

The Cultural Sisters

Annual Report 2022



Creative Connections in 2022

The Cultural Sisters artists worked with over 600 people on 6 projects this year. We continued to be Community Health Champions. We supported a CHC event day and received another grant to help us share health messages with people we worked with and our followers on social media. We received £5000 funding from Stoke on Trent City Council to work on two creative projects with artists and community members from the LGBTQI+ community. We continued to work with SPLAT Children's Holiday Activities to run carnival arts sessions, worked with Fegg Hayes Community Hub to make costumes with their families, and created an artwork with the Dudson Centre using mosaic techniques. We are very grateful to our artists, our support artists and volunteers, trustees and friends who continue to support us, encourage us and remind us of the importance of our work.

Some lovely words from our Chair ...

I was very honoured to be elected Chair of The Cultural Sisters Trustees again for 2022 and would like to thank all those who have been Trustees, friends and supporters of the organisation. As always we are indebted to all those who do such amazing work and would especially like to mention Jess who undertakes the administration and financial roles, such important roles often overlooked.

Since the Lockdown ended things have moved on and in 2022 a feeling of normality returned. Our projects became more accessible, and I feel this Annual Report reflects this. The Cultural Sisters have for so many years supported a multitude of people in their lives and development with extraordinary skills and innovation, 2022 was no different.

I would like to thank all those who gave financial support through grants, joint projects, fees and to the many who offered support voluntarily whether in organisation or practical work.

