



Final Evaluation Report



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Project funded by:





INTRODUCTION

Between December 2011 and May 2013 Trinity Community Arts (TCA) delivered the Bridges Project - a programme of accessible arts workshops using spoken word, creative writing, performing and visual arts, to draw out personal stories of local people, culminating in a final performance event - *The Ithaca Axis* - in April-May 2013. The project aimed to use the arts to bring together communities of Bristol from across geographical, ethnic, generational divides, with particular emphasis upon engaging older people, young people, refugee and new communities. The project was divided into two key stages - a series of artist-led workshops culminating in an exhibition and the development and delivery of a final theatre performance.

The following report documents the overall project, reviewing the main achievements and challenges. The project was delivered by a range of paid workers, as well as a number of volunteers across the project. For the purposes of this report, 'The Coordinators' refers to the paid project workers whilst 'The Bridges Team' refers to the team in its entirety including volunteers, with reference to specific individuals/roles made where necessary.

Summary of project achievements

Workshops and exhibition:

- The Project Coordinator & Creative Director worked well together and brought a strong, creative balance with them
- There was a wide range of artist that applied to deliver workshops and also participated in the Networking Events
- The workshops led by Andrew MacMillan with the schools were some of the most successful, and it would be good to emulate this with future workshops in terms of taking the activity to the group as opposed to trying to bring a group in to work with us
- The Short Story Competition was a huge success, we received 21 entries (more than we expected) and had 3 final winners
- The 7-day multimedia Final Exhibition at The Trinity Centre had a strong artistic content with the opening launch event featuring live creative performances by participants of workshops
- Developed the initial foundations for future partnerships with other organisations and groups, like Boom Satsuma, Bristol Fusion Dance, Stand+Stare Collective and First Born Creatives

Show:

- Great turn out for auditions, with over 200 applications for the main roles
- The amateur ensemble were enthusiastic and committed and it was encouraging to see that all the young people stayed for the duration of the show
- A great number of committed volunteers from all ages, helping as stewards, location supervisors and production tasks
- The cast produced a quality final outcome that was well received by audiences
- A well executed piece, given the very short time-frame in which to turn it around, and the final outcome of a citywide, site-specific, walkabout performance was ambitious and innovative
- Had great feedback from the other venues involved, like the Red Lodge and Looking Glass who were very supportive of the project and would be open to future collaborations
- It challenged and developed the skills of the organisation (TCA) in terms of team work and capacity
- It was TCA's longest project to date, ending on a big production that we managed to keep largely within the available budget, challenging us to work in creative ways to deliver without additional funding
- The show's run was well attended and met ticket income projections.
- The Ithaca Axis show help putting TCA on the map as an innovative theatre creator



RECRUITMENT

The Coordinators

TCA recruited writer, director Dr Edson Burton to the role of Project Coordinator in December 2011. Actor and director, Nick Young was appointed in January 2012 as the Artistic Director. Both had worked with TCA on previous heritage and theatre projects.

Nick Young is an established theatre practitioner and will be the Artistic Director, responsible for sourcing and coordinating an artistic team and ensuring integrity throughout workshops and final performance. As current joint Director of ACE funded The Idle Dream theatre company and former joint director of ACE funded The Wonder Club, Nick is able to draw upon skills of professional producers and an experienced team for artistic support. Recent works include directing the sell-out production *The Lamentable Tragedy* and the sell-out co-production of *At Tether's End* at the Trinity Centre as well as ongoing collaborations with the Stand And Stare Collective.

Dr Edson Burton has extensive experience working with hard to reach community groups, will be Project Coordinator and Outreach Worker, responsible for the vision and development of the project, coordinating promotion and outreach. His local connections give us the opportunity to tap into otherwise hard-to-reach communities locally using already established relationships acclaimed writer of both literate and script and experienced outreach worker, and has extensive experience in developing works from community participation.

The Coordinators were managed by Trinity Centre Manager Emma Harvey, the grant applicant. The Coordinators were allocated an office on Trinity's second floor. Employing both workers early on in the project meant that they were able to divide the work load and compliment each other. The Coordinators shared the research, planning and coordination of the project. The Coordinators pooled networks, shared tasks and took on roles suited to their skill sets. As the project moved into its final stage there roles became more distinct with Nick Young leading on the artistic direction and Edson concentrating on the writing of the final play and supporting the wider Bridges team.

Achievements and Learning

The appointment of both workers at the start of the project ensured a continuity of purpose, a clear point of contact, a variety of interpersonal styles and increased capacity. The latter was particularly important given the challenge of recruiting participants for the art workshops and the delivery of the final show.

Both workers felt that they worked to full capacity and beyond and felt that they were short of time to fulfil effectively many of the administrative tasks required as part of the project. Voluntary support was useful in this regard, but often could not be relied upon. A future project may require more dedicated administrative support throughout its duration to ease administrative workload.

The physical distance between the Bridges office and the main TCA office exacerbated a sense of detachment, which sometimes was a barrier to fluid communication. Both teams would need to prioritise contact in future if this is to be avoided.

Steering Group

Using a combination of Trinity's website, newsletter, and personal contacts, The Coordinators recruited, artist and marketing officer Lizzy Keates, retired teacher and broadcaster Paulette North, and artist June Young.

June brought to the group years of experience of working with women's groups, living and working in St Paul's and an impressive network of contacts with artists across Bristol – in particular, The Island, where her studio is based.



During her teaching career at Fairfield School, Paulette had specialised in working with young people with English as a second language. Paulette brought an understanding of the communities we were trying to reach. Paulette also presented a twice-weekly show on local radio station Ujima. Paulette offered to use the show to promote the project.

Trinity administrator Rhiannon Jones and board member Simon Bates also joined The Steering Group to ensure the project linked in with Trinity's programme of activities.

Further attempts to recruit individuals, in particular from target communities, were unsuccessful and by Easter The Coordinators chose not pursue additional members once The Steering Group had become established. Furthermore they could not expend any more time on finding further members without risking the time-scale for the project.

Achievements and Learning

The Steering Group supplied The Bridges Team with access to community networks, and promotional support especially during the recruitment of participants. They raised important questions about the project which helped the team to clarify its message to the various communities. This was particularly useful in the workshops stage of the project.

During the latter stage of the project, The Steering Group meetings fell from once a month to once every three. The consistency was difficult to maintain due to the availability and schedules of group members. This is challenging to avoid with a volunteer steering group but perhaps with hindsight The Bridges Team should have kept recruiting for new steering group members beyond Easter. The addition of one or two extra members would have helped to ensure that a presence, entirely externally, remained involved in the project throughout.

Volunteer Team

Eighteen volunteers were involved in the project over its duration and the need for volunteers shifted over the project stages. The Coordinators prepared a volunteer brief at the start of the project, with volunteer roles being revised in accordance with the project's changing needs across the lifetime of the project. Information about the various volunteer roles was disseminated through Trinity's website, Theatre Bristol, Community Service Volunteers (CSV) personal and professional networks and through the University of the West of England. With regard to the University, the project established a relationship with UWE's undergraduate volunteer programme and all the volunteering roles were disseminated throughout the University.

