



AGEING WELL: CREATIVE AGEING AND THE CITY

Symposium Report

by Elizabeth Lynch MBE

A day of exploration, celebration and curiosity

20 September 2019 at The Guildhall, London





Photo: Roswitha Chesher

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AGEING WELL

CREATIVE AGEING & THE CITY

MUSEUMS
HAVE HUGE
POTENTIAL for
SOCIAL SHIFT



entelechy
arts



DIVERSITY



LINK!



LINK!

HOUSING
MUSEUMS
GALLERIES



LINK!



MANCHESTER

CULTURE
RIPPLES
...
POWER

CO-DESIGN

OLDER

adults

SO

INVOLVED

LINK!



LINK!

VOICES
REAL



PREFACE

Entelechy Arts and the Albany were proud to be the co-producers of Age Against the Machine, the London Borough of Lewisham's Festival of Creative Ageing, winner of a Cultural Impact Award as part of the Mayor of London's London Borough of Culture initiative.

For three weeks in September and October 2019 Lewisham's theatres, parks, community halls, streets, libraries, residential care homes and myriad other public spaces were host to music events, theatre performances, craft workshops, discussions, fashion parades, films, exhibitions and many more creative events all celebrating the creativity of older Lewisham residents.

The whole festival clearly demonstrated the power of the arts in enabling our oldest and often most isolated and excluded citizens to make an active and vibrant contribution to civic life.

At the heart of our festival programme we held a symposium to bring together the voices and lived experiences of older participants, artists and cultural strategists to reflect on developing best practice. **Creative Ageing and the City** brought together contributors from Manchester, London and Tokyo to explore effective ways in which artists, arts organisations, local authorities, health and other community partners can effectively work together in new ways to support isolated and frail older people connect with, and contribute to, the cultural life of their communities.

This report effectively captures key contributions and learnings from what was a very energizing and action provoking day.

David Slater
Artistic Director
Entelechy Arts

Gavin Barlow
CEO/Artistic Director
the Albany



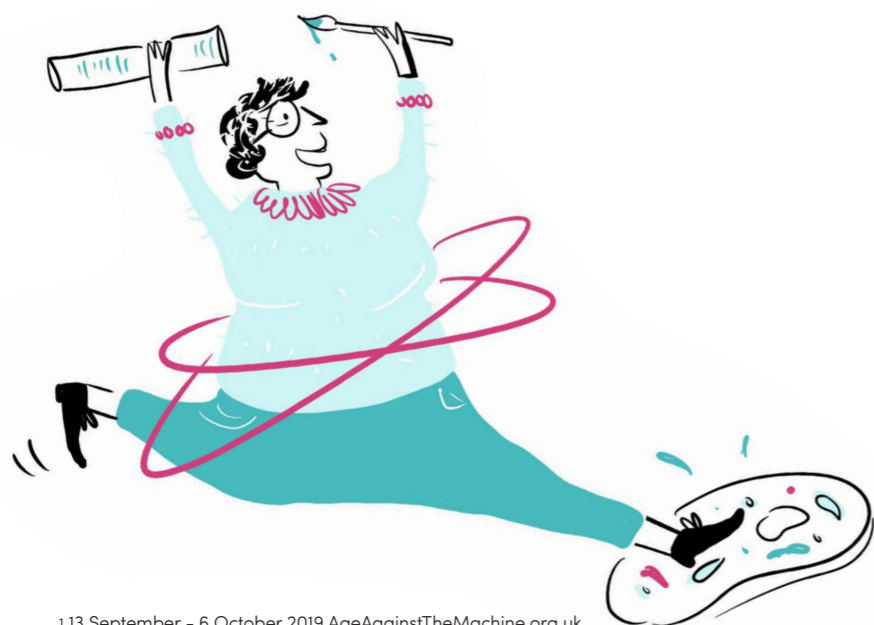
INTRODUCTION

2019 – 2020 has witnessed a pivotal moment for the creative ageing movement in the UK. Manchester Museum has launched a new sector support body for the creative ageing field, which aims to develop the legacy of the Baring Foundation's ten-year investment in the sector. Baring Foundation's recently published report *Older and wiser?* has illustrated the powerful impact of creative work on the health and wellbeing of older people. Arts Council England have launched their new 10-year strategy *Let's Create* which has an emphasis on greater inclusion and participation for all. *The Ageing Well: Creative Ageing and the City* symposium stood at the crossroads drawing on the experiences of three cities, looking back and looking forward.

METHODOLOGY

This report captures the key messages from the 11 keynote speakers and some findings in response to the questions posed to delegates during two roundtable discussion sessions.

The speakers were audio recorded and several provided transcriptions of their talks. Four of the 20 table discussions were audio recorded and six table scribes provided notes. In addition a visual scribe captured highlights from the speeches and from some of the discussions. After the conference we captured short interviews from 12 people (9 delegates, 3 speakers). There were 11 responses to a follow-up survey circulated to all 77 delegates after the symposium.



Old
~~not~~
cold





CONTEXT

Contributors from London, Manchester and Tokyo came together to share best practice examples of cultural initiatives that support agency and active participation as we age.

The symposium aimed to deepen the conversation between health, social care, arts and cultural organisations that are working with older people, including those who are isolated and living with complex health conditions.

The whole system approach of Personalised Care within the NHS recognises the contribution of communities and the voluntary and community sector to support people and build resilience. The recent work of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing has clearly evidenced that involvement in the arts can help meet major challenges facing health and social care: ageing, long-term conditions, loneliness and mental health.

Locally how can the arts, care and health sectors develop more embedded and sustained relationships to support the wellbeing of our oldest citizens? The focus of the event was to practically explore effective and everyday ways in which artists, arts organisations, local authorities, health and other community partners can work together in new ways to support older people, including those who are isolated and frail, to connect with, and contribute to, the cultural life of their communities.

The key messages from the day's speakers' presentations were:

- 1. Creative Ageing sector is now on people's radar but remains precarious**
- 2. Local authorities have a key strategic role to play**
- 3. Partnerships across different sectors and services are crucial for achieving funding and sustainability**
- 4. Social Prescription is an opportunity**
- 5. Listen to older people and involve them from the start**
- 6. Artistic leadership and support for emerging artists at any age is vital**
- 7. There is much work to be done in care homes**
- 8. Creative ageing is now an international movement**

Our hosts **Dominic Campbell**, founder of Creative Aging International and **Rosaline Muirhead**, founder member of Meet Me and advocate for creative ageing gave us a warm welcome setting the tone for a day when older people themselves featured on the platform line-up.

The first three speakers described how strategic funding has supported creative ageing and opportunities for further sources of support in the future.

SETTING THE SCENE: WHERE ARE WE NOW?

DAVID CUTLER
DIRECTOR
BARING FOUNDATION

David Cutler reflected on the impact of the Baring Foundation's (BF) investment in creative ageing since 2010, which has focused on participatory arts with people over the age of 60 facing disadvantage or discrimination. He acknowledged that this kind of activity had been going on for on long time in the UK, led by 'a noble group of pioneers, about a dozen, from the 70s 80s and 90s' such as Entelechy Arts, Magic Me and Equal Arts. In addition, a group of around 100 arts organisations would occasionally take an interest in older people subject to sporadic/one-off funding. Ten years on, BF will publish an independent report in November 2019, *Older and Wiser*, analysing the impact of their strategic funding. In addition, findings of a short survey of the arts sector by BF were published in Arts Professional ².

One clear observation is that there has been a mainstreaming, broadening and deepening of creative ageing activity.

