

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Barbican Centre Board	12 July 2017
<b>Subject:</b> Creative Learning Board Report	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Sean Gregory, Director of Learning and Engagement Jenny Mollica, Head of Creative Learning	<b>For Information</b>

## **Summary**

This report provides an overview of the Creative Learning department's strategy and planning, within the period July 2016 – June 2017. It examines our current developments and the challenges and opportunities that are facing our own work.

A primary focus of this year has been on the review and consolidation of our five priority areas; embedding the new strategic plan into our ethos and programming, refining our messaging, and re-organising our staffing and resources to best meet the operational and programmatic needs of Creative Learning, as well as the Barbican and Guildhall School.

In addition, the 2016/17 academic year has seen considerable incremental growth and the launch of some key new strategic initiatives (case studied in this report), which have provided the building blocks for our newly aligned direction of travel.

Over the course of 2016/17, the department reached 35,000 people, with 13,000 engaged as active participants in our programmes.

The report is divided into the following sections:

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- b. **Refining the narrative**
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**Recommendation**

Members are asked to: note the report

## **Main Report**

### **1. Background**

#### **a. Embedding the strategic plan**

Since launching our new Creative Learning plan in May 2016, a priority has been to see its full integration across the team and wider organisation, within all our work, planning and communications. This has been achieved through:

- re-organising the departmental structure and roles (see below) to best fulfil the needs of the plan;
- integrating the new strands of our work into our internal and external marketing and communications (see below);
- incorporating the new strands and strategic goals into staff appraisal objectives.

In addition, in April the department held its first all team away day for some time, bringing together colleagues in their newly configured roles to reflect on the 2016/17 year and plan ahead within the context of the strategic framework. The day provided a greatly valued opportunity to explore our priorities going forwards, and together to develop and agree our measures for success. In addition, as an action from the away day the team have been collaboratively developing a set of shared values and core principles, to better enable us to determine and articulate what is distinctive about our practice and approach for artists, audiences and participants.

#### **b. Refining the narrative**

An acknowledged necessity for our department, and the wider cultural learning sector as a whole, is the need for a more purposeful approach to how we tell the story; what we do and why we do it – and most importantly, what we want to change. Drawing out the key narratives and headlines, and evidencing the impact of our work for both internal and external stakeholders, in addition to the wider sector at large, must be a core part of our business.

At the end of 2016 we produced a suite of Creative Learning collateral, comprising of a new departmental brochure, year in review and suite of participant case studies and power point materials (see appendix D). The process provided us with a unique opportunity to distil down and articulate our activity and purpose for external audiences and stakeholders. Alongside this, a more intentional and considered approach on how we communicate in internal and external forums (all expertly supported by our Press and Marketing departments) has enabled a more professionalised and uniform approach to how we talk about our work.

#### **b. Reorganising the department**

A significant undertaking of 2016/17 has been the re-organisation of the department to best meet the needs of the new Strategic Plan (see appendix E for new department organogram). As such, from January 2017 we began a positive and cost-neutral re-organisation process. At time of writing the re-organisation is 92% complete (outstanding matters comprise of role re-grades that currently sit with the City of London's job evaluation team). This has been a considerable achievement; enabling us to:

- clarify roles and remits, ensuring they align with future priorities;

- update job titles and descriptions;
- identify gaps and create new roles where needed, including a vital new Schools Engagement post (to be recruited shortly);
- address the high number of fixed term contracts in the department;
- grow our total number of apprenticeships from 2 to 4;
- streamline the department into three core functions:
  - Projects & Programming,
  - Operations & Engagement,
  - Curriculum.

The above process has provided us with a vital opportunity to create the right conditions and framework for the team to flourish, placing us in as healthy and secure a position as possible for the coming period.

#### **d. Widening participation**

Over the course of 2016/17, we have revisited our position on widening participation, taking a more strategic approach. As such, we re-evaluated and streamlined our core, primary projects in this area, enabling us to more intentionally focus on the following key areas:

- Partnership models that enable us to signpost a diverse range of young musicians on to Junior Guildhall, CYM and other existing under 18 initiatives;
- Talent development models led by Creative Learning that have access agreement targets as their primary objectives, including Future Band, our new Song Writers collective, and our forthcoming Young Jazz Big Band;
- Models that specifically target disciplines that do not necessarily require several years of instrumental training from a very young age; including electronic music, jazz, acting, poetry and spoken word and technical theatre.

In addition, we have re-configured key staff roles that have particular responsibility to design and deliver our work in this area, incorporating this work more explicitly into their objectives, job descriptions and portfolios.

In 2018/19, we anticipate that this work will increasingly play a key role in the growing strategy around under 18s across the common platform and the City (see section 4, our future priorities).