In the first stage, volunteers were supported the administrative, IT, marketing (social media flyering) tasks, delivering the workshops and setting up the exhibition; installing the exhibition. In the planning and artist recruitment, volunteers provided a much needed boost to the project's capacity through supporting the IT, marketing, and administrative roles.

The Coordinators had hoped that each artist would be supported by volunteers for their initial workshops and felt that this would be of most benefit to the undergraduates, many of whom had come from an arts and/or educational background. However, in reality many of the student volunteers were taken up with exams towards the end of the month and were even less available for the revised workshop dates in August- September. This had little impact upon the artists who were used to working individually but did increase demands upon The Coordinators. However the installation was supported by three volunteers.

The number of volunteers and consistency of their involvement improved as the project entered its final stage. In the second stage volunteers were recruited to fulfil key production roles, provide logistical support with planning the promenade and steward the final performance. The Producer assumed responsibility for managing the volunteers many of whom had previous arts experience.

Achievements and Learning

Volunteers more than doubled the project's capacity. They allowed for The Coordinators to delegate labour intensive tasks and also to recruit skill sets not otherwise available. The volunteers in return gained substantial employment experience. The significance of this employment differed among the volunteers. For the undergraduate students volunteering provided practical experience of working in the voluntary, community, arts sector, for others it was an opportunity to re-establish a routine in preparation for a return to work.

It is fair to say however that volunteer contribution varied widely across the project. In the first and stage of the project volunteer involvement was sometimes out of sync with demand. The Coordinators were diverted into supervising and training volunteers at times better spent planning the project.

The reliability of volunteers varied widely with volunteers leaving the project after days of training. This is perhaps an inescapable aspect of volunteering but one which was particularly deleterious given the time pressures of delivery.

The consistency of volunteers improved in the final phase of the project. The producer was able to take a lead on managing the volunteers while volunteers that came to the project did so with clear goals in need. It is fair to say that having the additional capacity of the Producer to manage and support volunteers was influential in the successful engagement and retention of the volunteer team for this part of the project.

The volunteer- project relationship could be improved in future if the project takes steps to close and open the flow of volunteers as and when necessary. It may also be the case that volunteers attach to other areas of Trinity so that they can be called upon when necessary. Clarity from the University as to the practical experience would also help projects to anticipate what they should expect from a student. Trinity is also considering creating a volunteer management post which may help projects with the support and retention of volunteers.



STAGE ONE: Workshops and Exhibition





Phase One: Planning and Development

Planning and Research

The first two months of the project were months were spent building the project infrastructure, exploring project partnerships and working to engage community groups and organisations.

The Bridges Team researched and attended a number of theatrical shows including *Going Dark* (by Sound and Fury at The Cardiff Millennium Centre) and *Babel* (by Wild Work and Battersea Arts Centre at Caledonian Park, London).

The Coordinators met with Andrew Kelly, Director of The Bristol Festival of Ideas, to explore the possibility of including the project within the Festival's theme for 2013. Through the Watershed programming officer Madeline Probst, the project was granted access to the Bristol story archive, (see <http://www.watershed.co.uk/dshed/bristol-stories>) and also offered off use of a cinema space for any film screenings.

They also met Kate Yerdigoff of Bristol Old Vic to consider ways in which the project could link with the Mayfest programme as well as Martin Maudesley, Coordinator of Bristol Story Festival, to see how the project could link with storytelling initiatives throughout the year. These meetings helped to promote the project to Bristol's artistic community and link with wider city programming.

Achievements and Learning

The planning phase helped to create a strategy and message for what was a conceptually simple but multi-faceted project. The exploration of possibilities for partnership helped too to bring the project into the consciousness of a range of organisations.

In reality many of the discussions around partnership weren't actualised. The project delivery scale did not match up with that of the History of Ideas, or Mayfest. Furthermore the scale of the Bridges project was such that the team could not spare the capacity to explore in detail some of the partnerships on offer, such as the Watershed's digital stories archive. For future projects, teams should focus energies on more simplistic partnerships and explore partnerships where organisations are able to add capacity to the project.

Artist Networking and Recruitment

As expressed in the application, Bridges aimed to recruit eight artists who would each deliver six to eight workshop sessions. The Bridges Team aimed to attract artists that were able to work collaboratively so that participants would gain experience of different art forms. The Coordinators sought to match artists to the target groups, as highlighted in the initial grant application.

Artists were invited to submit a proposal detailing their aims and methods of working with the members of the public. Ahead of the submissions, The Bridges Team organised an Artists Network Day, to give artists an understanding of what was required by the project. The Bridges Team felt that an event combining both active networking with a formal presentation would attract and enthuse artists. The event was scheduled for the 21 February at The Trinity Centre, advertised online via our website and artist forums, with forty spaces available. In the fortnight before the event more than 60 had registered with others expressing an interest in attending. The Bridges Team therefore repeated the event on the 3 March.

Actual numbers for both events averaged out at 30 artists. Each event was divided between a morning and afternoon session. The morning session consisted of an introduction to the Bridges project, followed by an artist 'speed-dating' style activity, where artists worked in groups to create a proposal in response to particular stimulus, encompassing the specialisms of each artist. The activity was designed as a carousel so that every artist had an opportunity to work together.

The afternoon session featured a presentation and QandA with Arts Council Officer Ruth Kapedia on Arts Council funding opportunities. This was followed up with a more detailed description of the Bridges project proposal. After the second session the project was opened to receive artist submissions.

The artists were selected on the basis of the clarity, feasibility, and originality of their proposals, the quality of their past work, their relevance to the target group and their experience of working with a diverse groups.

The selected artists were met with The Coordinators to explore details of the work and their proposals and to agree the workshop schedule and target groups. The choice of target group was a negotiation between the artists and The Coordinators. These included the target groups mentioned in the application, other harder to reach groups and mainstream public.

The following describes the artists and the work they proposed to produce:

- *Marina Moreno*: (multi-media artist, and choreographer) Older members of Bristol's Chinese community, Prayer alters. Multi-media and recycled goods
- *Emma Myers*: (textile artist specialising in recycled materials) Refugee and asylum community. Shoe sculptures. Recycled materials
- *Andrew McMillan*: (poet) Young people in schools and not in education and mental health service users. Poetry on the theme of Bridges
- *Medea Mahdavi*: (Middle Eastern Dance and Choreography) Muslim women and women from the Asian subcontinent. Iranian dance
- *Lou Gray*: (multimedia artist, set designer, and prop maker) Intergenerational general. Peep hole model boxes. Recycled and found materials
- *Stand and Stare*: (*theatre makers*) Intergenerational. Digital jukebox. Multi-media
- *Cleo Lake*: (*choreographer*) Intergenerational, African British folk dance.

With the exception of Andrew McMillan, all the artists were Bristol based. The Coordinators felt that the work of multi-media artists Alex Pritchard and Paul Harrington were not suited to a workshop, but would be of merit to the final show. Both artists were therefore offered commissions to produce work for the interim exhibition which could then be used for the final show.