10 years ago, I think it'd be true to say that for many arts organisations...asking them to tell us about engaging older people would seem a slightly curious question. They'd say that the Arts Council 'is giving us money to do work with children, young people, that's really important, because all the older people come in anyway'. I think it would be very, very unusual now to find arts organisations that could not give a really considered thoughtful answer to that question. And in almost all instances, would have some type of programme for the engaging older people.

A second observation is that the UK is now part of a much broader international movement, driven by an increased interest in arts and health, recognition that we are ageing society, the significance of dementia and how the arts can engage with people living with dementia and also great direct awareness of the ills of social isolation for older people.

David attributes the arts-led nature of the UK activity to encouragement by arts funders, notably Arts Council England and Baring Foundation and to arts organisations themselves, *"I think there's been less movement in other related sectors for creative ageing."*

10 years ago, I said there was almost nothing in the way of national policy around art and older people...10 years later, that's pretty much true across the four nations. There's much more interest in arts and health, but not at a national government level, on creativity and ageing. And that's particularly true in England where there isn't even a national strategy for ageing, full stop, let alone arts and ageing. I think there is much, much more that can be done by older people's organisations themselves about valuing culture. Again, there are clearly exceptions. But I think, few in comparison to what's been happening in the arts sector, and the potential there is enormous.

There's much more to be done in care homes. We all know about the crisis in care homes. And we all know how difficult it is for care homes to even exist, let alone think about the arts. However, the arts are immensely important for people working in care homes and for residents.

Ageism was highlighted as a challenge for the arts sector. Do we think about emerging artists being older? Finally David acknowledged that whilst local authorities are well placed to lead and encourage work about creativity and older people, this was the exception, not the rule.

Cuts in local authority funding, roughly a 50% reduction in over the past 10 years, mean that realistically what we need to look for is not funding but their attention in their extremely demanding, crowded, almost overwhelming demands on their attention ³.

BF have tried to encourage exchanges between local authorities in the UK and also internationally. An example of where it's working well is in Helsinki, Finland, where the work is very much led by the local authority, not by arts organisations. They have a statutory duty to be considering the to be reporting to government and much better funded, and they're much better at using data⁴.

³ Also see: The Role of Local Authorities in Creative Ageing by David Cutler baringfoundation.org.uk/resource/the-role-of-local-authorities-in-creative-ageing/

⁴ In order to achieve the maximum results, the Social Services and Health Care Department and the Cultural Office have strengthened their interdepartmental cooperation. The main aim behind this is to improve the role of arts and artists within elderly care, on a cross sectoral basis. Arts-based elderly care: an alternative approach to developing a better future for the elderly by Jenni Varho, Cultural Planning Officer, City of Helsinki Cultural Office & Social Services and Health Care Department

REBECCA BLACKMAN

NATIONAL DIRECTOR FOR ENGAGEMENT AND AUDIENCES
AND AREA DIRECTOR FOR THE MIDLANDS

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Rebecca Blackman gave an overview of Arts Council England (ACE) strategy for funding arts with and for older people within their mission *Great Art and Culture for Everyone 2010–2020*. ACE responded pro-actively to evidence from the annual Taking Part Survey⁵ about the decline in cultural engagement after the age of 75. This statistic was identified alongside a significant upward shift in the age profile of England's demographics.

Rebecca outlined some of the challenges that some strategic funding programmes have faced, such as Arts in Care Homes in partnership with Baring Foundation. Their reflections on the programme led to the thinking that their focus should be more asset based, should engage people before they went into care settings and should explore a wider range of contexts.

Celebrating Age 2016⁶ aimed to support arts and cultural spaces to be open, positive and welcoming places for older people. This could involve: testing and applying new ways to engage older people; empowering them to help shape what's on offer; commissioning older artists or art that has particular relevance/resonance. Projects are ongoing and are being evaluated using a 'most significant change model'⁷.

This participatory model looks at changes and impacts from the perspective of stakeholders. Many powerful individual stories collectively make a compelling narrative. Participants saying 'I am someone, when you're old you are still someone'; a man rediscovering he could play the violin; people creating new networks and starting to define themselves as creative; residents moving from being asleep in their chairs in the lounge to being awake, smiling and clapping – despite a staff member having said they couldn't turn the telly off.



Nearly 54,000 people have been engaged to date; 68% over 65 at mostly morning week days and in public venues which are not exclusively arts or cultural ones. Cultural organisations are developing new partnerships... a significant proportion of the people we are reaching have disabilities. Co-production with older people themselves features significantly ranging from Leeds Playhouse co-producing a festival with a group of curators living with dementia to Live Age older ambassadors in Stoke carrying out their own peer research. We've seen the programme build social capital in settings where people may not have spoken to one another before and some interesting intergenerational work. We also have evidence of the impact it is starting to have on staff in some settings. Not that there aren't still challenges.

In addition to targeted programmes, ACE also funds older people activity through National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) and through Project Grants.⁸ In addition ACE funding has supported a cultural commissioning programme that crossed into creative ageing and activity through the Research Grants programme.⁹

In February 2020, Arts Council England committed to a prioritisation of work that supports older people in the first three years of the 2020–2030 strategy *Let's Create*. Some of the key shifts that they think the strategy represents are: the importance of creativity for **all** ages, the relevance of arts for health and well-being, and an interest in older people as individual artists and creative. When the final vision is informed by the consultation findings, Rebecca said:

Even if there didn't end up being specific older people focused programmes, there will be an expectation of embedding it when we talk about people of all ages. and perhaps we need to ensure we are measuring and capturing this properly. And then we need to make sure that we are able to measure and capture what is happening around that whole area of work.

5 <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/taking-part-survey>

6 <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/news/celebrating-age-through-arts-and-culture> (in partnership with Baring Foundation)

7 https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/most_significant_change

8 Examples include The Courtyard, Hereford and Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

9 Example: <https://theposhclub.co.uk/impact/>

NIKKI CRANE

INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT
SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

Nikki Crane gave a useful outline of how social prescribing might work for the arts sector and creative ageing. She described social prescription as offering a pathway for the referral of health service patients to local non-clinical services with the aim of promoting their health and wellbeing. Examples of Social Prescription schemes include – arts, cookery, gardening, befriending and a myriad other activities largely provided by the voluntary and community sector. Good examples of how the arts are taking hold in social prescription are Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group¹⁰ where arts on prescription is embedded in clinical pathways due to the Group's bold leadership.

I see social prescribing as an open door for the arts, a huge opportunity to embed the arts, which have been so much on the margins, in a national scheme... social prescribing takes in so much of the body of knowledge and experience of work that is already going on (and has been for years) so we need to draw on all of this and not treat it as a separate initiative. This is an opportunity to join up all that the arts have to offer: enhancing healthcare spaces, art-based training of health professionals and drawing on the increasingly robust evidence base conscientiously built up over so many years.

Nikki summarised some of the challenges of social prescribing (SP) for the arts sector:

- **Training for Link Workers:** The arts sector needs to work hard to contribute to Link Workers' knowledge and experience of the arts and work in partnership (e.g. with NHS) to enhance training.¹¹
- **A united front:** the arts sector needs to work with local authorities and other voluntary sector organisations to coordinate the arts and culture offer
- **Capacity and funding:** joining up arts organisations interested in SP in local consortia where resources and expertise can be shared would be one positive step forward while questions remain around new funding for this area of work.
- **Artistic quality:** 'Seek out the transformational work.' Our standards of delivery in this field must be upheld and not compromised by the emphasis on the quantity that is required to make SP work.
- **Evidence:** It's early days for effectively evaluating social prescribing but we can draw upon the evidence we already have as a basis.

Let's pull all our resources together to make this work especially at a time when increasingly there is a call for non-medical interventions, those interventions that can support self-management and independence.