#### **e. Breadth and depth**

A key priority for us over the 2016/17 year has been to begin to consolidate and rationalise the work we are doing across East London, within the context of our strategic ambition to expand our work regionally, nationally and internationally. This has led to the emergence of a dual approach to the way we deliver and maximise the impact of our models, ensuring an equal balance of breadth and depth - as follows:

- **Local, artist-led programmes**, including Associate Schools and many of our talent development programmes. These programmes require in-depth, artist-led, bespoke training and learning.

- **Large-scale, teacher mediated models**, including Barbican Box, that focus on providing a catalyst for creativity in others. Enabling us to work remotely and at scale through the professional development of artists and teachers.

Over the course of 2016/17, our work has started to see this dual approach in action, and we will continue to see further consolidation and growth over the 2017/18 period:

- **Local** - In September, we launched our new Associate Schools pilot programme, a new partnership model in East London that sees us working in-depth with three schools for a three year period (see section 3b for further details).
- **National** - In February, we launched our first ever regional pilot of Barbican Box, in Manchester. Generously funded by the Lord Mayor's Appeal, this pilot has come at a significant and very timely moment in our strategic development. Working in partnership with HOME, Complicite and UAL Awarding Body in Manchester, we are seeking to really test how the model works remotely, and whether the Barbican Box can be delivered at scale (see section 3b for further details).
- **International** - in January, the Director of Learning and Engagement and Head of Creative Learning were invited to South Korea by KACES (Korean Arts and Culture Education Service). Over the course of 4 days we delivered a series of presentations and workshops for arts education administrators, practitioners and policy makers in Seoul on the Barbican Box model and our approach to the training and development of artists working in participatory settings. KACES will shortly visit us back in London to continue to explore how our models could inspire and influence their own work and policy development.

The positioning of our work, and the potential for its local, national and international significance, will remain a significant priority for us in 2018/19 (see section 4).

#### **f. Diversity and inclusion**

Social inclusion remains at the very heart of what we do. We continue to strive to ensure that our work is relevant and accessible to a diverse range of individuals and communities. The past 12-18 months have seen us develop some particularly sophisticated mechanisms for engaging and enabling an even broader range of voices within the work of the department and organisation at large. This includes:

- community engagement work through our Barbican Ambassadors scheme (see section 3d);
- the development over the last 12 months of a new youth panel, which will launch this year (see sector 3c);
- the development and growth of our work with young people with learning disabilities, through our Associate Schools programme (see section 3b).

Each of these models has been designed to enable an authentic and meaningful dialogue and exchange with individuals and communities from a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences. This, in turn, has enabled us to better meet needs

and to understand gaps in staff skill set and expertise that we need to address. Professional development for Creative Learning staff over the past 6 months has included Makaton signing, autism awareness and trans awareness training. There is, as always, more work to be done and at the time of writing we are in the process of producing a departmental policy on equality and inclusivity that will audit our current position and outline future priorities for audiences, participants, artists and workforce.

#### **g. The cultural learning landscape**

We continue to work within the context of enormous change - in terms of the arts, the social and the educational landscape. From the EBacc to the new Post-16 Skills Plan, there are many shifting plates that invite us to continually re-examine what role an arts organisation can most usefully and meaningfully play to support schools and communities. Whilst this is nothing new, the pace of this change is significant, and ensuring that our department is able to positively respond to the world around it is paramount to all our Creative Learning work. Current drivers to our work aim to directly respond to these trends. We remain in a very strong place to respond to these changes, which includes how we:

- Convene and actively take part in Cultural Education Partnerships, networks and alliances across the City and East London, ensuring that we avoid duplication of activity, share best practice and understand the current trends within the sector. Includes:
  - City Learning and Engagement Forum
  - City of London Education Board
  - City Family Arts Network
  - East London Cultural Education Alliance
  - East London Music Education Hubs
  - Paul Hamlyn UK wide ArtWorks network
- Commission external consultancy and research as required. Includes:
  - A New Direction
  - Annabel Jackson Associates
  - Sound Connections
  - Paula Manning, Special Educational Needs consultant/ advisor
- Work with our network of partners across the common platform, the City, East London and beyond to develop a strategic and coordinated approach to delivering work and addressing sector-wide issues. Includes:
  - Creative Schools
  - Schools Visit Fund
  - Royal Opera House Thurrock Trailblazer

Within this context, a future priority for us is to continue to identify and articulate our place within the wider cultural learning ecology and what we can uniquely offer (see section 4).