As stipulated in the original application, the project aimed to engage artists who were working on projects which were in keeping with the Bridges theme. The Bridges Team offered additional support to artists who had attended the networking event whose work supported this theme. This included marketing, use of facilities and supporting letters to grant applications. This included:

- Performance artist Tom Marshman, who was already researching the oral history of the LGBT community in Bristol. The Bridges Team supported Tom in the marketing, promotion and delivery of an LGBT Tea Party in November 2012 (as well as free facilities use as a Bridges project partner), where members of the LGBT community were invited to Trinity to share memories of LGBT life in Bristol. The content of the stories shared influenced the themes in the final show.
- Dancer and choreographer Judith Jarvis was working across generations with a group based at St Stephen's Church in Bristol. Judith developed a dance piece as part of a separate initiative and The Bridges Team supported her application to the Arts Council and incorporated her piece into the final show.

Achievements and Learning

Feedback from the Artist Network Days was overwhelmingly positive, with most selecting either 'good' or 'excellent' on the feedback forms to describe the event. The attendees appeared to be particularly enthused by the combination of creativity, active networking, and formal presentation.

The number and variety of artists who attended the events suggested that The Bridges Team had successfully disseminated information about the project across various networks. The team felt that the process of submitting proposals, supported by the workshops, was in the spirit of true equal opportunity. Although not a target outcome, feedback from the events suggest that there is a strong need for a more sustained artists networking forum in Bristol.

The events also served to resolve some confusion between the artists submissions and the work which they would deliver. The submissions were examples of work that could be carried through to the workshop phase depending on their feasibility and interest to target groups. Conflicting schedules and the reality of the challenges of cross-community working created difficulties around achieving the levels of cross-artist collaboration as part of the workshops that we had hoped to achieve. A future project would need to ensure that cross-art collaboration was more of an integral outcome, addressed during the planning phase. Challenges that emerged from recruiting participants also worked against a consistent schedule (addressed in the following section).





Phase Two: Delivery of Activities

Recruiting Participants

The Bridges Team took the view that working in partnership with established organisations would be the most effective means to reach the target groups.

The Coordinators chose to target particular groups whilst, where appropriate, also keeping sessions open to the general public, to ensure widespread uptake for each workshop. The workshops were advertised from May 2012 (a month in advance of the start date) through websites, forums, emails to organisations, flyers and through local radio stations BCFM and Ujima.

The Coordinators had varying success with matching artists to the communities identified at the start of the project.

Achievements and Learning

Perhaps the most successful project partnership was working in partnership with youth organisation Boom Satsuma, which led to the successful delivery of poetry workshops within the following schools and educational centres:

- Bristol Metropolitan St Mary Redcliffe and Temple Schools in Bristol
- The Meriton School for young mothers
- Backwell and Nailsea Schools in North Somerset
- Ravenswood School for children with learning difficulties in Nailsea

In particular, working on these sessions off-site and within the community - proved successful and it would be good to take the activities to groups (rather than trying to get them to come to us) for future projects.

The Coordinators contacted St Paul's based Bristol's Chinese Women's Association as a means of engaging members of Bristol's Chinese community. The group had a long standing track record of delivering services and cultural activities for the Chinese community. Edson had also worked with it's director Rosa Hui in the past. The group showed initial interest in the installation workshop.

However after protracted discussions The Coordinators and group were unable to agree a schedule and cost for the workshops. The Association were unable to recruit and commit their members in line with the artist's availability during the summer months. Furthermore The Coordinators could not finance the cost of translation demanded by the group. It is fair to say that the group's administrators were attempting to use the project to recuperate revenue lost through their own funding cuts.

The amount of time spent negotiating this group meant that there was little time remaining to market the workshop to an alternative group given that the artist's own scheduling availability.

Similar issues arose in our engagement with Bristol Refugee Rights (BRR). The group run a twice-weekly drop in for Bristol's refugee and asylum community and have worked with TCA on past projects. However, The Coordinators were unable to engage the refugees and asylum seeker clients directly as the organisation's administrators insisted on being the conduit for information, despite there being limited capacity for their staff to fulfil this role as organisation as they were occupied with moving premises at this time.

A number of service users of mental health group Rethink had, with help from their support workers, contacted the Bridges project independently regarding the art and poetry workshops. The Coordinators contacted Rethink to arrange a more strategic engagement between the organisation and the Bridges project. Rethink's key art-worker set dates, created flyers and began to recruit

service users to attend the Bridges workshops by Emma Myers and Andrew McMillan. However, this worker found alternative employment in the lead-up to the recruitment and delivery of the sessions. Without this key worker Rethink were unable to commit to the partnership. However, it is fair to say that this initial project intervention led to subsequent partnership working between Rethink and Trinity, through Trinity's Community Garden project.

The Coordinators tried to engage Trinity based Asian women's groups group Awaz Utoah in the dance workshops led by Cleo Lake and Medea Mahdavi. They were supported by volunteer, writer Harpreet Kaur in meetings with the group and its chair. However the group's director Simi Chodury felt that performing live or being recorded dancing was a barrier to participation by the Muslim and Asian women.

The intergenerational workshops run by Stand and Stare engaged participants ranging from 12-60+. However the project could not persuade Older People's groups based at Trinity, local churches, Kensington Road Baptist, and Asian Day Centre to engage. This, despite a number of visits, face to face and on-line contact with Link Age.

Refining Target Groups

Due to the challenges that emerged The Coordinators rescheduled and re-advertised the workshops to the general public whilst continuing to target the groups mentioned in the application. The Coordinators amended the flyers, press release, website, email information, and announced the changes on the local radio. Opening up the workshops ensured that there was viable take up but also led to the intergenerational cross-cultural take up that the project sought to achieve through the previous targeting of specific groups.

Achievements and Learning

The initial publicity for the project did not reach the wide range of communities that we had hoped and perhaps with future projects a better marketing strategy is needed and application of a marketing budget to working specifically with PR and outreach agencies, as opposed to printed runs of flyers that may not always have the desired scope and reach.

A clearer brief from TCA when engaging designers is needed, to include an accessibility remit to ensure that promotions convey that the project is open and accessible and ensuring accuracy around areas such as print size and planning around distribution of final print for example.

Workshop Delivery

The workshops took place between May-June. Unless specified otherwise all workshops took place in the Trinity Centre.

Stand and Stare worked with a small group of members of the public based at the Pervasive Media Centre to create the cards for the theatre jukebox. These were finalised by Stand and Stare in time for the interim exhibition.

Artist Lou Gray worked with four participants to create peep-hole model boxes. The participants all women between the ages of 40-50 built up a unique and intimate bond after the first workshop. The Coordinators agreed with Lou that given this relationship it was not appropriate to recruit additional participants.

Medea Mahdavi worked with composer Hans Hesse to produce a dance piece inspired by Iranian dance. Three of the participants had previous experience of middle eastern dance and had come to the workshop to learn the nuances of middle eastern dance. Hans Hess had earlier become involved in the Bridges project to develop ideas for music for the final show.

Workshops led by choreographer Cleo Lake who worked with Bristol Jamaican youth-group

Jamafrigue and Stand and Stare Theatre Jukebox were excellent examples of intergenerational dialogue with participants ranging from ages 7-65. The respective workshops targeting adults attracted a dedicated group of participants for each session. The artists worked together to help participants produce outcomes for the interim exhibition.