When I worked in an arts and health setting, I was always surprised by the number of doctors who would comfortably tell me how playing an instrument or singing or painting relived their stress and anxiety, and in the same breadth would tell me that concerts in the hospital offered no value at all.

Moirra Sinclair, Vice-Chair, London Mayor's Cultural Leadership Board



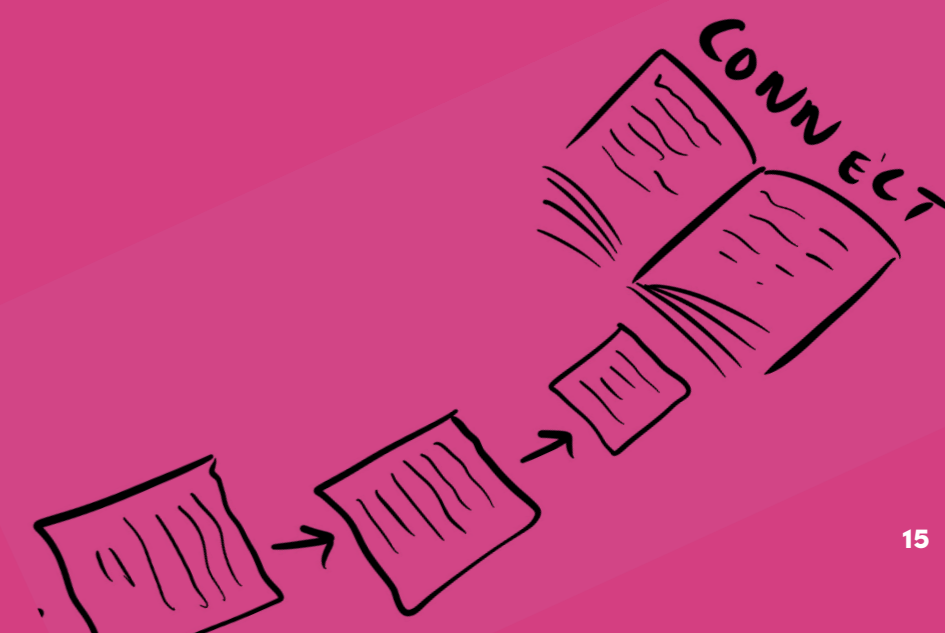


CITY STORIES: LONDON, MANCHESTER AND TOKYO

Throughout the day all the speakers referred to the crucial role of partnership working in order to influence policy, to deliver strategy and to secure and support funding, resources and sustainability. As David Cutler pointed out, artist and arts organisations have been leading by example, demonstrating good practice, engaging and involving older people from the outset. Panels of artists, older artist volunteers, activists and arts managers from three cities told us about their inspiring work, their successes and the challenges they face.

When the Deputy Mayor of Lewisham, Chris Best welcomed delegates prior to the above speaker's presentations, she gave the symposium an insight into a local authority's strategic role in leading, supporting and nurturing creative ageing. Later the story of creative ageing work in Lewisham and beyond its boundaries was expanded by speakers from Entelechy Arts and the Albany.

Manchester and Lewisham were offered as inspiring examples of where this is working well. London also sees the value of the arts and health sectors working together and is integral to the Mayor's Culture Strategy.





LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

CHRIS BEST

DEPUTY MAYOR OF LEWISHAM AND
CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

What if isolated and vulnerable older Lewisham residents went to an arts centre instead of a day centre?

In Lewisham there are close working relationships in the Community Services Directorate that includes adult social care and culture as well as public health, adult education, libraries, sports, arts, community safety, funding of the third sector and community engagement including their local assemblies.

"We asked ourselves "What if isolated and vulnerable older Lewisham residents went to an arts centre instead of a day centre? This question started a partnership between Lewisham, the Albany and Entelechy Arts in putting the arts centre stage in combating loneliness and isolation by bringing our elders together and eventually led to the incredible 'Meet Me at the Albany' which has transformed the lives for many residents. How that has evolved and how successful it has become we could not have imagined but it is from this leap of faith that the Age Against the Machine Festival grew."

Good Practice Case Study 1: The Albany and Entelechy Arts

GAVIN BARLOW
CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
THE ALBANY

The Albany is a neighbourhood arts centre, driven by the cultural and creative diversity of our local area. We aim to be a 'world class community arts centre', in that we believe you can work hyper locally and that work can have a national and international resonance. With 30 resident organisations the heart of our approach is partnership and a spirit of collaboration with artists, organisations across sectors, and with local people.

In 2013 we began the **Meet Me at the Albany** project in partnership with Lewisham Council and Entelechy Arts. Entelechy Arts is a participatory arts company who have been based at the Albany for over 20 years. They collaborate with people who may be marginalised and place arts practice at the heart of a process striving for more connected and engaged communities. It's been a powerful and enduring partnership that's positively changed both organisations.

Meet Me... started principally from a challenge and a question. The challenge was from Lewisham Council – they needed to reduce funding for day centres, and challenged local arts organisations to come up with any answers that could address the problem. It was a remarkable leap of faith, and a willingness to invest in new ideas at a very difficult time. The question we asked ourselves was: what if it's an arts centre that vulnerable older people come to rather than a day centre? How could that be better? We also wanted to reframe the problem: rather than just how do we care for older people, we wanted to ask: what is their potential, what can they offer their communities, and what can their communities offer them?

At its heart it's simply a weekly arts club but it has prospered over the last six years despite inevitable cuts in funding. It's led to a myriad of new projects in the borough and beyond, to new partnerships not just with the health and social care sector, but with housing providers, libraries and others. It has led to new ways of working, and new initiatives including the **Age Against the Machine** festival, of which this symposium is a part.

So turning back to the original **Meet Me at the Albany**, what makes it work?

- **Visibility**, Meet Me is centred in the café at the heart of the Albany building
- **Artists** who play an essential role uncovering and developing the creativity and potential of participants
- **Partnerships** with the health and social care sectors who help with reach the people who need it most and help us meet some of the myriad unexpected challenges along the way
- **Social element**, the first point of entry and a catalyst for creating new supportive participant and volunteer networks
- **An ongoing process of co-creation with participants**. Results include a new choir and a film club and ensuring unlikely outcomes, so an 80 year old is as likely to be suspended in silks at a circus workshop, as enjoying a jazz performance, creating sculpture or writing poetry

As I was watching last Tuesday, it occurred to me that Meet Me does at its best sometimes feel like a vision of an 'everyday utopia' – daft as that might sound, in the sense that it feels both remarkable but also very ordinary and part of normal life. As it should be.

Good Practice Case Study 1: The Albany and Entelechy Arts

DAVID SLATER
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
ENTELECHY ARTS

GWEN SEWELL
PERFORMANCE MAKER AND MEMBER
ENTELECHY ARTS

I thought I'd finished with life but this is waking me up again. It makes you feel you're not dead. You're not worthless. You can do something and still be a part the world.

Nelly Andoh

We began with a room full of people who had been introduced to us by Adult Social Care Teams, Home Library Teams, GPs, neighbours, relatives, Hospital Discharge Teams.

We began with a room full of people carrying different descriptions – the recently bereaved, people living with dementia, people caring for people living with dementia, people living with depression; people in similar situations.

We began with clay, wire, paint, trumpets, wool, poets, tea, aerialists, song and critically, not knowing. We began with the courage to make it up as we went along; the courage of staying with things when you are not quite sure what is going to happen.

Today Meet Me at the Albany is part of a huge relational network of people in their 50s 60s 70s 80s and 90s who come together to make make stuff that has meaning. 300 people are involved on a regular basis. There's Meet Me at the Movies, Meet Me on the Move, Meet Me Moving, an expanding range of activities. Some participants have joined Entelechy's performing company and have toured nationally with our street artwork 'Bed'. One year you join a Meet Me arts group in the lounge of your sheltered housing accommodation and two years later you find yourself on tour performing in Dundee and Cardiff.

