeter, the **LOCUS** public art project planning continued, with funding for two additional artworks added to the trail. For these, both murals, four designs were commissioned and a public vote in late February decided the winning two. These will be painted in July/August this year, shortly after the install of the four sculptural works in the trail, and will be accompanied by the trail map which is currently being designed by local design student Chloe Keppie.



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Following a successful funding bid to the British Council we have been able to advertise **X-CHANGE**, a partnership between Shetland Arts (Shetland) and McNay Art Museum (San Antonio, Texas). It is an artist residency/exchange opportunity exploring the extraction economy and the environment, funded by The British Council and Creative Scotland with support from Art Fund (UK) and Association of Art Museum Curators (US). The project aims to connect two artists/initiatives, with the scope to work digitally and/or with moving image in these two settings, to explore themes around the economics of the natural resources in these distinct geographic areas within the context of the global environmental emergency. More news on this next Quarter...

MUSIC

Refresh Now, our new commissions funded by the Creative Scotland Performance Arts Venues Relief Fund moved forward with the five works in the first round being researched, composed, designed, animated, recorded and edited by the artists involved, ready for screening and exhibiting in April.

The second round, **Refresh Now Music**, focused on creating opportunities for bands in Shetland who have not been able to perform live because of Covid and who have ambitions to record and promote their music further afield and online. Five bands were awarded commissions - **Peter Alec Trio, Ten Tonne Dozer, The Stoals, SHEER** and **Grimlok** and invited to prepare and perform a 30 minute set which was filmed and recorded live. The bands worked with SADA technicians and the Mareel Recording Studio to produce a Live EP from this event. The filming and editing of each band's performance was produced as part of an upskilling opportunity for film makers in Shetland, organised by Creative Opportunities and led by **Simon Thompson**. Film makers **Keiba Clubb, Vaila Walterson, Liz Musser, Dave Donaldson** and **Jonathan Bulter** were each given specific bands to work with and are producing five very different and individually fitting live performance films which will be released online in April.

Preparations for the third strand of commissioning, **Refresh Now Garrison**, is underway, with the four companies involved casting their shows and beginning rehearsals. The companies awarded commissions are; **Da Choys (Jacqueline Birnie and Kathy Hubbard), Islesburgh Drama Group, John Haswell** and **The Imposters**. Each group is working within the parameters set by our Covid-safe performance policies for the Garrison and will prepare a piece of work up to 1 hour long. These pieces will be filmed and edited by the film-makers taking part in the upskilling opportunity and screened throughout April.



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Priority Area: Mareel Recording Studio

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.

Q4 in numbers

0 Concerts / Screenings / Exhibition days

0 Audience attendances

35 Development Sessions

73 Participations

Q4 was a relatively busy quarter at Mareel Recording Studio. Throughout February, recording sessions took place for **Unlocking Our Sound Heritage**, a SADA-supported project led by **Jenny Sturgeon** in conjunction with the **National Library of Scotland**. Songwriting and sound-design workshop participants met at Mareel to record their contributions to a larger soundscape which will be premiered online in May.

Our own **Refresh Now** commissioning program necessitated the live recording of band performances at Mareel throughout March. An open call to artists led to the selection of five bands who were each invited to produce a live performance film in the Mareel Auditorium, with all audio production, mixing and mastering taking place in the Mareel Recording Studio. The finished films will premiere online in April 2021.



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Case Study: Shetland Youth Theatre Connections



Last year, **Shetland Youth Theatre Company** were selected to take part in **National Theatre Connections**, during Q4 they have mostly been online, working on casting, read-throughs and rehearsing their production with Director **Stephenie Pagulayan**.

Every year the National Theatre commissions ten new plays, bringing together some of the UK's most exciting writers with the next generation of theatre-makers.

Shetland Youth Theatre chose **Tuesday** by Alison Carr, a light, playful and slightly sci-fi production, focussed on the confusion when a rip in the multiverse sucks up school staff and pupils, whilst also raining down new people. *"The play touches on themes of friendship, sibling love, family, identity, grief, bullying, loneliness and responsibility"*.