## **2. Current Position**

**Creative Learning 2016/17 reach in numbers:**

- **35,000 people reached**
- **13,000 participants**
  
- **134** young people in our collectives and ensembles
- **24** Big Barbican Workshops in the 2016/17 academic year
- **37** schools from across **8** London Boroughs and Manchester
- **2551** students and **150** teachers in our **3** Associate Schools
- **30** Barbican Ambassadors
- **1,100** Creative Careers members
- **86** Barbican Blocks sessions
- **1,126** students taking part in Barbican Box

## **3. Overview of the 2016/17 Creative Learning programme**

### **a. Public Events**

**Goal:** *To deepen and enrich the experience of visiting the Barbican, Guildhall School and City of London for our audiences, empowering them to be creative and to discover more.*

#### ***Barbican Blocks***

In the spring we launched our brand new initiative for families, **Barbican Blocks**, in the foyer's Old Shop space. Designed for families with children aged five and under to explore, play and stretch their imaginations, Barbican Blocks has proved a much welcomed addition to our foyers. Since opening on 3 February, we have been at capacity every session with children and parents who live in and around the Barbican, and have positively welcomed this new Creative Learning commission for our tiniest visitors. Barbican Blocks is just one of many projects initiated by the Incubator over the last few months, and is a key contribution from Creative Learning towards the Barbican's newly established strategic goals. Barbican Blocks is delivered by experienced play workers and focuses on child-led play, aligning with the Early Years Foundation Stages framework. The initiative has supported the needs of local partners and stakeholders, including the Barbican Children's Library, the LSO and a local Barbican nursery. At time of writing, since the residency launched we have run 86 sessions, with approximately 3,800 individual attendances (average of 45 people per session). Customers have given Barbican Blocks an average customer satisfaction rating of 4.59 out of 5, with 100% of attendees stating that they felt it was important that the Barbican are doing this, and 100% stating that they feel welcomed at the Barbican.

***"I just wanted to say a big thank for you for putting on Barbican Blocks. I have been 3 times now with my 1 year old, and she absolutely loves it! It's made the Barbican a great place for us to go during the week.***

***[...] I've told lots of parent friends about both events – they're all surprised to hear that the Barbican is so baby friendly but many have since visited.***

***Long may it continue! And a huge thanks to whoever puts these events on.”***

*Customer feedback  
Barbican Blocks*

### ***Beyond Barbican***

- The Barbican’s new pilot festival in October, **OpenFest**, attracted approximately 5,000 visitors. Presenting work from East London communities, the festival aimed to engage diverse audiences from Waltham Forest and Barking and Dagenham on site at the Barbican. A range of free workshops, performances and activities were programmed across the Barbican Foyers. Creative Learning highlights included: free Framed Film Club children’s screenings and workshops, Barbican Young Poets and Junior Poets, Pop Up Parks and DrumWorks. In addition, Boy Blue Entertainment worked with Creative Learning to programme 7 community based dance groups to perform in the Barbican Hall. On the day, coaches brought in approximately 200 participants and community members from Barking and Dagenham, and 46 families from Tower Hamlets.
- The first **Barbican at the Broadway Festival** provided an opportunity to showcase both our learning and participation work, and that of our partners, in the borough of Barking and Dagenham. Students from Barking and Dagenham schools and colleges came together to present original theatre and music pieces produced through our flagship Barbican Box programme, in a showcase which saw over 100 young people performing. This was followed by a performance from the (Im)PossibleWorks Satellite Collective, who came back together to re-create a composition co-written for Dialogue 2017: *Where the Water Curves*. Our Associate, Drum Works, also performed with their participants from across the borough and beyond.
- The Earthly Paradise Tent at our 2016 **Walthamstow Garden Party** was programmed by Creative Learning, featuring youth focussed performances from 138 young and emerging artists, 66 of whom were local residents aged under 18 years. The programme also showcased 4 Waltham Forest based youth arts organisations and the winner of our new Ideas Kitchen initiative.

### ***Gallery Family Days and Events***

Creative Learning’s public programming around Barbican Art Gallery exhibitions has evolved significantly this year. Central to this success has been the creation of a workshop space within the Gallery, which has enabled us to programme regular weekend workshops for ticket holders, in addition to bookable schools workshops to accompany guided tours of exhibitions. The latter have been particularly popular with sixth form groups (The Vulgar workshop programme in particular attracting fashion students from schools in London and beyond). In addition, Family Days have included a **Japanese House Family Day**, which attracted 462 attendees and featured a range of free drop-in workshops and events across Barbican spaces, including ‘Make a Tiny Tea House’ and more.



***“Great fun and full of learning. My daughter and I enjoyed it very much.”***

*Customer feedback  
Gallery Family Day*

## **b. Schools & Colleges**

***Goal:*** *To create relevant and engaging learning experiences for local and national schools, empowering them to value and embed the arts and creativity across the national curriculum.*

### ***Associate Schools***

September saw us launch our new **Associate Schools** programme in East London. The initiative sees three schools sign up to a three year in-depth partnership with the Barbican and Guildhall School of Music & Drama. The Associate model involves a school-wide approach that aims to inspire teachers to harness the power and value of creativity within educational settings, and to widen access to the arts to all. Participating schools have the unique opportunity take part in a range of tailored arts and learning projects, designed to meet their school improvement priorities. Experimentation and evaluation underpins this programme, and for this pilot phase we are intentionally working with three schools from three distinctly different educational and geographical contexts: **Greenleaf Primary school in Waltham Forest, Sydney Russell secondary school in Dagenham** and the **Garden School in Hackney, for learners with autism** (background information on our three Associate Schools is included in appendix A).