And in pride of place, we have these huge 21st Century Dance events. Huge tribal gatherings. A few days ago at the Festival Launch dance it felt as if we were almost able to achieve what the urbanist Jane Jacobs called 'spontaneous combustion'. When people crowd people together informally, says Jacobs, and they will collude, gossip, innovate. They will take agency.

Doing stuff creatively with others enables us to create time instead of killing time. Having something to look forward to. Involvement in the arts has the ability for people to spin the phrase: "what will be come of me?" from a mantra of despair to a question that holds excitement and curiosity.

We need to be able to grow older not just with a GP practice at the end of our street but with an arts centre, a library, a museum a few blocks away. Places that we can develop sustained relationships with; where we can grow into new possibilities of ourselves.

When you get talking to people you find that everyone has got the same story to tell. There may be a few things that are different but mainly it's a story about being lonely and getting lost and not being able to find your way back out.

Pauline Hale on Meet Me

GREATER MANCHESTER

EMMA HORRIDGE

AGE FRIENDLY CULTURE
CHAMPIONS MANAGER

ELAINE UNEGBU

CULTURE CHAMPION AND CHAIR
OF GM OLDER PERSON'S NETWORK

ELIEEN JACKSON

CULTURE CHAMPION AND PART
OF AGE FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOODS

Manchester is one of the Age Friendly Cities recognised by the World Health Organisation

A central unit in the local authority brings together the NHS, the voluntary sector, other public services and older people in a powerful and long-term partnership. Emma Horridge manages the Culture Champions programme, a post which functions across for the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (10 local authorities) Manchester Museum, the Greater Manchester Culture Team and the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub.

It's a new way of working and at times it can be challenging - three different teams wanting you in different places at the same time but over all it's a beneficial way of working... it's helped with combined funding bids and also I've three different teams to turn for advise and expertise. This partnership work has enabled Age Friendly work to be really embedded across Greater Manchester and great example of that is the Culture Champions...a powerful resource for mobilising older people, co-production across the cultural sector and democratising arts and cultural activity with and for older people.

Emma Horridge



Good Practice Case Study 2: Manchester Age-friendly Culture Champions

Elaine Unegbu described the role and impact of the Culture Champions, older people who are ambassadors and advocates for art and culture in the city. This team of 140+ volunteers: connect family, friends and the community to a wide range of cultural experiences; have a voice at neighbourhood and city-wide level to influence policies; co-design activities with cultural organisations and benefit from bespoke tours and subsidised/free tickets to events. The personal and social impacts of this work 'opens a new chapter' in people's lives and sets out a positive vision of ageing. The challenges of ageism and access are all around, but each success motivates pushing back, whether that's about the timings of programmes in cultural organisations, access or transport. Closer links with Black, Asian and other ethnic communities need to be developed.

We have been proactive. We created some Age Friendly Bus guides to give out on buses and to drivers to remind them what makes for a safe and comfortable journey for older people. And many bus drivers have thanked us!

Elaine Unegbu

Another Culture Champion, Eileen Jackson offered detailed practical advice to arts and culture organisations, based on research with older people (see Good practice Case Study below)

There is no denying that older people are at greater risk of missing out on the Cultural offers available. Good practice by organisations needs to be applauded, but it also needs to be firmly built into their everyday practice, and someone within the organisation should monitor it. As older people we will hold you to account! As older people we have a lot to give in return. We don't need everything handed to us on a plate, but we will flourish with a little support and a gentle a helping hand. Ask us what we like, what we would like to see and do. We will tell you... We are all different and our needs are different.

**Good Practice Case Study 2: Manchester Age-friendly Culture Champions**

Eileen Jackson asked a few people in her local community:

What stopped them from taking part in cultural activities? This is what they said:

- **Distance** can be a hurdle for people living miles away from the city centre, even with great transport links, it can take over an hour to travel. Could cultural offers be taken to where people live? Our amazing Halle Orchestra sometimes rehearses in our local leisure centre. Perhaps we can get them to do an impromptu concert every time they come?
- **Accessibility** for people with mobility or other health issues is an issue, especially in older buildings, e.g. uncomfortable seating and hearing loop that don't work – I have been to many performances where the hearing loop is not working. You need to be a very confident person to fight this battle on your special night out! Sometimes I do and sometimes I don't. It's the law for all arts centres and other public buildings to have a (working) loop system.

Where light levels are low, galleries and museums please think about the labelling artefacts and paintings.

Seating is a big issue. My goodness the discussion I had around seating was amazing! Often there is no seating, or it's too low, and those carry round seats, they can be very scary if you have mobility problems. Try walking with a stick and carrying one of those!

When holding meetings and events, think about access to the room, the provision of wheelchairs and whether the staff know where they are. Language used on tours should be understandable.

- **Standards and training:** older people's organisations need to do regular check-ins with arts and culture organisations, what are their age-friendly policies and programme? Do they train their staff regularly?
- **Timing:** Many older people are daunted by getting home from the city centre late at night when performances end. is there a late bus, or tram. How far do I need to walk from the bus or tram stop Can I afford a taxi? Even though we know statistically that it is not little grey haired old ladies who get attacked, The perception is very often different. Personally I like going out at night but some older people prefer matinee performances.
- **Confidence:** Galleries and museums can seem intimidating, so opportunities to go with friends/in groups works well. Have you thought about setting up a buddying scheme? Culture Champions could help with this. Some places offer a companion ticket (2 for the price of one 1)
- **Cost:** Ticket prices of £50 and £60 are beyond the budgets of many older people. How about offering free tickets to particular groups in rotation, with good notice (not 24 hours!).
- **Class:** Arts institutions are all very white, and very middle class. We need to think and do more about getting our museums and galleries to take their exhibitions out to where people live. If we are not coming to you, you need to come to us. Not just for a day, tell them that you will be back next week perhaps with something different. Consider coming to neutral spaces – community buildings such as libraries, community centres, schools, leisure centres and coffee shops.
- **Advertising:** Not all older people have access to social media/internet. As well as these tools, we need to use the old ones too. Word of mouth, newsletters, snail mail, visits to organisations, local press and radio.

TOKYO

SACHIKO UKEGAWA

PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR OF
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MITSUYO OBUCHI

PERFORMER
SAITAMA ARTS THEATRE

HIROSHI WATANABE

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
SAITAMA ARTS THEATRE

ANNU WATANABE

PERFORMER
SAITAMA ARTS THEATRE

Ninagawa tried to demonstrate a creativity totally different from that of professional actors

Japan is a hyper ageing society on a scale as yet experienced nowhere in the world. By 2025 33% of the population will become 65 years or over... by 2060, the ratio goes up to nearly 40%. Life expectancy is nearly 81 for men and 87 for women. The time of life has become a lengthy period that deserves to be called the "second life".

Sachiko Ukegawa

Sachiko Ukegawa described the background to Saitama Arts Theatre which started in 2006, when the internationally acclaimed theatre director Yukio Ninagawa formed a theatre company for people aged 55 and over, Saitama Gold Theatre. About 1,200 people applied and the group started with 48 members selected through auditions. After 13 years, there are 36 members still working with us, but now the average age is 80 years old, with the youngest 68 and the oldest 93 years.

Ninagawa often described that his vision to form this company was born, out of his desire as an artist to search for a new form of theatre, based on the personal histories of people of age. With his Gold Theatre, he tried to demonstrate a creativity totally different from that of professional actors. His strong artistic vision and powerful leadership together have become a driving force of the company.

Sachiko Ukegawa

Working with older actors, the company has to take on board all the physical difficulties related to ageing in addition to their role as carers of older parents.