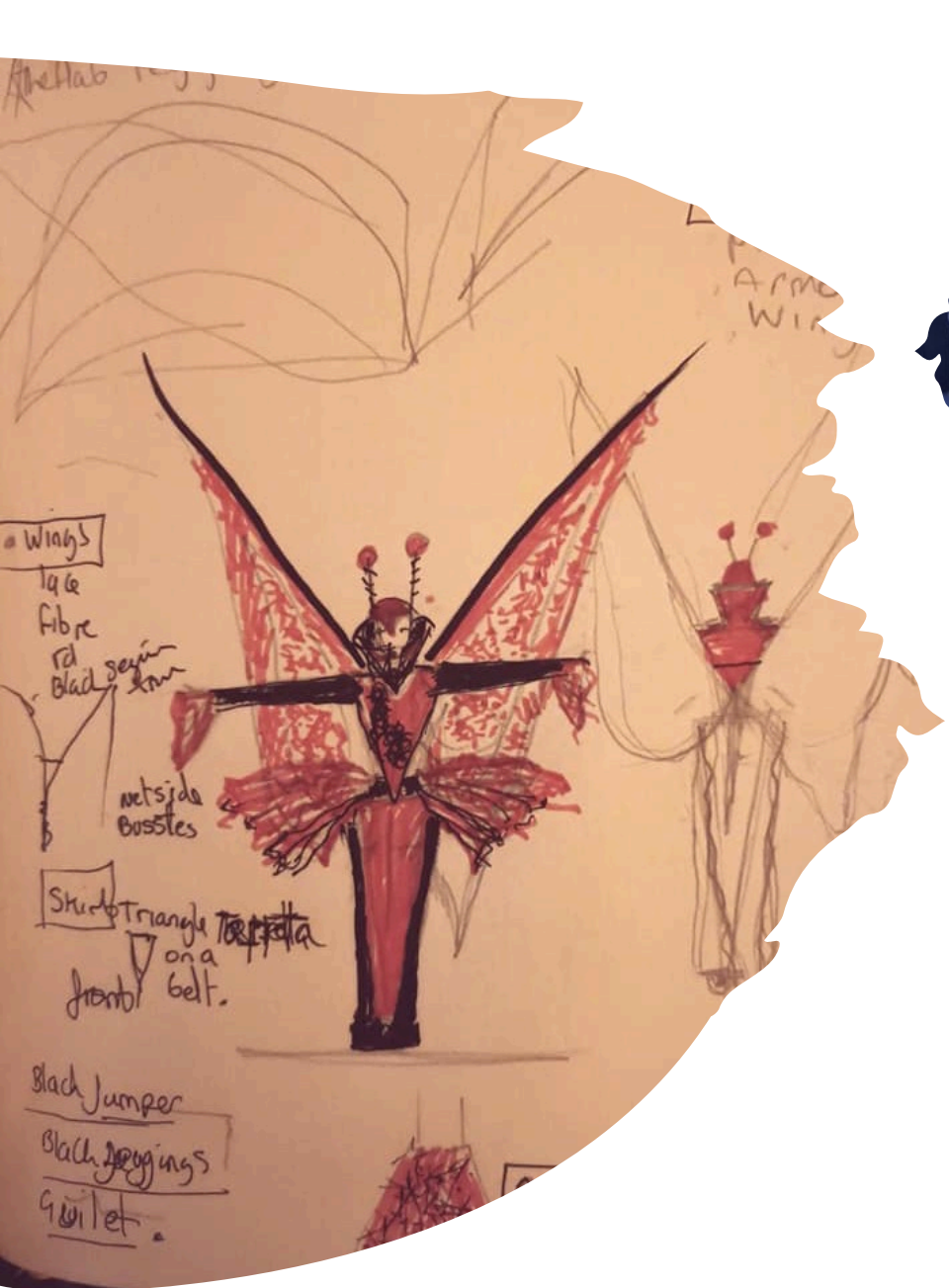
Timothy Diggles

Chair

High Peak Arts set us a lovely challenge to kick the year off working with their Project eARTh group in Buxton. Using some of our hoarded fabrics and materials they had leftover from previous projects, the group designed and made themselves individual aprons to wear at their weekly arts sessions.

Liza and Deborah worked with 30 people experiencing mental distress, teaching pattern-making printmaking and sewing machine skills 1 day a week over 5 weeks.





Fegg Hayes Hub Butterfly Costumes

Early in the year, we worked with a fabulous group of local families to create 2 butterfly themed costumes for their children to wear at the annual lantern procession led by BArts

We were very happy to see the Novels that Shaped our World garment touring the libraries of Stoke on Trent



A sound box hidden in a pocket is triggered by people approaching the garment to play the voice of ASHA member Yasse Nugloze reading ...

THE PATH AND THE WAY

Once upon a time.....In Hanley Library four people met and talked together.

They talked for much longer than they had anticipated and they enjoyed themselves.

They all came from very different worlds and shared their stories of life in Africa and Europe.

One came from a land of celebration. One came from a land of quiet. One came from a land of strength and the last, came from a land of love and creativity.

They worked hard and their determination had led them here. They were excited and determined to learn English better, to celebrate and share a different life here.

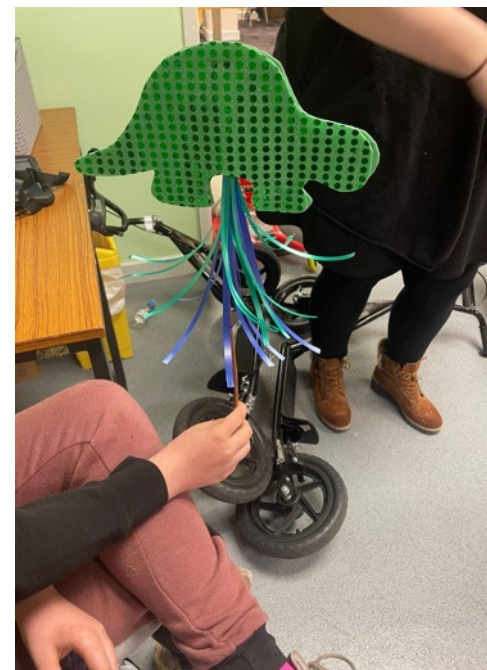
One man loved to celebrate and was happy and open. He liked to talk about his family and how they helped each other.

One man lived alone, prayed alone and felt alone.

Another man spoke of travel to a distant land and a place with a beautiful castle. Knights had fought and won and lost there.

Lastly a woman listened and encouraged connection.