The participants relished the opportunity to meet again in person for the week-long intensive in March and worked very hard, recording a film to be screened as part of the production as well as rehearsing for the performance. The production was performed to an empty auditorium and recorded live in a multi-camera shoot. Their production of **Tuesday** will be screened nationally as part of the National Theatre Connections online event in June and we hope to also host a local screening when Mareel reopens.

Case Study: Show Us Shetland

In Q4 we supported **Document Scotland** to reach out to young people in Shetland for [Show Us Shetland](#). The brief was simple: use a camera or smartphone to explore where you live and interpret that through individual pictures or a series of images. Following an initial workshop, the work was made during February and early March 2021. The young people were keen to show the reality of their lives rather than the picture postcard image so often seen of Shetland and produced a range of diverse, insightful and interesting photography. There followed an online group curating session where the photographers talked about their work and the inspiration behind it.



© Lucy Renwick



© Martha Brown



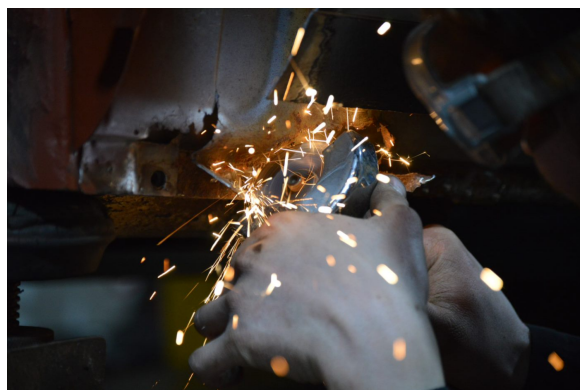
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© Katrena Anderson

"I really enjoyed being part of this project and I'd like to thank you for creating this opportunity. I found the work of others inspiring, and even found myself sketching down compositions. I'll be sure to keep my eye out for future projects." (Kiy Rafferty).

Document Scotland then curated their work into an [online event](#), alongside the Shetland work of Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert, Tom Kidd, Craig Easton and MAP6 Collective photographers Heather Shuker and Richard Chivers.

The young photographers were: Aileen Cumming, Freya Deyell, Kailee Tait, Katrena Anderson, Kiera Nicolson, Kiy Rafferty, Lucy Renwick, Martha Brown and Sophie Manson.

Case Study: Perimeter



Perimeter was a temporary outdoor exhibition space showcasing new contemporary art, conceived in September 2020 at a time when our exhibition spaces were closed. The small, basic greenhouse was modified to withstand high winds by our ingenious technician Angus, and installed in the car park at Mareel. The greenhouse was locked and viewable from the outside only by passers-by at any time of the day or night.



A small programme of exhibitions was developed, focusing on new work made by local artists addressing the strange times we found ourselves in, with each exhibition carrying a fee of £300 to support the development of new work. The space gave us the opportunity to showcase work in a safe environment, while being an installation in itself, a draw for people returning to Mareel as it reopened, to see something new, unusual, fresh and challenging.

The first show was **Ways of Seeing** by Shetland-based artist **Vivian Ross-Smith** in October. This was an extension of her work from July 2020 in which she commandeered the Shetland Webcam network to make a performance piece exploring accessibility of the art world, perceptions of place and her identity as an islander. Within the Perimeter space, Vivian showed a montage of her

webcam footage alongside 'performances' where she occupied the space herself in 'wearable paintings', further exploring the conventions of viewing art.



Following this, the space was used to showcase work by **MAMhouss** who had just completed a month-long residency at The Booth studio in Scalloway. MAMhouss is a collective of artists, writers and makers who aim to navigate and combine parenting with creative practice. Their work is driven by dialogue with a wider community, particularly a community under-represented or an otherwise non-traditional art audience. Their residency, and subsequent Perimeter exhibition, **A Moment in Time**, was a playful installation of drawing, sculpture, jewellery and film engaging

with a social and emotional response to the pandemic. A small interactive event beyond the Perimeter space gave passers-by the opportunity to add their feelings in chalk on the pavement, providing a poignant reflection of the impact of Covid.



In December, Perimeter was turned into a festive audio-visual spectacle to light up Christmas 2020 through a collaborative partnership between SADA and local graphic artist **Jono Sandilands**.