Doing theatre means to us to live and go through with all these conditions, which reflect our society's urgent issues. However what is so outstanding about Saitama Gold Theatre is its very high artistic standard. Ninagawa never compromised in order to achieve what he wanted to realise on stage, but at the same time worked with the (older actors) with so much care.

Sachiko Ukegawa



Since Ninagawa's death three years ago the company continues with guest directors and new projects that have engaged 1,600 older people not only from the local Saitama community but from nearby Tokyo, remote parts of the country and abroad. 10,000 Gold Theatre (2016) created a major sensation in Japan and proved that arts are needed and wanted by people they hadn't yet reached. Subsequently Saitama set up the Gold Arts Club which meets annually for two to three months to rehearse and stage a show, and has over 1,000 members.

The breathtakingly high artistic quality of the Japanese case study was especially memorable. Delegate

The colour 'silver' is often associated with senior citizens in Japan. Ninagawa considered that becoming old is an upgrade in life rather than a decline – just like a credit card. We could shine more as we age. So he named his company the 'gold' theatre. We decided to adopt the word, to cover the entire older people's programme we conduct. Sachiko Ukegawa

Saitama Arts Theatre is a public theatre run by the local government of Saitama. A 30 minute train ride from Tokyo, it attracts both local audiences and metropolitan Tokyo and visitors from across the country. 2019 marks the theatre's 25th anniversary.

A multi-venue arts centre, with 4 specialist theatres, it features national and international performing arts, is renowned for its work with world leading choreographers and Shakespeare productions directed by the late Yukio Ninagawa, former artistic director of the theatre. An important part of our mission, as a public theatre, is focus on education and community engagement.

World Gold Theatre 2020 is the latest development, an international festival focusing on older people's creative activities. It is expected to serve as a national and international platform for like-minded people who practice in different corners of the world to get together, exchange experiences, share insights, and develop ideas and practices further, through collaboration. Launched in 2018 the second festival will be held in 2020, as part of Cultural Olympiad for Tokyo Olympics & Paralympics. Saitama Theatre will collaborate once again with the Albany and Entelechy Arts and present Christopher Green's The Home in Japan.

Saitama Theatre believe that arts and culture can do so much to realise a society where older people shine and to realise a society where we all shine with older people. Looking forward to seeing you in Japan in September 2020!

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

DISCUSSION 1

WHAT DO WE KNOW THAT WORKS NEAR US? WHY?

At a dozen tables group of 6-10 people shared their knowledge and insights about arts projects transforming the lives of older people with particular reference to the recently retired/active and the isolated and vulnerable. We were able to capture conversations from approximately 50% of the tables. Some delegates shared information about projects that are too numerous to relate here. Please see the delegate list which indicates many of the organisations and projects describes. From the discussions which were scribed or audio recorded, the following findings are summarised below.

WHAT WORKS

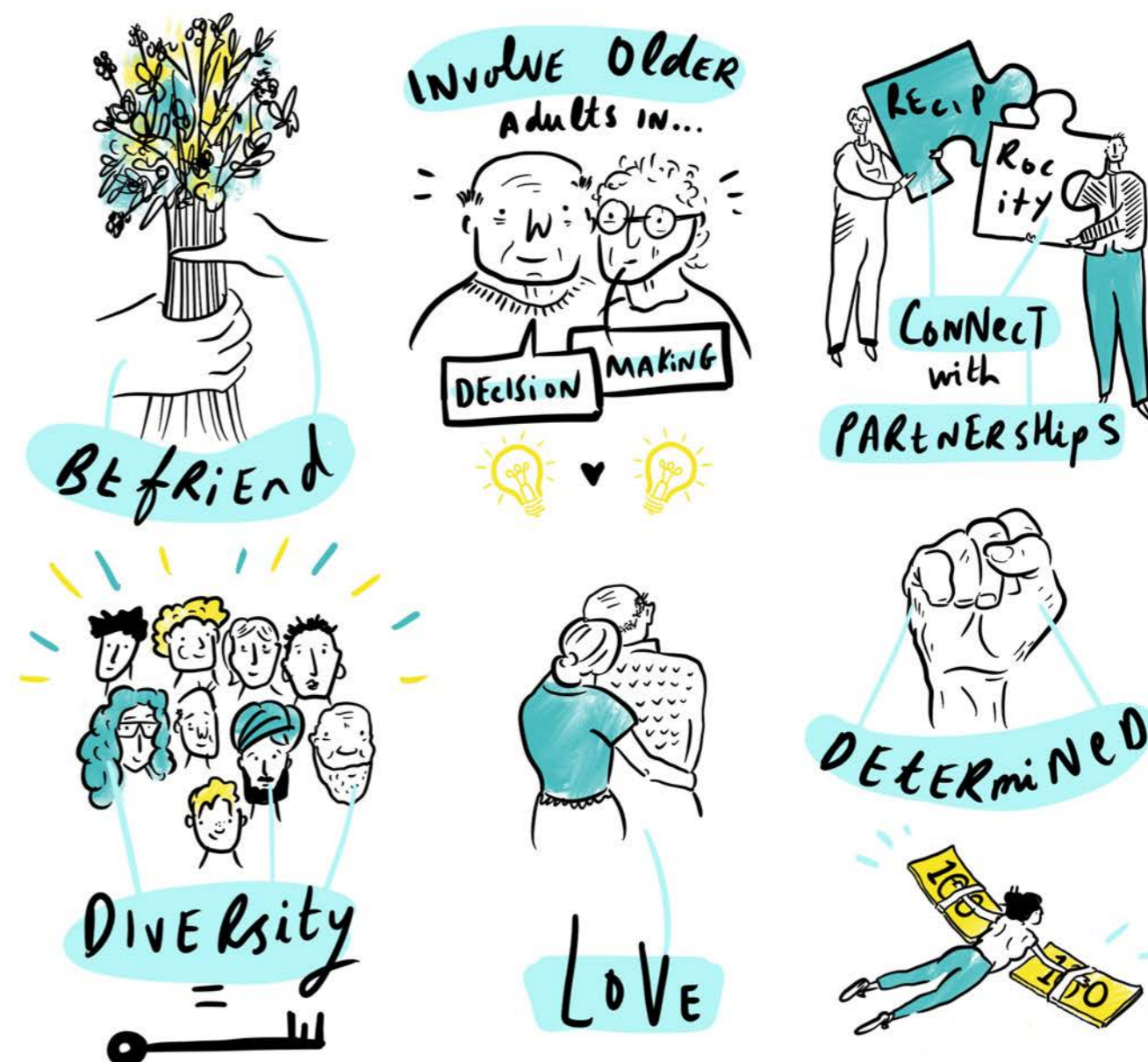
- Going out on home visits to get people interested and involved (and sharing info with health professionals and social workers who do this already)
- Taster sessions
- Befriending volunteers
- Seek funding outside arts funding streams
- Reciprocity – “we have the space and the assets, other people can bring the skills and the abilities into our space”
- Giving time, e.g. Gwen Sewell given the time to speak on stage
- Developing older artists

People come because their GP has said you need to build a strength and balance. And then two years down the line they're doing all these amazing things... one lady said 'I haven't got time to die. I'm too busy. I'm too much in demand.' So that's working for us being there consistently, even though I haven't got any money. Delegate reflection

Thinking about older people as artists as well, (adult learning) that's the place where they are taken seriously as artists and actually something that we need to better connect with.



#1 What Works And Why?



UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

You're asking me what I want. I want to dress up. I want to see a show and I don't want it to be boring. And I don't want it to be for old people. You know, I want to see something funny and glamorous and silly. And I want to be in a beautiful building with beautiful environment and lovely lights, and I want to drink tea out of a proper tea cup. And I want some handsome young man to serve me. I want to feel like the queen.