They sat together by speaking about their life and freedom for themselves and their countries. They would leave in different directions to carry on a journey, taking with them love, laughter, liberty and a NEW STORY.



SPLAT Carnival Arts

The Cultural Sisters has had a long working relationship with SPLAT, a local community organisation which provides creative activities and play for children. Their founder, Tabby Mansha, did a Carnival Arts workshop with The Cultural Sisters when she was a teenager.

The children made a huge variety of Carnival Masks and Wands, often freely experimenting by customising the templates we brought or making their own completely. While cutting out the materials always provided a challenge for dexterity, it also brings its own sense of accomplishment.

In 2022 we provided three drop-in sessions in February half term with approximately 10 to 12 children in each session.

We were supported by Stoke on Trent City Council's **Better Mental Health Fund** to run two creative mental health projects, with and for members of the LGBTQI+ community.

A project to help ...

Improve mental wellbeing

Address loneliness

Support people to access mental health and wellbeing services

Support people with housing or financial insecurity to access appropriate support

Our first 6-week project, Reclaim, was led by ceramicist Sarah Fraser, supported by Deb from The Cultural Sisters, to work with 12 participants from a local group of older people from the gay community (OLGBT). We also partnered with James from SAGE Sexuality and Gender Empowerment to provide additional support.

All artists and support were also from the LGBTQI+ community.



RECLAIM | LGBTQI + Mental Health

This is a project exploring connections between creativity and mental health through transformations and changes in clay as it goes through the process of drying, dissolving and becoming soft and pliable again.

Where?
BCB Studio, Spode Works, Elenora Street, ST4 1QQ

What to expect?
This project will focus on the process and tactile qualities of clay. Fragile, strong, malleable. It will use clay that has been left as remnants and scraps from previous projects, needing human energy to take care of and reclaim it. Giving it new potential.

Traces of the process and a film documenting it will be the main outcome, part performance and ritual. A small selection of objects could be fired if the group wishes.

What will be provided?
All tools and materials will be provided, please wear warm clothes that can easily be washed.



Reclaim worked with the power of clay and the understanding that it soothes our minds and bodies. We were not making finished pieces to glaze and fire but playing with the clay. The end result (see next page) was a sculptural piece that was reclaimed by water to reveal a few hidden fired gems.

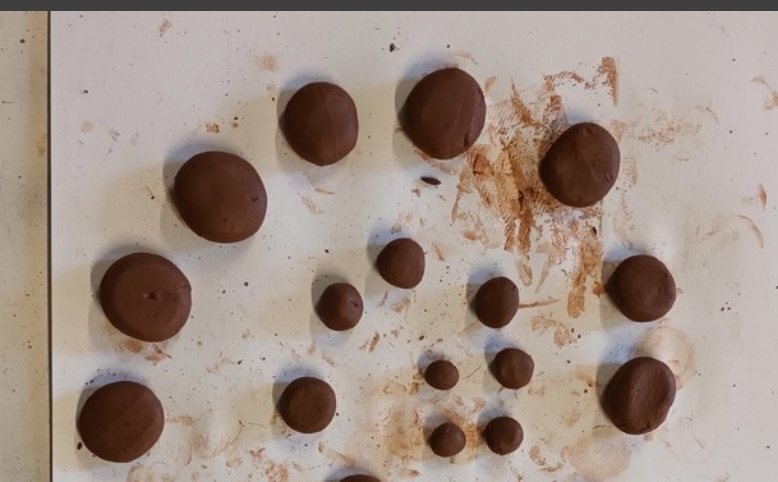
Under Sarah's guidance, we explored many clay techniques and rituals to focus on the many qualities of clay. Each technique was explored without pressure. Using old clay and bringing it back to life was significant to the group.

In response to the invasion of Ukraine by Russia which began during the project, we made sunflowers to be included in the final piece. The sunflowers were the only pieces glazed and fired.

A quote from a new member of the OLGBT group



'The project finished, my first with the group and optimistic and excited about the next one. Oh yes, my scores for well being, improved dramatically since the first check at the start of the project. I proved a few things to myself and dare I say a little proud.'