Projects with our new Associate Schools to date have included creative coding sessions, teacher CPD and a termly assembly programme at The Garden for all students and their families to experience and access the arts.

The Associate Schools programme has come out of the growing recognition that the way we work with schools locally needs to change. Specifically, we acknowledge that in our schools work we need to:

- co-create programmes, responding to specific improvement priorities for schools;
- co-define a jointly agreed legacy from the outset;
- co-develop our own team’s skillset and expertise, providing time and opportunity for it to evolve and adapt with schools, in order to create relevant, accessible and innovative models.

At its heart, Associate Schools is a two-way learning process and dialogue. We provide learning opportunities that fit the needs of the school, and in exchange, schools provide professional development and up-to-date sector awareness for our Creative Learning staff. This has particularly been in the case in our work with the Garden School this year:

***“When arts organisations say the work is for SEN, they generally are not. The Barbican is different because it has tried to understand our way.***

*[...] It sets the agenda for a lot of things we do. Working with professional artists at the top of their game gives everyone the chance to celebrate the school and the children. It improves morale. It is good for parents to see their children having access to the facilities that mainstream children have. The children gain from getting out of the school and meeting other adults apart from the school teachers. Parents tend to lack the funds and the courage to take the children out in public, so the families often spend long periods of time at home. All the children are on free school meals and many come to school using Council transport. It is difficult for our families to access anything in the community because their children's behaviour is socially unacceptable.*

*[...] It feels like an equal partnership. The Barbican have done the training. They are using our tools and are already very skilled at using them.*

*[...] There have been no behavioural problems at the Barbican at all. One child, who has severe medical needs, gave the sign for 'home' when he was in the Barbican [...] When we move to the Barbican it is as if we are connected."*

*Annabel Jackson Associates  
Interview with Deborah Snowden (Dance Teacher) & Pat Quigley (Head of School),  
The Garden School (Special Education School) Hackney*

### **Barbican Box 2017**

It has been a notable year for Barbican Box. Alongside our Visual Arts, Theatre and Music boxes, this year saw the launch of our inaugural Barbican Box for primary schools, alongside our first regional pilot of the programme in Manchester. Over the six month process, 44 classes from 33 schools participated in the programme, from across 8 London boroughs and Manchester. All participating groups have received workshops from our inspirational team of artist mentors, educational resources, teacher CPD training, and tickets to performances/ exhibitions at the Barbican.

- This year's **Barbican Art Box** used Barbican Art Gallery exhibition **The Vulgar** as a catalyst for students' exploration of style and identity in London. Combining street and studio photography, the project culminated in an event in the spring that launched this year's publication **VULGRRR**, a fashion magazine filled with striking images created by the 128 secondary school pupils who took part in the project. The launch event was attended by over 60 pupils and a further 150 guests including their teachers, friends and families. The students' work is currently on exhibition in the Barbican's Cinema Café.
- This year's **Barbican Music Box** was delivered in partnership with Barbican Music associates, **Serious**. Students had the unique opportunity to work with Guildhall School graduate and beatbox artist **Bellatrix**, who curated a Box on the theme 'finding your voice'. Students performed their own group compositions to an audience of approximately 470 family and friends in the Barbican Hall, supported visually by animations created by BA and MA students from University of the Arts London.

- Our **Barbican Theatre Box** was curated by world renowned theatre director **Ivo van Hove**, who presented three productions in the Barbican Theatre this year. Ivo and designer Jan Versweyveld developed the contents of Barbican Box 2017, enabling students and teachers to explore Ivo's work through his process of theatre-making both with Toneelgroep Amsterdam, and with practitioners around the world.
- In the autumn we produced our inaugural **Barbican Primary Box**. Celebrating the 350th anniversary of the **Great Fire of London**, pupils created their own creative responses to the Great Fire, each grounded in storytelling, animation and film-making. In total, 5 classes from 3 primary schools from the City and East London took part, and we intend to expand the project further in 2017/18.
- Generous funding from the Lord Mayor's Appeal provided a highly valuable opportunity to test a regional expansion of Barbican Box. The pilot involved 4 schools and FE colleges from the Manchester area, in partnership with **Complicite**, **HOME** and **UAL Awarding Body**. In tandem with the pilot, we are engaging in consultancy with a range of potential national partners. The pilot has allowed us to robustly test how the Barbican Box model translates remotely beyond the Barbican and London, and is providing insights into a range of key areas of enquiry, including: needs analysis mapping in the regions, partnership working infrastructures, financial modelling, licensing, intellectual property and quality assurance.