Overall the artists delivered a total of 33 workshop sessions comprising 11 full-day and 22 half day sessions. Sessions were held on weekday evenings, daytime and weekends. The Trinity Centre was the base for most of the activities apart from some of the dance (held at Medea's private studio, Kuumba and Malcolm X Centre) and theatre jukebox workshops which were at the Watershed. The Coordinators also used the second premises, Arts West Side, for Andrew's workshop with older people. The artists engaged a total of 120 participants, 98 of which were under the age of 16.

Achievements and Learning

The Bridges Team felt that they worked with creativity, and with determination to recruit participants to the workshops. This led to a significant number of Bristolians experiencing new art forms for the first time, whilst also building interest in the project.

Arguably some of the difficulties which occurred could not have been anticipated such as the resignation of the arts-worker from partner organisation, Rethink. Furthermore, the impact of funding cuts on organisations such as BCWA and Awaz Utoah reduced their own capacity to engage in partnerships. Youth organisations such as Catch 22 who had expressed a keen early interest in engaging in the project had also lost funding by the time the workshops were being delivered and were subsequently unable to participate. Overall the workshops structuring and recruitment took up a substantial amount of The Coordinators' time and capacity.

The team felt that, with hindsight, the project should have focused on engagement of fewer target groups so that their efforts could have been focused towards recruiting a specific target group of participants. They felt that it was difficult to establish trust with any one particular group given that their face-to-face contact with any one group was spread so thinly and that, perhaps these relationships need to be built over time.

This is certainly the indication with the Rethink example where, while they did not participate in this project, this initial contact and relationship with Trinity through The Coordinators led to their subsequent engagement with a Trinity project further down the line. Focusing perhaps on the engagement of one or two partner groups through a sustained relationship would also have had the added advantage of giving The Coordinators the flexibility to respond to the changing circumstances of their partner group.

One might also question the efficacy generally of engaging single communities. The workshops which were most inclusive tended, in any case, to attract members a diversity of participants. Therefore, perhaps with future projects, more resources need to be allocated around the marketing as a whole to ensure that the widest possible communities are reached.

Interim Exhibition

The interim exhibition was installed by artists and The Bridges Team in September and consisted of installations by artists Lou Gray and Marina Morena (to view the video installation by Moreno Marina follow the link: <http://vimeo.com/51018293>), the Theatre Jukebox by Stand and Stare, a composite poem by Andrew McMillan and a video installation produced by partner organisation Boom Satsuma. The exhibition launch event was held on the 15th September. The event was attended by over 100 individuals including Bristol's Lord Mayor.

The launch featured the work from the workshops as well as performances by adults and young people who had worked with the dance artists Medea Madhavi, and Cleo Lake, a film and

photography City Perspectives by young people working with Stand and Stare, and a dramatic preview of the final show the Ithaca Axis. The exhibition ran for two weeks and was open to the public during Trinity's office hours 9am-5pm Mondays-Fridays. Fifteen visitors made comments in the exhibition in the book provided:

- *“Amazing work. Loved the boat part. Thanks”*
- *“Love the theatre jukebox and poems, great use of the building, more exhibitions please”*
- *“As I can see this project is good for the community need..art project is progress.”*
- *“Really inspiring – love the boat -makes me want to travel the world. And the masks make me want to go an inner journey- particularly the procrastinator”*

The Bridges Team and Boom Satsuma also organised a mini tour of the poetry boards on the request by three of the participating schools St Mary Redcliffe, Metropolitan, Nailsea and Backwell. In addition Boom Satsuma toured the film produced for the exhibition within North Somerset schools and to the launch of Bristol's youth hub The Station.

Achievements and Learning

The exhibition brought together an international range of innovative artists. The team showed resourcefulness in making sure that their artistic vision was not compromised, such as in the case of Mareno Moreno where a boat was sourced from Bristol harbour. The number of visitors during the duration of the exhibition did not reflect the quality of the exhibition. On reflection, the team needed to maintain the same level of marketing as was the case in the run up to the exhibition.

To do so they required additional capacity and, in particular, more marketing expertise recruited and maintained throughout the project. Future exhibitions could be linked to particular events For future projects, it would be better to piggy-back on existing events such as Trinity's Garden Party - which is attended by 1,000 people - as well as trying to secure space at other city centre exhibiting venues, to ensure exhibiting content that can be viewed by a wider audience.



Phase Three: Evaluation and Project Refinement

Short-Story Competition

Following the interim exhibition and mid-way project report, The Bridges Team identified there was a need to gather more stories from participants in order to improve upon the diversity of the voices represented within the adaptation to inform the creation of the final show.

The call for stories on Trinity's website, press release, emails and broadcast had led to three submissions. This was less than what The Coordinators had hoped to gather for the final show. In addition to the final artwork, each arts workshop also contained a storytelling element. The Coordinators had planned to gather stories on the theme of Bridges from the first session of each workshop. However, they were unable to intervene in the workshops as regularly as they had hoped, as much of their time was spent recruiting participants and advertising changing workshop scheduling.

The team considered using the underspend from the artists fees and materials to offer more workshops. However, they were concerned by the demands this would create on their time and on the limited budget available. Therefore, they added a Short-Story Competition as a new activity to the project, choose to run a writing competition on the theme of Bridges as a way of addressing the points above.



The team engaged writer and journalist Rin Simpson to run a short story workshop on the 22 November prior to the competition, so that new writers would have some experience of the medium prior to submitting their stories. The Coordinators set the date of the 17th January 2013 for an

award event with the workshops and competition were advertised a month prior to the first workshop. Seventeen participants attended on the day in question – participant numbers were down on expressed interest, due perhaps in part to the torrential downpour on this evening.

A total of 21 stories were submitted as part of the competition. Authors Tania Hershmann and Mike Manson agreed to act as judges who, alongside Edson, chose the winning entry, runner-up and three other stories for commendation. winning entries and short-listed three others.

The event was attended by entrants and family members. The winning entrant Mal Sansbury, with David Chedgy as runner-up and the recommended writers were previously unpublished. The writers were awarded a selection of books published by Tangent Books.



Left to right (judges) Mike Manson, Tania Hershman, (winning entrants) Mal Sainsbury, David Chedgy, Jude Higgins, (judge and Co-coordinator) Edson Burton

STAGE TWO: The Ithaca Axis Show





Phase One: Planning and Development

Devising the show

The Team began devising the Lthaca Axis production in April. It became apparent early in the process that concentrating the site-specific interventions described in the grant application as part of the show itself would combine the art, storytelling and poetry within a more effective use of the available capacity. In agreement with Trinity's Centre Manager the show's duration was extended from 7 to 13 nights, with the predicted audience and income spread across the revised run.

Sites were identified and preliminary investigations made as to the feasibility of their usage. Sites such as the Red Lodge and the 18th Century Orchard Street offices had not been used as a theatre space previously. Nick was also successful in approaching youth organisation Breakout Adventures for the use of the Svanskar sailing ship.