Jono creates work at the intersection of design, printmaking and technology, creating a relationship between the tangible and digital, and in the process exploring interaction and play. For **Sounding Joy**, each of his six electro-conductive paint motifs installed on the surface of the greenhouse triggered a separate Christmas song to play on speakers inside, further triggering the LED light display. The

resulting installation, activated by hovering a hand over each conductive artwork, was a giant, uplifting, Covid-safe jukebox.



Artist **Callum Moncrieff** used the space in January 2021 to create a sculptural installation, **The Last Tree in Scotland**. This work used bleached discards of the seasonal pursuit of gardening, tree thinnings collected by the artist and reassembled into a new and hopeful form within the Perimeter space. The elegant sculptural structure morphed through time with repeated visits from the artist, creating new shapes that gave life to the work, and the organic structure contrasted with both the framework of the greenhouse and Mareel in a visually striking way.



Through February the exhibition space was further transformed, by Fine-Art student and writer Claire Davenport. Her animated story **Unknown Caller** was created using over fifty line drawings created a short narrative based around the Hillhead phone box (see left). The work evolved through the recent period of lockdown. With restrictions limiting Claire to her local area, she found herself reimagining it in new ways and exploring the streets with a new energy. This presented a new opportunity for Claire to experiment with stop-frame animation.



The last in the series of exhibitions in the Perimeter space was by artist and writer **Joyce Davies**. Joyce's practice has evolved through well-being classes at Shetland Arts and since then her work has been exhibited internationally. She explores lived experiences with deep emotion and boundless visual imagination. Having a memory that is made up of vivid images, Joyce thinks in pictures, and she shares these in a very honest way in her work.

For Perimeter, Joyce created **Doun the Hoose**, a meditation on 'home'. Filling every panel of the greenhouse with pictures painted on acetate, she combined this visual spectacle with an audio piece voiced by herself. The overall effect was of

a religious shrine, reflecting Joyce's spirituality and love of churches, and offered a contemplative focus to themes surrounding the pandemic and our responses to it.

It's hoped that the Perimeter space might reappear somewhere else, sometime in the future, but for now the greenhouse has been retired. As an innovative space for showcasing the talent of our local artists and makers, supporting the creation of work in response to the current circumstances, it has been an enormously powerful 'test-tube' space and platform for a new way to engage with contemporary art.

Jane Matthews, Exhibition Manager
2021

Indicative 2020/21 KPIs	Concerts, Screenings, Exhibition Days					Audience attendances					Development Sessions					Participations				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
1. Youth Arts	11	2	0	0	13	3944	44	0	0	3988	39	21	13	32	105	310	155	111	225	801
2. Education & Learning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	264	133	487	367	1251	855	584	1481	1142	4062
3. Arts & Well-being	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	23	25	9	83	1104	486	514	144	2248
4. Development & Support	0	62	100	31	193	0	798	2543	773	4114	9	4	11	22	46	9	4	55	173	241
5. Programming	17	106	402	74	599	5288	4108	31277	2115	42788	4	1	4	1	10	162	73	223	54	512
6. Recording Studio	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2	35	42	0	7	4	73	84
Programme Total	28	170	502	105	805	9232	4950	33820	2888	50890	342	187	542	466	1537	2440	1309	2388	1811	7948
SCT Annual Target					4229					161112					2218					20902
% of SCT Target					19.0%					31.6%					69.3%					38.0%

Notable variances between Target and Actual KPIs

20/21 total KPIs	Target*	Actual	% Achieved
Concerts / Screenings / Exhibition days	4,229	805	19%
Audience Attendances	161,112	50,890	31.6%
Development Sessions	2,218	1,537	69.3%
Participations	20,902	7948	38%
Practitioners supported	1,900	509	26.8%
Groups supported	200	115	57.5%
Micro businesses supported	73	48	65.8%
Total voluntary hours	2,000	149	7.5%

* Targets as set in 2019

The actual KPIs are all considerably lower than target KPIs due to Covid 19 pandemic restrictions with reduced cinema, festival and live event programming particularly impacting the year-end percentages achieved.

Much of our activity continued online hence the still relatively strong KPIs in areas such as Development Sessions delivered. Furthermore, despite an overall reduction of performance events, many individual events were able to reach a wide audience via online platforms.

In summary, we were able to adapt and continue with all our Priority Area workstreams via online delivery or with a reduced, socially distanced capacity.



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