***“Working with The Barbican and Complicite has been amazing. For students from a small town in the North West to be able to work with two world-known theatre establishments has really helped to put their learning into a wider context and establish aspirations beyond their local area. The students have been enthused and excited by the Complicite workshops, leaving them full of ideas and concepts they want to explore. The CPD and support provided for teachers has been outstanding too, it has given me the inspiration to try out new methods and explore different ways of working.”***

*Michelle Mahoney, Teacher of Dance and Performance,  
Carmel College, Manchester*

***‘Obviously you hear about all the things that happen in the world but you never really discuss it with your friends or anything. It’s quite nice to see what other people think about and to know that you’re not kind of alone.’***

*Jack and Grace, Students,  
Denton Community College, Manchester*

### **TeachMeets**

Our regular Teacher Preview Nights have quickly become established as valued opportunities for teachers to connect with the Barbican and each other. This spring we developed the model further, piloting a new type of teacher event. TeachMeets

are a recognised format for teachers to share skills and knowledge with each other, and combine a networking event with presentations by teachers on their own classroom practice. 45 teachers attended our first TeachMeet event in May, which was open to teachers from across all arts disciplines and other subject teachers looking to integrate the arts into their classrooms. The event linked with the recruitment launch of our 2018/19 Barbican Box and Young Creatives programmes, as well as providing an opportunity for teachers to attend an event or exhibition at The Barbican.

***“Slick, informative, inspirational”***

*Teacher feedback from our first TeachMeet event in May 2017*

### **c. Young Creatives**

***Goal:*** *To equip young people with the skills and progression routes they need in preparation for careers and training in the performing, creative and cultural sectors.*

#### ***Talent Development***

134 young people have taken part in our 2016/17 training programmes for young artists, which include Future Band, Young Reviewers, Young Visual Arts Group, (Im)Possibilities, Young Poets, Young Photographers, Young Programmers and Young Songwriters (participants statistics can be found in appendix B).

- The **Young Poets** programme saw 25 young people aged 17-25 from diverse, largely East London backgrounds participate in the six-month programme. This year, the Poets' showcase stepped up a notch, taking place at Milton Court Theatre to a sell-out audience. The Poets' work has been published in an anthology, ***An Orchestra of Feathers and Bone***, and a series of posters presenting their work was displayed around the centre. In addition, in August 2016, Jenny Mollica (Head of Creative Learning) and Kieron Rennie (Barbican Young Poet) discussed young people and creativity on BBC London Radio. Jenny and Kieron discussed the Barbican's Creative Learning offer, the challenges facing young people today and how the **Young Poets** scheme has helped Kieron move forward with his life.
- **Young Songwriters** is a new widening participation project. Working with a group of circa 20 young people, the programme is designed to respond to identified priorities for the Guildhall School to reach young people in East London who might not necessarily be thinking about further study at HE level. Through mentoring sessions, which include music talent and personal development, participants are being coached to create and write their own music, which will be performed at the Walthamstow Garden Party. The young people are coming into contact with the Guildhall School, being mentored by artists who teach at the school, in addition to being introduced to careers that exist within the arts.
- In May our **Young Visual Arts Group** presented ***Are You Sitting Comfortably?***, showcasing the work they have developed as a group since coming together in October. The showcase featured 11 original works from 13

young artists – and the group had input into the curation, planning, marketing and documentation of their event with support from Barbican staff.

- The 2017 **Chronic Youth Festival** took place on the weekend of 18 and 19 March. Curated entirely by our **Young Programmers**, a group of 16-25 year olds who meet regularly at the Barbican to learn about all aspects of film programming, distribution and marketing. The group selected films, supported with marketing and social media and helped to deliver the festival, including giving all on-stage introductions and leading Q&As. The festival focused on 'coming of age films'. Screenings were very well attended, with 420+ attendees each day (25% of whom were under 25), with 4 out of 6 screenings sold out. The young people chose to show a diverse range of work, including a programme of short films by young female filmmakers working today, and the UK premier of *Swagger*, a documentary depicting the lives of teenagers growing up in one of the most underprivileged neighbourhoods in France. The festival was rated 5 out of 5 by 73% of audiences.