A local filmmaker Blythe Taylor captured the project to create a film to be shown at Stoke on Trent Pride 2022.





A Place at the Table –

As part of the Jubilee celebration, the Dudson Centre invited The Cultural Sisters to create an artwork for their Centre in Hanley. "The centre was donated as a legacy by Dudson Ltd in 1996, and after a major refurbishment was opened by HM Queen in 1999." During May and June 2022, we held 7 drop-in workshops for visitors, users and staff, and designed a mosaic project we called A Place at the Table to represent equality and agency. We bought a preloved round wooden table and lots of Dudson crockery from local second-hand shops and sourced a few special pieces some from the Dudson factory shop.

About 60 people from services including bereavement care, relationship counselling, recovery and mental health projects, smashed up crockery, scratched into and prepared the table, tested out and created designs and made beautiful place settings inspired by Dudson Pottery ware themes. We laughed and learnt a lot, connected with some fabulous people and left them a special table that can move around the building.



Stoke on Trent Pride 2022
The Cultural Sister support the arts, fringe tent
and parade at our local LGBTQI+ Pride.

We support queer artists and their allies to run creative workshops that enhance the parade, promote freedom of expression and support the excellent Red Gibson to manage the fringe tent.
The Cultural Sisters artists relish in creating flamboyant costumes for 2 of our queer artists to wear to head up the park parade.



Better Mental Health project 2 - Express Yourself

For the second part of our Better Mental Health funded project, The Cultural Sisters asked Ashton Blythe, a trans-artist and fine art graduate from Staffs University to facilitate a series of creative workshops with members of the LGBTQI+ community in Stoke. Ashton was supported by our fabulous Penny Lane, Jess and Deb. The project deployed various techniques to encourage the group to express themselves, and develop connections and self-esteem. The creative workshops were a buzzing hive of chatting, listening, making and laughing. The group made an androgenous sellotape body sculpture, decorated bags to express their identity and created a series of monoprints of themselves and famous LGBTQI+ people to recognise queer role models.

Finances 2022

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
1	Cultural Sisters Accounts 2022														
2															
3	DATE	Bal c/f	Income	Expenditure											
4															
5	01.01.2022	12527.91													
6	31.01.2022	12039.69	0.00	488.22											
7	28.02.2022	10227.62	0.00	1812.07											
8	31.03.2022	10703.58	2532.99	2057.03											
9	30.04.2022	12933.20	2500.00	270.38											
10	31.05.2022	15076.75	4195.00	2051.45											
11	30.06.2022	11506.51	715.23	4285.47											
12	31.07.2022	6704.52	0.00	4801.99											
13	30.08.2022	5042.47	0.00	1662.05											
14	30.09.2022	9085.89	5500.00	1456.58											
15	31.10.2022	5547.61	0.00	3538.28											
16	30.11.2022	5019.22	0.00	528.39											
17	31.12.2022	5320.82	500.00	198.40											
18															
19			15943.22	23150.31											
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22	Bal c/f	12527.91													
23	Income	15943.22													
24	Expenditure	-23150.31													
25															
26	Bal 31.12.2022	5320.82													
27															
28															

We are very grateful for the help we get from our bookkeeper Kathy Lovatt, Jess Byron who manages our invoicing and Lynne Ball who audits our accounts, they all ensure our finances are kept in order.

A full set of accounts can be viewed on application to The Cultural Sisters

Cultural Sisters Accounts 2022

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Lynne Ball

11 Joanhurst Crescent

Stoke on Trent

Staffs

ST1 4LA

3rd October 2023

Independent Examiners Report of The Cultural Sisters ending 31st December 2022

I report on the accounts of The Cultural Sisters for the year ended 31st of December 2020


It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under Section 145 (5)(b) of the 2011); and

To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Conclusion

In connection with my examination no matter has come to my attention and the accounts presented are a true and accurate reflection of The Cultural Sisters for the year ending 31st of December 2022



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L J Ball (Mrs)