The Coordinators chose *Homer's Odyssey* as a vehicle for the Bridges story. Homer's themes of maritime travel, loss, exile echoed powerfully the themes that emerged from the workshops. Furthermore the character of Odysseus offered a metaphor for transition and division. In this new interpretation, Odysseus returns to a Lthaca now renamed Bristol to find that wife is now CEO of 'The Poseidon Foundation' - an organisation that runs the city. In his absence their son, Telemachus, has lived as an 'out' bisexual man, while his daughter from an African slave, Cassandra, is incarcerated. His father, the marginalised, embittered Laertes, observes this liberalisation but can do nothing to stop it. Odysseus returns to restore the old order and a four way power struggle ensues.

Planning the play began in earnest in September. The Coordinators divided their roles. Edson Burton focussed on writing the script and Nick Young directing the show, developing the overall concept and focussing on the logistics.

Logistics

The play was devised around the audience following four main characters, struggling with the impact of Odysseus' return, as they travelled across different central Bristol locations. The audience would experience each character from a partial perspective and gain insight into the wider story, through encountering the characters' interactions along the route.

The Centre Manager was concerned that the promenade performance could raise the cost of the project beyond the agreed budget. In agreement with the Centre Manager, The Coordinators brought forward the appointment of the Producer. The role was advertised through Trinity's website, Theatre Bristol and other theatre websites and Kate Hartoch was appointed to the post in October.

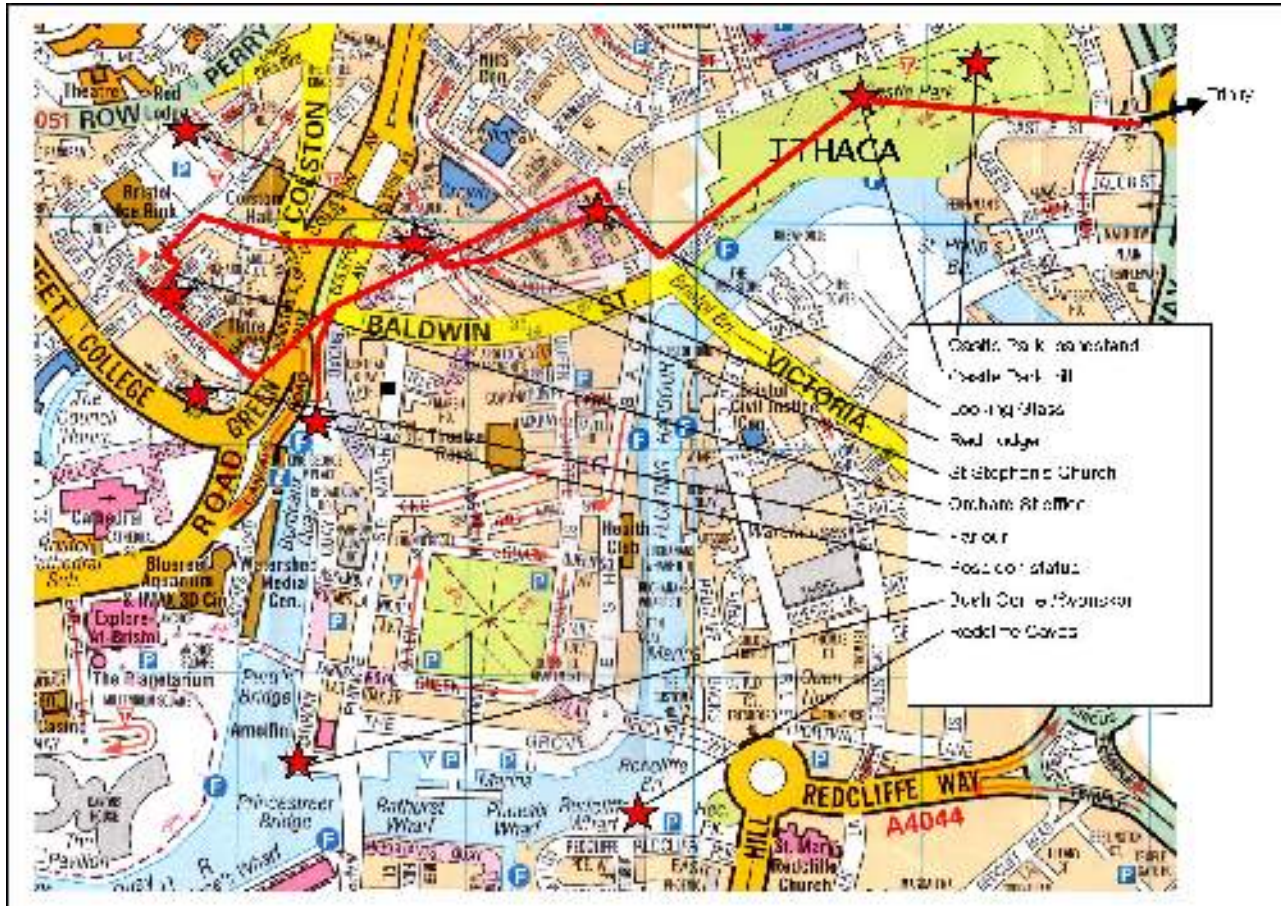
Kate identified significant gaps in the production budget and was indispensable to finding solutions. Kate also helped to finalise the use of the sites identified by The Coordinators. Hidden staffing costs which were not immediately clear on initial inquiry, was an issue that emerged from the use of a number of different sites.

Finalising the use of the sites, approving licenses, and working through the logistics was a more protracted process than first envisaged which delayed the writing of the script to February 2013.

The following sites were eventually chosen:

- The Fountain, Broad Quay (Assembly Point)
- Skanskar Ship, docked outside the Arnolfini
- Orchard Street, behind Bristol Hippodrome
- The Parlour Rooms, Park Street

- The Looking Glass
- The Red Lodge, Park Row
- St Stephen's Church, off Corn Street
- Castle Park maze and bandstand
- The Island, Broadmead
- The Redcliffe Caves and dock area
- The Trinity Centre, Old Market



Conception

The writing was completed March 2013, leaving a month for rehearsals. There was much ambition to create an overall submersive experience, which included the creation of separate online identities of the central characters as well as the creation of a separate website set up exclusively for The Ithaca Axis show. However, the short time-frame in which these had the opportunity to really take seed meant that perhaps a large amount of work was undertaken for relatively little impact.

Achievements and Learning

An ambitious script and devising occurred which was credit to the creative talents of both The Coordinators. However, the idea to create a more widespread identity for the show's characters was not possible with the short time-frame and there was no real clear link between the end show and the digital media that had been created. If new social and online media are created as part of a project this should be done at the project's inception and it is felt that there would need to be clear resources detailed in the budget committed to ensuring there was capacity to ensure these were maintained and populated with information to achieve full affect.

Production Team

The recruitment of a production team began in January 2013 with the recruitment of Netty Miles to replace producer Kate Hartoch who had given birth over Christmas. All the roles were filled by March 2013. The team were recruited through arts jobs, stage jobs, theatre Bristol and personal networks. The Assistant director, marketing, production and stage manager were volunteer posts with expenses available for travel and subsistence.



The Coordinators office doubled as the production team office. Most of the production team meetings were held at Trinity. These were attended by the entire team with smaller group meetings held after a plenary meeting. Trinity's Centre Manager attended some of the meetings, but was otherwise kept informed through minutes and meetings with the Producer.