***"I've participated in quite a few youth programmes and this is by far the best. People at other venues can't believe what we've done."***

*Participant  
Young Programmers*

***"Everyone I know is talking about this festival."***

*Sight and Sound journalist  
Chronic Youth Festival*

### **Youth Panel**

Young Londoners aged 14-to-25-years-old have been invited to apply to join the Barbican's first Youth Panel to help shape our work and embed youth voice and participation across the organisation. Members of the Barbican Youth Panel will meet once a month for a year to share their views on the arts programming and ethos of the organisation, working with departments ranging from Music and Theatre, to Marketing and Human Resources. They will also have the opportunity to get involved with major Barbican shows including art exhibition *Basquiat: Boom for Real!* opening in September, as well as gaining experience of teamwork, project management and leadership. There will be mentoring opportunities available, free tickets to some Barbican events, and travel expenses within London will be provided.

### **Creative Careers**

There are now over 1,100 participants aged 14-25 registered for our Creative Careers programme for young people and artists looking to pursue careers in the cultural and creative industries. Over the last year we ran 11 artist-led seminars that were attended by around 200 young people. Sessions have included:

- December 2016: **Networking** - Media consultant, David Thomas
- January 2017: **Producing - Music** with Barbican Contemporary Music Programmer, Chris Sharp

- March 2017: **Building your brand** with established companies Boiler Room, Village Underground & Vice

Of those that took part in the programme over the last year, 89% agreed that 'Participating has had a positive impact on my career in the arts'. Our online resource for Creative Careers was recently launched in March 2017 [creativecareers.barbican.org.uk](http://creativecareers.barbican.org.uk), providing an opportunity for young participants to explore other opportunities in the Barbican and across the arts sector as a whole.

***"It was really good to benefit and learn from experienced (practitioners), especially if you are thinking about a career in the arts"***

***"These sessions have allowed us to learn and interact with each other which has given me the confidence to progress in a road I thought was closed to me!"***

*Creative Career participants, 2016/17*

#### **d. Community**

**Goal:** *To nurture and develop relationships with local City and East London communities, widening access to the arts for everyone.*

#### ***Dialogue 2017***

The 2017 **Dialogue** project brought together community based groups with Guildhall School students and creative learning ensembles. Work culminated in two nights' of performances at the Broadway Theatre, Barking in February. Taking initial inspiration from Bedwyr Williams' Curve exhibition, *The Gulch*, this year's festival, entitled **Where the water curves**, included projects with homelessness charity St Mungo's, Barking and Dagenham based group Her Dynamic (a Somali Women's group), Broadway Playhouse (a group of young people with special needs) and Green Shoes (a mental health support group).

***"I can't think of another situation where I could be playing amongst such accomplished musicians, without fear of being embarrassed, where everyone is so friendly, helpful and kind."***

*Participant – The Messengers*

#### ***Beyond Barbican capacity building***

We have developed a number of initiatives designed to support established and grass roots organisations and local artists in Waltham Forest. These programmes aim to help build and develop the infrastructure in the borough to ensure the sustainability and continued development of initiatives including the Waltham Forest Garden Party. Our work has included:

- commissioning local artists to develop projects selected by the community through the Ideas Kitchen;

- a series of Community Masterclasses on aspects of business development and arts practice for practitioners in the borough;
- focussed, long-term planning with core Garden Party partners through action learning sets and mentoring.

Through these programmes we have built a network of over 120 local artists and organisations who remain engaged with our work in the borough. Waltham Forest Council have recently been awarded Arts Council/ Lottery Great Places funding to continue to develop initiatives such as these, and we are also now working in partnership with a local arts charity to build sustainable models for many of these programmes.

### ***Community Ambassadors***

In May this year, we recruited an additional 15 Community Ambassadors, raising our total number to 30. The Community Ambassadors are a diverse range of committed and passionate individuals who play a crucial role, connecting the communities of East London with our world class arts and learning offer. Their role involves visiting community groups to tell them about the Barbican, assisting those groups to attend events or signposting them to projects delivered by Creative Learning and carrying out evaluation to measure the impact our work is having on local communities. Our new cohort is incredibly diverse and includes individuals of Caribbean, African, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Australian, British, Afro-Latina and eastern European heritage. Our youngest Community Ambassador is 17 years old and our oldest is 62. 75% of the cohort live in east London with 25% living in Waltham Forest and 25% living in Barking and Dagenham – our two East London target boroughs.

### **e. Emerging and Practising Artists**

***Goal:*** *To support and develop artists in their creative and professional development, through a range of formal and informal pathways with the Guildhall School, Barbican and our partners.*

### ***Open Lab***

The Open Lab programme offers circa 15 weeks a year in the Pit Theatre to artists and companies, providing opportunities to explore, experiment and develop new ideas. In March, as part of the development of her forthcoming work *Smack That*, Dance Theatre artist Rhiannon Faith spent a week working with a cast of 7 women who have shared their stories of surviving domestic abuse. A collaborative project, *Smack That* is commissioned by Harlow Playhouse with the charity Safer Places, the leading care provider for all victims of gender-based violence throughout Essex. *Smack That* will appear at the Barbican in 2018 as part of the Art of Change season.