Delegate reflection

- Making sure you involved older people in decision making
- Work in partnership
- Diversity: gender, ethnicity, class and culture
- Think about mental health/ill health

When we're bringing it into non traditional spaces, and people who don't expect to get involved, then get involved. We bring it into those non traditional spaces, because we form alliances of hosting associations, with the NHS, of all of these different places. And that's, I think, when it really starts to impact on people's lives, and you reach a definite broader group of people. And that's when it starts to get really embedded. And that breaks it down from being this culture, high culture, creativity that isn't for every one.

Delegate reflection

KEY INGREDIENTS

- Local community partners
- Local NHS and health partners
- Dementia training for museum staff
- A warm welcome
- Love, determination and patience

Sticking with something and not knowing what's going to happen in the first year...

CHALLENGES

How will the social prescribing work? How do you advocate for what you do, which has a real body of practice and experience behind it and training and all of that, versus it's (SP) a very unregulated thing, patchy thing?

1. Uncertainty about social prescribing and quality provision, who decides?
2. Consistency and sustainability are interlinked – projects take time to bed in and build trust with participants and partners
3. Many people are not accessing activities so we always need to review the offer and think about diversity and inclusion
4. Large well-funded arts and culture organisations don't always pull their weight in collaborative projects, are takers not givers and expect small organisations with limited funds to bring resources to the table, in addition to participants
5. Language and categorizing- we need to change the way we speak about ageing , e.g. not 'retiring' – you're just stepping from one thing into another
6. Negative preconceptions about artists

Sometimes in the room with a Local Authority, they don't take the work of artists who work with older people seriously. It can be a bit like, Oh, you know, the artists, the fun bit, how adorable. Now, we're the serious people. Delegate reflection



ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

DISCUSSION 2

HOW CAN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS WORK MORE EFFECTIVELY TOGETHER IN SUPPORTING OLDER LIVES TO FLOURISH?

How will the social prescribing work? How do you advocate for what you do, which has a real body of practice and experience behind it and training and all of that, versus it's (social prescribing) a very unregulated thing, patchy thing?

Culture is for all, across the life course. Social prescribing – 'it could be good for you when you are well too, so why only use it as something to address a deficit?'

Delegate reflection

1. Resources – culture is the first thing to be cut when council budgets are reduced. Councils do not always see that culture can also bring solutions. More joined up thinking in local authorities would make better use of resources for older people and arts.
2. Councils have no statutory obligation to provide sports and leisure activities to their residents.
3. Don't underestimate the power of evaluation. Local Government loves hard evidence. Soft outcomes and understanding the holistic approach are important.
4. Significant implications depend on who is in power and if/when there is an election
5. We need to support digital education for older people. There could be digital solutions for some things if there was cross-departmental buy-in.
6. Tourism, whilst attracting people to cities to see/participate in culture, can often focus spend and resources on non-cultural activity, e.g. street cleaning. In Japan, the focus is on tourism with 40 million people expected to visit in 2020. As a result of this increase, Japan is focussing on languages.
7. Japan's ageing population faces similar challenges to that of the UK and artists are looking at the bridges that culture can provide to support its older population.

Access to culture is a human right and feeds our souls.



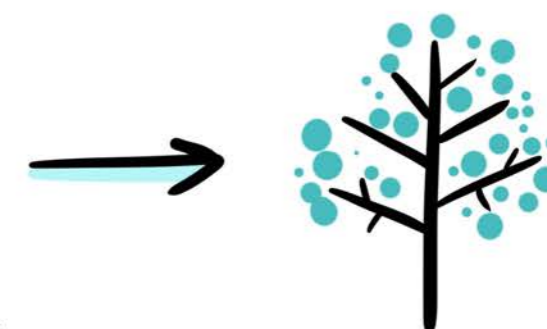
AGEING WELL

Creative ageing & THE city

GRAPHIC RECORDING: MERLIN STRANGWAY



#WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?



Social Isolation



EVIDENCE & EVALUATE

FINAL REFLECTIONS

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY, CULTURE TEAM PERSPECTIVES.

MOIRA SINCLAIR

VICE-CHAIR LONDON MAYOR'S CULTURAL LEADERSHIP BOARD.

Culture has a vital role to play in enabling Londoners from all backgrounds to come together and forge a sense of belonging

Delegate reflection

Greater London also aspires to Age-Friendly City status and Moira Sinclair described how this ambition illuminates many of the issues that cut across into the Cultural Strategy. Practical barriers to participation in culture include inaccessibility of venues, poor health and caring responsibilities of potential participants – and older people (those who are 75+ years) have a lower participation in all the cultural activities measured by the Taking Part survey.

Older Londoners (aged 65 and over) are more likely to report that all their friends are the same race (35 per cent) and the same level of education (36 per cent), and the Mayors' cultural strategy stresses that culture has a vital role to play in enabling Londoners from all backgrounds to come together and forge a sense of belonging...

We are lucky to have a Mayor who understands and values the place of culture as part of the city's DNA...Enjoying culture can help to keep people connected and healthy. Engaging more Londoners, and in particular, vulnerable Londoners, in cultural activity is part of the Mayor's approach to tackling health inequalities and a key commitment in his cultural strategy. Delegate reflection

Moira asked, how can we help build resilience for older Londoners to help them navigate the health and social challenges that can come in later life and how can culture offer a meaningful contribution to any solution we might think about? She echoed the need for the cross-sector approaches described in Lewisham and Manchester:

Partnerships – I know how hard we have to work to establish them, to build trust and create shared endeavour. But the pay off as we've heard all day is worth it.



At Greater London Authority (GLA) culture and health is embedded at the Executive level and in Governance structures, which helps to build momentum. The Mayor's Culture Seeds Projects fund¹² provides micro funding to support local projects and to date that includes 24 Health, Wellbeing and Culture projects. For example, The Workshop, led by artist Benjamin Perrot, worked with local residents to design, build and exhibit temporary urban furniture and generated a new way of building new social ties between elderly residents and younger people. Ben's project was delivered in partnership with a sheltered housing provider and brought together people who might not otherwise meet for a common purpose. The GLA, the Alzheimer's Society and the Museum of London have created a new forum to promote and develop more dementia friendly programmes across the arts sector. The London Arts and Culture Dementia Network brings together organisations including English National Ballet, the Royal Albert Hall and Kew Gardens as well as organisations in film, dance, heritage and art. The network will meet regularly and act as a 'critical friend' and ally to influence policy making whilst promoting a Dementia Friendly London.

What might next steps be...more connecting, more people centred thinking, more aligned service provision...All of us in the cultural sector should be proud of the work we do and its contribution to individual well-being...We don't want to see culture as "good for you" – that feels too reductive. So can we develop a different language and narrative that artists can embrace? One that speaks to 'unusual suspects' (local authority Chief Executives, health commissioners, business leaders) about why this stuff matters and how they can support it.

Whilst the NHS, health and social care sector place a value on culture... As a country, we need to reinvigorate and allocate budgets to the softer, community and people-focused solutions that get to the heart of some issues such as isolation, lack of confidence (physically as well as mentally) and poor social capital. If lack of understanding and evidence is the issue, then both sides need to work to deal with that. Delegate reflection



DELEGATE REFLECTIONS AND FUTURE ACTIONS

Through interviews at the end of the day (12) and a post-event survey (11 responses) we captured some of the shifts in thinking and future actions from delegates. We asked people to respond to two questions.

WHAT HAS RESONATED WITH YOU TODAY?