Achievements and Learning

The planning of the promenade performance was detailed and thorough. Problems which might have arisen were foreseen and dealt with in the build up to the final show. The team were passionate about putting on a show of this nature and scale, going over and above what they were paid to deliver to achieve an aspirational outcome. The number of sites used and the logistics concerned meant that The Bridges Team worked to its maximum capacity. The show was ambitious for the budget available, leading to issues around capacity and there needs to be more work done to ensure that the project budget for any final show of this nature is realistic and with a healthy contingency.

The production team brought together an impressive array of professional skills and organisational competency. Workers were attracted by the project because of the reputation of The Coordinators and to have the opportunity to work with them and build their own professional careers. For volunteers such as Ellie Meanwell and production assistant Marina Ares, an added attraction was an opportunity to gain substantial experience in new roles. The project also consolidated the reputation of lighting engineer Santiago Martinez.

The demands of a project of this scale meant that all members of the production team worked far in excess of the contracted hours and good working relationships and commitment carried through the planning and show run. Future projects cannot expect to rely upon such a level of good will particularly from volunteer staff and planning and budgeting must take account of what is expected of the production team.

Presenting The Bridges Team with the full budget lead to unnecessary debates about areas of the budget such as core cost contributions that led to resentment on both sides. It was felt that for future projects it would be better to not make the full budget available to the project team and only present them with figures for areas that they are able to spend or have some control over. As mentioned previously, having designated administrative capacity to support The Coordinators from beginning to end would have perhaps placed less of a need on bringing in the Producer early on and also working to maintain The Steering Group who could support and monitor and agree any changes.

The pressures of planning and delivering this project led to a mutual sense of detachment between The Bridges Team and the in-house Trinity Team. The detachment heightened disagreements about the scale of the project and control over its direction. It vital that all parties make clear what they want to achieve through the show, and for all parties to be kept aware of the requirements of putting on a show of this scale. If such was to occur then compromise can be more easily reached.

For such tensions to be avoided in the future it is vital that Trinity has consistent ownership of the project throughout its duration. Such ownership is distinct from the administration of the grant. It would see all aspects of the project main streamed into Trinity's activities. The scale of the final show also left little time for in-house and production team to meet and discuss the project. The Coordinators were fully engaged in delivery the script and or defining logistics and perhaps their lack of capacity to attend wider Trinity Team meetings to update on progress compounded misunderstandings.

The tensions described dissipated during the final rehearsal week with everyone pulling together effectively to deliver the final show. In future project both the organisation and the project team needs to be more proactive in building a relationship. There needs to be a more clearly defined induction process for project contractors to assist in the building of a positive working dynamic, which is critical to the success of the project.



Phase Two: Casting and Rehearsing

Workshops for Emerging Actors

Starting in January, Nick led a series of weekly drama workshops at Trinity. The workshops were designed to recruit an ensemble cast for the final show, to introduce non-actors to drama, and increase engagement with the project. Forty participants attended the first workshop.

The group ranged from novices, emerging actors, performers from non-acting backgrounds and those who had never acted or performed previously. For the sake of brevity the cast will be referred to as 'The Ensemble.'

Recruiting Professional Actors

The call for the five main characters was sent out to local and national agencies and via team and associate networks in November. The response was initially slow but by changing the rehearsal schedules, The Coordinators were able to revise the actor's fees and the responses improved accordingly.

200 actors applied for the roles and day-long auditions were held at Trinity between December -January. They were led by The Coordinators and Producer Kate Hartoch, in consultation. Auditions for the roles of Penelope and Laertes were particularly competitive.



Carlotta Cutrupi – Cassandra, Dominic Wolfe – Telemachus, Glyn Diley – Odysseus, Heidi Dorschler – Penelope, Paul Beech – Laertes

Rehearsals

In the weeks leading up to the show, Nick introduced the participants to characterisation, projection, storytelling, vocal and physical techniques. Choreographer Laila Diallo and vocal tutor Sarah Joy Pearson led part of the sessions. In order to minimise costs members of The Ensemble were rehearsed separately and in groups from a month before the show. The whole cast was brought together for two intensive rehearsal prior to show opening.

Each of the main four characters were accompanied by three members of the ensemble cast. They played pivotal roles including companions, friends and guards. Laertes was a static character. It was not always possible to rehearse the entire ensemble at Trinity, therefore the group were able to procure rehearsal spaces across central Bristol such as the Malcolm X Centre, The Island and St Agnes Church. On site rehearsals were held in the various venues in the final two weeks of the production.

Achievements and Learning

Nick began to solidify the casting as the script neared completion. There was, perhaps a falling away in February and March as the show grew closer. The final cast consisted of thirteen

emergent actors. Fear of performing publicly was partly a factor but several members of the amateur cast explained that they were unable to commit to daytime rehearsals prior to the show, which is perhaps a consideration for future theatrical projects. There is an inevitable degree of shrinkage as participants find that they cannot commit to a show. One way to reduce this fall out is to involve some members of the ensemble in smaller interventions better suited to their ability, confidence, and availability.

The emergent actors learnt new acting, movement, and vocal techniques through the workshop process. They reported finding new levels of confidence through working in a promenade performance that involved key elements of improvisation. In terms of the professional actors the rehearsal process called upon all the skills the professional actors had learnt during their careers. Audiences to the show were therefore treated to seeing actors of considerable calibre acting to the best of their ability.

Bringing the cast together gave the emergent performers an opportunity to learn from more experienced peers. The show was an example of good practice in peer mentoring. The project was fortunate to attract professional actors of this calibre and experience for the fees offered and TCA may need to review how much budget is allocated to professionals for future theatrical projects.





Phase Three: Performance

Logistics

The Ithaca Axis ran from 23-28 April and 30 April-5 May. The show began in Bristol's Broad Quay, a pedestrianised central venue at 7pm. Audience capacity was 100 with a maximum of 25 audience members for each of the four main characters. Tickets were available from Bristol Ticket Shop, EventBrite and from the Bridges production team at the meeting point on each night.

On arrival at Broad quay audience members were each given a coloured wrist band. The band denoted one of the four characters. The stewards made sure that the bands were distributed in equal number.

After the first scene the audience joined one of the four main characters and were taken on foot to each site where a scene would be performed and the story develop. Each audience group was supported by two stewards so that there was always a steward available in case an audience member became detached from the group. The characters intersected at varying points of their journey's so that, by the final scene the audience had met the other characters. In between the venues- the cast remained in character and engaged the audience with a mixture of improvisation, poetry, storytelling and games developed during rehearsals.

The penultimate scenes for all four journeys was held in Bristol's Castle Park. Castle Park, approximately a ten-minute journey on foot to the final location at Trinity. Following the penultimate act, the main actors and audiences converged and promenaded up Bristol's Old Market area towards the Trinity Centre with the final act beginning at around 9:30pm and finished around 10:30pm each night.

Achievements and Learning

The Ithaca Axis was definitely a logistical achievement that put Trinity on the map in terms of theatre production and delivery of activities outside of the Trinity Centre. The logistical planning for the show proved to be successful as evidenced by the convergence of the characters and audience at key points.