### ***BA Performance and Creative Enterprise / Masters in Leadership***

The BA (Hons) in Performance and Creative Enterprise (PACE) was launched in September 2015, and has now completed a very successful first two years of activity. PACE focuses on the following in particular: Cross-arts; New work; Enterprise & entrepreneurship skills; Socially-engaged practice; Bespoke learning opportunities.

The first cohort of 6 students, who offer a mix of spoken word, music and theatre practice, have forged ahead in their second year, with strong contributions to both the Dialogue and Curious festivals, as well as commissions from The Museum of London, Apples and Snakes, and Rich Mix. Meanwhile, the new cohort of 14 students, who started in September 2016, have produced some very high quality shows, working collaboratively with both in-house tutors, and practitioners such as Ned Glasier, Chetna Pandya and Endy Mckay. They are a highly entrepreneurial group of students with a particularly strong interest in socially-engaged practice.

September 2017 will see a third cohort of a **further 14 students** starting the programme, bringing the total number currently studying to 34, with three parallel cohorts of students on this three-year BA. The first set of 6 students will graduate in July 2018, and we would hope to continue to increase numbers at the current rate, so aiming for a total student cohort of circa 45 students in September 2018. By 2020, we anticipate that PACE students will have worked with up to 2000 young people, artists and participants, and that approximately 30 PACE alumni will be working in the sector.

The Masters in Leadership has had a particularly strong year. This year's **Curious** festival, which showcases the student's own artistic practice, will take place over three nights in the Barbican Exhibition Halls. We are now beginning the process of developing a new MA for projected launch in 2019, building on the existing practice in both PACE and Leadership.



#### 4. Our future priorities

- a) Continuing to define our position within the **wider cultural learning ecology** in London and beyond remains a significant priority. Knowledge and understanding of equivalent venue-based learning programmes - for example the South Bank, Tate, National Theatre, Roundhouse, Lyric Hammersmith, Sage Gateshead, Lincoln Center in New York, as well as Conservatoire outreach programmes - remain an important part of our strategic development. In 2017/18 we will undertake research and consultation with external partners and peers, in order to openly explore how our provision is perceived, examine our key strengths and opportunities and refine our priorities accordingly.
- b) Over the coming year and beyond we are committed to further developing our Community strand, specifically in growing our expertise and engagement in **socially-engaged** work. Building on the existing foundations of Dialogue, we are keen to review and develop the contexts in which we work across all the art forms, with a particular focus on **inter-generational** learning and applied settings such as **health and social care**. As such, we are currently exploring the feasibility of adapting our Associate Schools model to launch a new 'Associate Communities' scheme. As with Associate Schools, the model would still focus on in-depth partnership working over a three year period – but would be re-framed to explore a wide range of informal, socially engaged contexts, including hospitals and community centres. Within this context, it is also particularly important to us that we continue to strengthen relationships with our immediate neighbourhood communities. Building on recent successes such as Barbican Blocks, where we have experienced clear local demand, we are keen to achieve a greater balance in the work of our community programme across the City and East London.
- c) We will also be continuing to grow and develop our work with children and adults with **physical and learning disabilities**. We are keen to learn from the success of our work in the Garden School, and explore how this can be replicated and expanded to achieve greater reach with more SEN schools. Furthermore, through consultation with industry experts, we will continue to ensure that all our provision remains fully inclusive and welcoming to artists, audiences and participants, and to play an active part in organisational learning and development around learning disabilities.
- d) The momentum of cultural education partnership working through the CoL Learning & Engagement Forum in and around the **Cultural Hub** is encouraging us to re-consider our local provision, and the potential for cross-organisational working across Hub partners to create a **destination for learning within the City**. We are keen to ensure there is an equal balance to our offer across the City and East London, and to allocate sufficient dedicated staff time through roles including our Community Engagement Manager and Schools Engagement Manager (the latter to be appointed). These roles will primarily focus on developing potential around our relationships with local City

based schools and communities. In particular, the Cultural Hub offers two significant areas of potential for us:

- how partners within the Cultural Hub can work more effectively together in order to address social cohesion, social mobility and employability issues through cultural engagement;
- how partners within the Cultural Hub can collaborate to create a destination for cultural learning within the City.