(SAMPLE: 12 INTERVIEWS)

The need to make sure that we listen to, and give voice to the people we're trying to reach, in this case the older people and make sure that they're informing both policy and practice

(Meeting) with other people and talking about their projects and what they've been doing, that has really hit home. The international flavour has been really reflective.

I was able to meet people from very different sectors including arts, policy and healthcare and academics.. So I my role (in Japan) is to facilitate people from different sectors, bridging gaps and seeing how we can build trust between us. Today has been really encouraging.

We still have a long way to go!

The shared understanding that old age isn't the end, older audiences know what they want, and we need to listen to them. I felt really inspired by the work that was shared (in the discussions) the knowledge of what the impact of the arts is.

Most people are going to listen a bit more. Listening and do some action about it.

The conversation is changing. What's changing is there is a much more deeper and broader conversation within some of the leadership. I was really struck by Moira Sinclair because it wasn't about separating, making ageing another thing. It's incredibly important that there are dedicated resources for older adults because they are so invisible within the culture and within any existing system. But to separate them from the rest of life does a disservice to the rest of us. And I think that conversation is beginning to get richer and deeper.

In uncertain times change can happen for the good, we should take advantage and seize the moral high ground.

The thing that really resonated with me is how much respect (Saitama group) all had for Ninagawa. I think we're a bit afraid of that in this country. Nobody really mentioned the artists today, our pictures just flashed up on the screen.... We could at least get some sort of that same sense of status.

F. Delegate Reflections

WHAT HAS SHIFTED/CHANGED IN YOUR ATTITUDES? WHAT WILL YOU TAKE AWAY FROM THESE DISCUSSIONS OR DO DIFFERENTLY? ARE THERE ANY ACTIONS YOU WILL TAKE?

(SAMPLE: 23 VIA INTERVIEWS AND THE SURVEY)

Delegates reported coming away from the day motivated by new thinking and new ideas. Inspired by the speakers and conversations, several spoke about increased awareness of the creative work being undertaken with older people, their professional commitment to a more joined up approach to the delivery of services in their area and to including creative activity as part of their offer. Several gave examples of making new contacts in their borough, across London and the UK.



The number of contacts to be able to make things happen. So many good things happening but often they're under the radar.

I have planned a meeting with artists and other practitioners to see how can change the emphasis of our service delivery model from day care to art and well-being

I will reaffirm more strength in my resolve, to make sure that arts and cultural providers and organisations are thinking about their work with older people.

I'll look for some more support from the local authorities.

Looking at the way the day centre is structured. Actually do we really need it to be a day centre, could it be an arts centre? So I feel quite motivated to change what we are doing.

It has improved my perception of (the value of) intergenerational work. We don't have to be in our own boxes.

I've learned a lot, looking at others. Sometimes when you're in your own area cocoon, you don't know what's happening. I really I really enjoyed hearing about everything that's been going on in Manchester.

From today, I really want to have this kind of opportunity in Japan, to talk to people in Japan who work for different sectors to talk about arts and the health sector.

I was focusing too much on the impact of arts activities on older people are. But today I found out it's more like a celebration of the older people's creativity. It's really nice to have the actual older people on the stage.

I need to put a post it on my desk that says 'work to the capabilities not to the limitations of older audiences'. Having aspirations for these groups as well. And including them in the conversation at the start of the project.

Events like this are making us increasingly brave to use this place in a different way... Diversification of the figures at the front of the room is critical, critical, critical. In terms of the ages of the people speaking, once you have someone at the front of the room, who speaks slowly, you have to slow down and listen. And it changes the dynamic of the conversation. And it changes what people talk about. And if we're going to change the culture. ..and the arts that get made in it and the way that we go about it and the systems and structures that support those and we need to have those people from the centre of the room.

I'm going to spread the word about all the people to be listened to. And take action. Most times we talk and we talk. Nobody takes any notice. Because you're at a certain age. That should not happen. If we need the buses sorting out, then we need it. (I liked) the woman from Manchester! We'll nick the idea from Manchester.

Having presentations from outside of London shifted my thinking the most - fascinating cultural information so that the work wasn't divorced from cultural, social, geographical context - somehow this illuminated my own work and experience more.

It's certainly challenged me to check my preconceptions about who a creative project might reach/target (i.e. older adults can and should engage with quality performance art). We have also included bus routes on promotional materials for an upcoming event targeting older adults.

I particularly got a lot from those (table) conversations and those practitioners who spoke about place making and geography, the uncovering of grassroots work that was going on everywhere already and of creating different maps (of an area) that includes the natural places where ordinary people are developing initiatives.

APPENDIX: ATTENDEES

Greater London Authority

Angela Farrance
London Borough of Culture Coordinator

Bealtaine Festival

Bridget Deevy
Arts & Culture, Assistant Manager

darts, Doncaster Community Arts

Cara McAleese
Arts & Health Project Manager / Producer

Policy Institute, King’s College London

Caroline Green
Research Student

Magic Me

Catherine Connell
Project Manager, Schools and Communities Programme

British Council (Japan)

Chika Sudo
Project Manager, Arts

City of London

Chris Pelham
Assistant Director, People Services

Greater London Authority

Clare Lovett
Principal Project Development Officer – Culture and Creative Industries

The Centre for Policy on Ageing

Dave Martin
Associate

Breckland Council

Dominique Tonitto
Silver Social Project Coordinator

Sadler’s Wells Theatre

Elaine Foley
Company of Elders

Queen Mary University of London

Elizabeth Quinn
PhD Student

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Emma Gillan
Relationship Manager

Independent

Helen Shearn
Freelance Consultant arts, health & wellbeing

Independent

Jackie Richards
Freelance

Greater London Authority

Jacqueline Rose
Head of Culture (Acting)

Dulwich Picture Gallery

Jane Findlay
Head of Learning and Audience Development

Queen Mary, University of London

Janelle Jones
Lecturer in Social Psychology

Nubian Life Resource Centre

Jazz Browne
CEO

Southwark Council

Jennifer Moore
Senior Culture Officer

Sadler’s Wells Theatre

Joce Giles
Director of Learning and Engagement

Arts Council England

John McMahon
Senior Manager, Policy & Research

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

June Yates
Supervisor, Ageing Well

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance

Kate Atkinson
Head of Community & Professional Development

Kingston Upon Thames

Kathryn Woodvine
Arts Manager

Bealtaine Festival

Kim Chew
Arts & Culture Administrator

Lewisham Council

Liz Dart
Head of Culture and Community Development

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance

Lizzy Green
Projects Manager, Community & Professional Development

The Albany

Lucy Warren
Programme Manager, Meet Me

South Bank Centre

Lucy Wells
Education Manager (Communities)

Leeds Playhouse

Maggie De Ruyck
Older People’s Programme Manager

Fun and Fitness, Hounslow

Marion Pike

Hammersmith & Fulham Council

Michael Law
Manager Community Independence Service

Westminster City Council

Michelle Salerno
Cultural Policy and Projects Officer

Tokyo Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology

Mika Sugiyama

Saitama Arts Theatre

Miki Tanaka
Production Manager

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea Council

Miranda MacFarlane
Culture Development Officer

Lewisham Council

Nancy Stridgen
Arts Officer

South Bank Centre

Nanda Poleon
Coomnites coodinator

Arts Council England

Olivia Lowson
Relationship Manager, Music

Entelechy Arts

Paul Cann
Entelechy Arts Trustee

University of Leicester

Peter Lester
PhD student, School of Museum Studies

The Albany

Rachel Nelken
Head of Creative Programmes

City of London

Randall Anderson
Councillor and Chairman, Community & Children’s Services Committee