However, the last walk back to the Trinity Centre from the central locations was perhaps a bit too far, in the desire to have the final act at Trinity. If delivering a similar project of this nature, we would seek to keep all locations closer and more central to ease access. Anecdotal feedback suggested that the distance was too long and future teams may have to consider the merits of each venue over the quality of the pleasure of the walking experience.

We were incredibly fortunate with the weather and it is fair to say that heavy rain would have had a significant detrimental impact on the delivery and audience numbers. This is something to build better contingency for for future site-specific projects.

Audience

Audience figures were low for the first days of the show, though this had been anticipated. The company was as yet unknown to Bristol's theatre going audience and we anticipated that news would spread through word-of-mouth following the first few nights. The Producer therefore distributed complimentary tickets to the production team, cast, volunteers and community groups. The paid audience numbers are therefore not reflective of the numbers who actually followed the journey.

Achievements and Learning

The Ithaca Axis was a successful outcome to the entire project on various fronts. The total audience for the show was 624 with 432 tickets sold (318 full price and 114 concessions) and 192

guests. The revenue raised by the show reached TCA's forecast and audiences were enthusiastic in their praise for the show.

With hindsight the online portal EventBrite - an American online seller - was perhaps the wrong ticket seller for both the organisation and the show. that made complicated arrangements for final payments. Extra work and stressful situations from this particular seller carried on after the project was finished and. Trinity itself lacks its own box office, which would have probably mitigated this issue, however, being an independent music venue, Trinity has built relationships with different ticket sellers, online and shops, which should have been utilised to sell tickets for the final show.





Phase Four: Show Evaluation

Audience Feedback

Audiences were impressed by the ambition, the quality of the acting, the directorial initiative and the balance of emotional tones. The accolades were particularly noteworthy given the fact this was new production team company. The show also allowed the public access to unfamiliar and or rarely glimpsed venues such as The Red Lodge. Selection of comments fed back via online mediums including Facebook and email:

- *"What a show, what a team. If this was on for another month, I'd be back for more for sure. Great end scene too"*
- *"Fabulous, inspiring piece of work; a wonderful way to reclaim Bristol. Loved it."*
- *"Thanks, what an awesome show - gobsmacked"*
- *"Still reeling. The Ithaca Axis engulfed me and then clawed away at my very core. Stunning work. Get tickets. Go."*
- *"Beautifully lost in The Ithaca Axis"*
- *"Absolute epic night yesterday at The Ithaca Axis ... Fantastic production."*
- *"The Ithaca Axis' have heard great things from friend who was at last night's performance. Wish Bristol really was a feminist utopia!"*
- *Really enjoyed the show. Logistical genius and very politically current. Thanks.*
- *"Fascinating evening. Definitely recommended, but you need to go four times for the full experience. Alternatively, go with three friends, join different groups and share stories at the end."*

Trinity Development

The Ithaca Axis transformed the perception of Trinity as solely a music venue. Outside the BS2, BS5 areas most of the general public are unaware of the community aspects of the organisation. Since the show there has been an increase in enquiries about using the space for rehearsals, and to stage professional theatre. Trinity recently hosted the Mayfest show *Beowulf* and *Dreadnought* by theatre company Oxygen.

In terms of Trinity's own theatre delivery, the Ithaca team are keen to continue working together. In a separate initiative Trinity has supported the creation of a new theatre company Tank Theatre, funded by The Ernest Cook Trust. The theatre company is aimed at young aspiring actors aged 16-26 and are staging an adaptation of Macbeth, entitled *M.C.Beth*. The group has attracted an ethnically diverse cast of young amateur actors and Trinity are considering ways of sustaining its theatre element by bringing both teams closer together.

Personal Development

The Ithaca Axis was an important development curve in the careers of all it's paid and unpaid staff. All members of the team learnt new skills which they can take forward into their careers. For Artistic director Nick Young and writer Edson Burton this was the first time they had worked on a play of this scale. For the emerging actors in the cast it was a new and challenging experience. For first time actors it was a substantial transition from other performance modes. For volunteers such as Ellie Meanwell (marketing assistant) and Marina Arias (production assistant) the play was a first time. experience of working in these roles. Lighting engineer Santiago Martinez has worked constantly since the show.

OPERATIONS

Financial Monitoring

There were a number of key challenges that emerged from the show some and of these related to the financial monitoring and budget controls of the overall project.

The project overspent due to unforeseen costs from using multiple venues, a lack of clarity around volunteer expenses. The concerns over the budget caused some tension between Trinity, staff and The Bridges Team. The organisation anticipated the project could overspend from January and best practice and internal cash flow challenges meant the organisation was insistent that the project fell within budget. The Bridges Team felt that there was little choice but to redirect the budget once the show had gained momentum. The tension over the budget led to questions over the artistic choices and whether these were in keeping with TCA's initial vision. Such tensions are perhaps inevitable given the show was a new experience for all involved and the conflicting priorities between creative vision and financial outlay.

The show has revealed the true cost of staging a show on this scale. The planning of future events will take on board the lessons learned from the show. It is also imperative that all parties involved in future applications bring together their expertise to highlight budgetary concerns from the outset.

One additional challenge TCA faced was the change in Arts Council Grants Officers, meaning that we were often in a position of confusion around clarity of contact. The networking session for artists was well supported by regional officers with Ruth's attendance at both sessions a valuable part of the experience for the artists. However, subsequently, there was not really a clear defined relationship between TCA and the Arts Council and we would hope that this could be improved upon in future projects for the mutual benefit of both organisations.

The overall project was monitored by our in-house Finance Worker with project expenditure checked and certified by our independent, external management accountant Ryan Corkery of Magic Bean Counters Ltd 38/8 Chelsea Road Bristol 0845 519 8689 info@thebeancounters.co.uk

Marketing

The Coordinators used a range of social and print media to engage artists, community groups and individuals in the various opportunities for participation. The Coordinators in consultation with Trinity's core staff took overall lead of the marketing and promotion with a larger team of volunteers and partner organisation delivering the marketing material.



The marketing priorities for the project shifted in accordance with the project's needs. Trinity's website was the main source of information about the project. The project volunteer and Trinity's IT

worker were tasked with keeping the website up to date. As Trinity's website secured approximately 12,000 hits a week this was an effective vehicle for promoting the project. In keeping with equalities practice all paid roles were advertised through public media. The Coordinators also used neighbourhood forum mailing lists to target harder to reach groups.

In the second month of the project The Coordinators developed and disseminated a press release explaining the project's aims and objectives and the various opportunities for participation. The project used a range of artist forums such as Arts Council Jobs website, World Jungle and Bristol dance to recruit artists. In this regard the speed dating event was an effective means of spreading information about the workshops.

The workshops were promoted through a printed and email-flyer which listed the dates of all the workshops. The flyer was disseminated to various community and arts organisations and left at appropriate venues. Specific flyers were also developed for particular workshops this was partly necessitated by having to re-advertise the dance, installation and music workshop due to the initially low take-up. The team therefore embarked upon a second marketing and promotional campaign from July, August to recruit more participants.