- e) The Barbican Guildhall **Common Artistic Platform** also provides us with a unique opportunity to review a number of areas of shared priority, particularly around emerging strategies pertaining to our joint **creative enterprise, digital learning** and **under 18** provisions. We continue to ensure a coordinated and streamlined approach to professional development and widening participation across the Barbican and the School (and beyond), providing an incubator for the training and development of artists, teachers and cultural entrepreneurs.
- f) Early indications suggest that the Barbican Box pilot in Manchester has demonstrated high impact on pupils and teachers, and addressed need from local partners. We remain hugely committed to seeing our work increase its breadth and reach, and anticipate that Barbican Box will play a key role in facilitating the beginning of a national conversation with potential regional partners about **what role the Barbican and Guildhall School can play in cultural learning nationally**. As such, we hope to continue working regionally in 2018, alongside continuing to fundraise, consult and plan for an anticipated national expansion of the programme. Through partnership working, we aim to support the delivery of high quality arts education in the regions; building capacity within the sector (through the professional development of artists and teachers) and extending the reach of the Barbican and Guildhall School beyond its walls.
- g) The Barbican Blocks residency in the Old Shop space has provided us with a unique opportunity to test and develop an on-site provision for **families and early years**. We are currently in the process of exploring the feasibility for long-term use of the Old Shop space as a drop-in for under 5s, their families and carers, assessing the potential for a semi-permanent, pop-up installation in the space.
- h) The incubator facilitated 'Pit Shake-Up' project has provided us with a highly valuable opportunity to explore how the Open Lab programme can play into a wider infrastructure of **artist development** across the organisation, strengthening the offer and placing it within a more coherent framework. The new Pit Shake-Up programme will be built around three tiers of activity to create a clear and transparent developmental pathway. We anticipate that the forthcoming trials and pilots in this area during 2017/18 will provide significant learning and insights over the coming period and help to inform our Lab strategy going forwards.
- i) The proposed development of **a new MA in inter-disciplinary and socially engaged practice** will be a significant priority for us over the coming period. We are in the process of recruiting for a new Programme Leader to start in

September, who will be responsible for our Creative Learning undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum work (which includes the BA in Performance and Creative Enterprise, MMus Leadership and BMus Professional Studies, as well as our associated electives). This new post-holder will be responsible for leading on the development of the new MA and managing our curriculum team, reporting to the Head of Creative Learning.

- j) **Evaluation, research and advocacy** remain a key priority for us. Increasingly, the department has taken a highly reflective and iterative approach to the development of its models. An ongoing, evolving process of piloting, testing, evaluating and refining has enabled the success of many of our models, including Associate Schools and Barbican Box. This ethos of applied research is one that we are keen to continue to grow and embed, giving space for learning to inform our decision making at every juncture.

Within our working processes, we are now building on the strategic plan by identifying agreed Key Performance indicators and measures of success. We will review our standard data collection and evaluation toolkit, and take the opportunity to benchmark our practice against other arts and education sector organisations. Some structural changes in the team have increased our capacity for data analysis and reporting, and we plan to introduce regular impact reports alongside our current funder and stakeholder reporting. Finally, we are working alongside Communications and Marketing in a review of our stakeholder strategy, in order to take a more streamlined approach to invitations to events and sharings of our work and to establish a yearly stakeholder event to coincide with the launch of our new annual Year in Review publication.

## **5. Conclusion**

As shown, it has been a strong and fast-changing year for Creative Learning, consolidating the work of the department and managing the department through a period of transition and incremental expansion.

Whilst changing gears to better align Creative Learning with the strategic direction of the Barbican, Guildhall School and City of London, the past year has also enabled us to test many significant new projects and models, putting into place a number of important building blocks that enable us to achieve our ambitions.

In particular, this period has allowed us to pursue some subtle yet significant re-adjustments in our thinking and planning. A focus on:

- what we want to **change**, not just what we want to **do**;
- achieving a greater balance of **breadth** and **depth** in our scope;
- achieving a greater balance in the **social** and **educational** drivers to our work;
- a more developed understanding of **our own narrative** and, going forward, how we can harness its powerful potential to inspire, influence and catalyse change.

So much remains unknown to us at this stage – from the long-term consequences of the EBacc to the impact of the Post-16 Skills Plan. As such, it is vital that we continue to develop models that allow us to respond flexibly and with agility to a rapidly changing world, educationally, socially, artistically.

Alongside all the above, we have – and will continue to - consolidate, streamline and refine; to maximise our resources in order to make space for new and emerging strategic priorities within the context of tight economic times. In addition, it is vital that we continue to actively apply research and evaluation into our thinking and planning, allowing learning to directly inform and guide our decision making at every juncture.

And finally, as we continue to orientate ourselves, it remains important for us to assess and identify Creative Learning's position within the wider ecology; understanding the landscape and what we uniquely have to offer locally, pan London, nationally and internationally – today, and into the future.

## **6. Questions**

- a) What is the balance that we want to achieve between continuing our work in East London, and growing our work pan London and nationally?
- b) What is the balance that we want to achieve between core, established programmes and new work?
- c) What is the Board's perception of the role that Creative Learning can play within the wider ecology – across London and nationally?
- d) What is the role that research can play in the development of Creative Learning's work?

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