Goldsmiths, University of London

Rebecca Charlton
Senior Lecturer in Psychology

Entelechy Arts

Rebecca Swift
Creative Director

Arts Council England

Richard Ings
Relationship Manager

Entelechy Arts

Sarah Jarman
Volunteer Coordinator

The Albany

Sarah Phillips
Meet Me at the Albany Project Coordinator

Fun and Fitness, Hounslow

Satish Dutt

Greater London Authority

Shipra Ogra
Senior Policy Officer, London Borough of Culture at
Greater London Authority

Breckland Council

Stevie Spencer
Locality Officer (Engagement)

London Borough of Camden

Suzie Plumb
Arts Development Officer

Age & Opportunity Ireland

Tara Byrne
Arts Manager Age & Opportunity Ireland

Lewisham Wellbeing Map

Timothy Bradley
Founder

Arts 4 Dementia

Veronica Franklin Gould
President

Kanagawa Arts Theatre

Yasunori Sato
Producer

Setagaya Public Theatre

Yukari Shiohara
Producer

Shizuoka Performing Arts Centre

Yuki Nakaura
Producer

HOSTS AND SPEAKERS

Creative Ageing International
Dominic Campbell
Co-Founder

Meet Me
Rosaline Muirhead
Meet Me Participant

Saitama Arts Theatre
Hiroshi Watanabe
Executive Producer

Saitama Arts Theatre
Sachiko Ukegawa
Programme Director

Saitama Arts Theatre
Annu Watanabe
Actor

Saitama Arts Theatre
Mituyo Obuchi
Actor

Christopher Green
Artist

Arts Council England
Rebecca Blackman
Director, Audience and Engagement & Midlands Area Director

Entelechy Arts
David Slater
Artistic Director, Entelechy Arts

FOR ENTELECHY ARTS AND THE ALBANY

Entelechy Arts
Caitlan Smith
Goldsmith's University Student Intern

Entelechy Arts
Jessica Acton
Administrator

Entelechy Arts
Christine Lee
General Manager

The Albany
Meg Hendrickse
Duty Manager

The Albany
Kate Farrell
Head of Marketing & Communications

The Albany
Polly Cotran
Marketing & Communications Manager

The Albany
Alison Hamilton
Executive Assistant

The Albany
Gavin Barlow
Chief Executive Officer/Artistic Director

Baring Foundation
David Cutler
Director

King's College London
Nikki Crane
Programme Lead – Arts, Health and Wellbeing

Lewisham Council
Chris Best
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet member for Health and Adult Social Care

Greater Manchester
Emma Horridge
Age Friendly Culture Champion Manager

Greater Manchester
Elaine Unegbu
Culture Champion and Chair of Greater Manchester's Older Persons Network

Greater Manchester
Eileen Jackson
Culture Champion and Age Friendly Neighbourhoods

Meet Me
Gwen Sewell
Meet Me Participant, Performance Maker

Greater London Authority
Moira Sinclair
Vice Chair, London Mayor's Cultural Leadership Board

Chieko Kehoe
Translator

Emiko Yamaguchi
Translator

Chiaki Gulvin
Translator

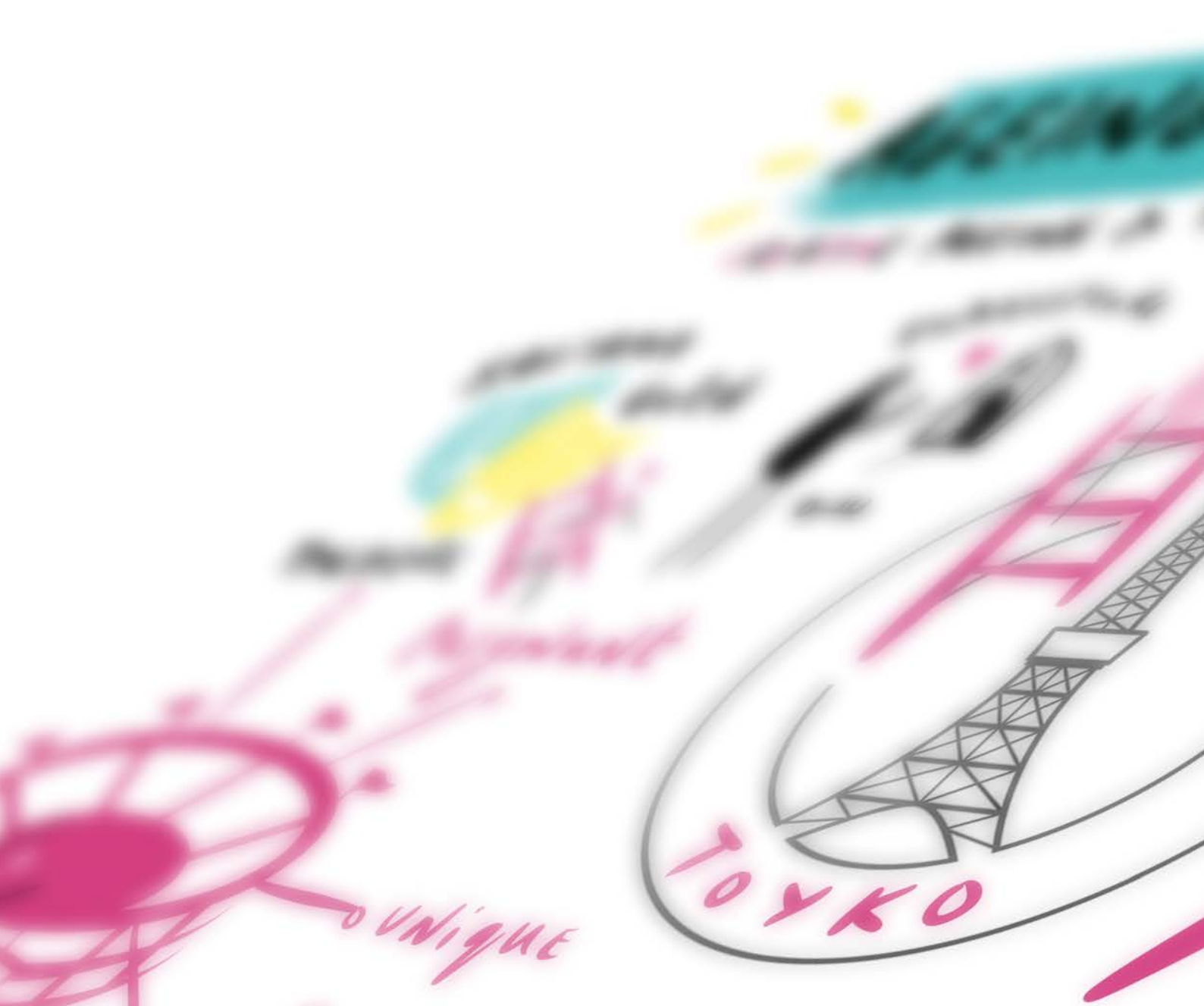
NOTE ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elizabeth Lynch MBE is an arts producer and researcher who works with artists and communities. Her experience lies in collaborating with and commissioning artists, especially in community contexts, and producing interdisciplinary projects across art, science, health and education. She established the flagship Roundhouse Studios as Director 2001-8 and now works for various arts and culture organisations including Wellcome, National Trust and LAMDA. She is an Associate Research Fellow in Contemporary Theatre at Birkbeck University, Chair of Board for Theatre-Rites, Trustee for Arts Catalyst, Critical Friend for Ideas Test and a member of Spitalfields Music Advisory Group. In the New Year Honours 2020 she was awarded an MBE for services to art and culture.



Visual scribe
Merlin Strangeway
drawntomedicine.com

Photography
Chris Marchant



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Symposium delegate

Written by **Elizabeth Lynch MBE** October 2019

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MAYOR OF LONDON



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