The marketing of the final show followed two distinct streams. When the idea for using the Odyssey first emerged The Coordinators wanted to include social media to create an immersive world ahead of the show which played with notions of truth and artifice. The artistic director worked in partnership with City of Bristol College to create Poseidon Foundation website. The Foundation was the imaginary corporation which ran the city. The artistic director and students from City of Bristol and Nailsea also added content to the website. The website was separate from but linked to the Trinity Community Arts website. The Coordinators felt it would defeat the purpose of having a website if were hosted by a 'real world' venue. In addition the team created twitter accounts for each character. The actors and team tweeted as if the characters were involved in real world events as they transpired in the weeks leading up to the opening night.

The Coordinators commissioned First Born Studios to produce trailers for the show from the underspend on documenting the workshops with the trailers uploaded to YouTube, available from the beginning of April:

- Penelope http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cLYC_TuMv7o
- Telemachus <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1X0jaPyDhSk>
- Odysseus <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztXXWI1YqWM>
- Cassandra <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hF5SI3BmHk>

Promoting the show itself took the more conventional route of flyers, emails, and broadcast interviews. The project recruited media graduate Ellie Meanwell. Ellie worked closely with the Producer, The Coordinators and Trinity's IT assistant to promote the show particularly through creating and maintaining the Facebook and Twitter accounts.

The budget for the entire show for marketing had been reduced by additional outlay on recruitment for the workshops. The project therefore considered that they could maximise the promotional effort through out sourcing the promotion of the show to marketing firm *Plastered*. Plastered was keen to move into the promotion of theatre and arts events and therefore reduced it's fee. Using Plastered meant not putting an ad inside Bristol's magazine, principally Clifton Life. The project could not afford both. However, perhaps in vindication of this decision Plastered secured a Points West feature filmed at various locations in the final rehearsal week, which was a key aspect of promoting the show to wider audiences.

Achievements and Learning

The team created clear, concise and attractive marketing material throughout the project.

They used a variety of media to engage a broad range of Bristolians. Securing a double page review in Bristol's Evening Post and a significant feature in BBC Points West are two particularly notable success. Anecdotally many more Bristolians were aware of the project than were able to participate which suggests that the marketing was indeed effective.

The show was well attended but was not picked up by any major reviewers, though there were some quite positive previews and blog reviews. As highlighted across the report, a better overall marketing strategy is needed, including a clear investment in marketing coordination and PR from the start, as well as a rethink as to how a marketing budget for a project like this can be invested to achieve maximum scope and reach. For example, instead of two artistic leads at the end of the project, a Marketing Manager might be a better option to finish off the project and focus on marketing strategy and best implementation

Working with fewer community groups would have reduced the cost of marketing and the pressures of promoting the workshops. This in turn would have allowed for resources to be pushed towards the final show. The use of social media, the creation of an on-line world emerged at too late a date to provide an additional area of promotion for the project. YouTube, Twitter and Facebook in particular required a longer lead-in time in order to gather a meaningful number of followers.

Arguably The Bridges Team could have concentrated their energies on promoting the project through the Trinity website. The Bridges Team may also have missed an opportunity unique to this project as audience members who had followed one of the journey's often said that they wished to return to see the play from the perspective of another character. Evidence therefore suggests a discounted offer for two or three of the journeys would have been popular with audiences.



Project Documentation

The Coordinators appointed Bristol media production company First Born Creatives to document each phase of the project. They agreed a schedule for documentation that would reflect the £3,000 budget. This was a modest fee given the scope of the project therefore The Bridges Team agreed to support the documentation process.

The exhibition and selected workshops were documented by Bristol media company First Born Creatives, UWE photography student Marton Gosztonyi and The Bridges Team. The changes to the delivery dates led to an under documentation of some of the workshops. First Born staff were not always available while members of The Bridges Team were sometimes deployed elsewhere.

The final show was documented by First Born, Bridges Team, and in house Trinity staff. There is over 1500 photos of the final show. In addition Trinity volunteers filmed the entire first night of the show.

First Born Creatives have also produced a short film as documentary evidence of the entire project.

Achievements and Learning

The narrative of the entire project has been documented across various media. There exists a significant body of material for TCA to evidence what has occurred and to promote future activities.

The short falls in documentation are partly due to the events which occurred during the project delivery. It is also in part due to the cost of hiring external contractors to document the project. Given the skills within the in-house and Bridges Team and the ready availability of technology, gaps in the documentation could have been prevented. It can be said that during pressurised times of delivery documenting the project fell down the check list of priorities.

The value of documentation must be reiterated throughout future projects. The Bridges Team's capacity was taken up with activity development, planning and delivery, leaving little scope for them to take on tasks such as creating online content around the project (i.e. regular news items, updates, pictures) to encourage participation. The part-time nature of The Coordinators has perhaps contributed to difficulties around gathering more photographic evidence of the project workshops and support from a Marketing and Administration Assistant could help to support committed volunteers in the delivery of such tasks. It is therefore recommended that for a future project of this scale that a Marketing and Administration Assistant be costed in to lead on these aspects. This is necessary not only regarding the documentation itself, but in the processing and selection of images where there have been large volumes of images taken.



CONCLUSION

The Bridges Project was the longest and most ambitious arts project that Trinity Community Arts has undertaken to date. It has for the most part met the aims and objectives outlined in the grant application. The quality of the final outcome has further more enriched TCA's reputation as a key arts provider.

A crucial challenge yet remains in how to engage harder to reach groups within the inner city area. There have been significant changes to the landscape of voluntary sector organisations which have made this task ever more difficult. The capacity of some organisations has been reduced while others have folded. Selecting fewer target groups to work with is a possible solution.

The success of the project owes much to the tenacity and resourcefulness of all involved. This was a project that was in many aspects much bolder than had been budgeted for, and in excess of the available capacity. Effective management by TCA ensured that these deficiencies did not diminish the quality of the artistic experience. Future funding will take on board the lessons learned. Key areas of consideration will include the integration of project activities, marketing and administration into TCA's regular activities.

In terms of the organisation, a show with a limited capacity over a long show run was essentially a waste of a large venue as it prohibited the venue's use for other activities during this time. A larger capacity show over less nights, or a flexible set that can be taken down and re-set to allow other activities to continue would be a better use of the venue.

As this was the first large-scale arts-focused project of this nature at The Trinity Centre, future projects would benefit from better working practices, focused financial support, appropriate marketing and as well as better communication channels and outreach to ensure that the project has the desired scope and reach.

Overall the project was successful in terms of participant numbers, audience numbers and profile and TCA hopes to build upon this for future community arts projects.





Participant numbers

Group	Sub-group	Number
Artists	97	
	for the workshops	8
	networking event	60
	professional actors for show	5
	writers supporting with short story project	3
	production team	19
	other	2
Participants	238	
	attendees of the workshops	120
	volunteer numbers	41
	ensemble	38
	community group participants	10
	steering group	5
	short story entrants	24
Audience	774	
	visitors to the exhibition and launch	150
	attendees of show	624
Activities	67	
	performance	11
	exhibition	11
	workshops	33
	networking event 2 days	2
	sessions for stewards/stage managers	10
New commissions	2	
Period of employment for artists	392	