

Skimstone Arts

Skimstone Arts Annual Report and Accounts

April 2021 - March 2022



Audience take part in our *UNITY* Festival. Image: Ako Ismail



Jimmy at St Anthony's, Walker takes part in *The Garden Song*.
Image: Claire Webster Saaremet



Joe Hodgeson, Assistant Project Manager/trainee Technician.
Image: Claire Webster Saaremet



Band Leader Nicole Davis and Lead Musician Peter Saaremet
Image: Shahor Omar



One Day Changes Skimstone radio broadcast. Image: Colin Davison



Young people make origami butterflies for social action at our *UNITY* Festival
Image: Shahor Omar

Skimstone Arts works with diverse artists and those at risk of isolation to create work with, for, and about the world that matters to them

Reference and administrative details

Charity number: 1182284
Company number: 06261728

Registered office and principal address:
Skimstone Studios, Room 2.03, 2nd Floor, 14 Quayside,
Albion Row, Newcastle Upon Tyne,
United Kingdom, NE6 1LL

Independent Examiners: Connected Voice
Bankers: The Co-operative Bank
Artistic Director: Claire Webster Saaremets

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Report from our Chair

“Be the change you want to see in the World” is a quote which encapsulates the spirit of Skimstone Arts.

Our amazing team continues to evolve, grow and challenge as creative artists working together with a diversity of people. We seek to enable every person we work with to find, use or amplify their voice, and to see themselves create change and move forward with their potential as they realise their own artistic possibilities.

Skimstone Arts works with so many organisations, artists and communities – locally, regionally and internationally. This was reflected in the first live-location Skimstone **UNITY Festival** weekend which celebrated those partnerships and connections. It was testimony to the inclusive and generous nature of Skimstone Arts’ approach.

At a time of global change we moved premises and started to recover from the intense constraints of working in a pandemic. We commissioned an independent organisational review which helps us reflect on our dual identity as an arts organisation and a charity. It is important for us to continue to learn and to see how we can become stronger and more resilient. It has been an enormously helpful process bringing fresh and external perspective on our impact, quality, and inclusivity.

The move to i4 Quayside during this last year and embedding our organization geographically into

some of the communities with whom we work has been so right for us. It has felt like “coming home” to be neighbours with so many partners and individuals.

We are committed to quality and diversity assurance, to be transparent and rigorous in the creation of projects and programmes that are co-created and reflective of the communities in which we work. We continue to support organisational maturity and the development of our teams. Our band Reality Boots was successfully awarded a National Lottery Arts Council England project grant to deliver a regional tour. The impact case study included in this report highlights the band’s achievements of which we are humbled. These musicians are our new leaders of the future and are skillfully continuing Skimstone Arts’ vital work with young people across the North East of England.

Reflecting on this year, we have many reasons to feel and share pride for Skimstone Arts. This report provides a summary of the highlights and it certainly feels like we are making a significant contribution to creativity, and social and creative expression. The Team has worked so hard to distil and prioritise our work to deliver the ambitions we hold in our Theory of Change. The process of applying to be an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation is one we relished and has contributed to our belief in the difference we make and will make to bring about positive change through the arts.



Chair Wendy Scott gives her report at our hybrid zoom and live AGM October 2021. Image: Claire Webster Saaremets

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About Us

Our purpose

Skimstone Arts is established to advance the arts, particularly but not exclusively, **music, drama, film and the visual arts**, by the production of performances, plays, exhibitions, gigs and filming involving diverse groups of disadvantaged **artists and communities** for the benefit of the public. This is set out in our charitable objects. (Memorandum & Articles 2017)

Our mission

Skimstone Arts supports diverse artists and those at risk of isolation to create work with, for, and about the world that matters to them.

Skimstone Arts is established as one of the North East's leading charitable companies for inclusive arts practice and social action and has dedicated expertise in high-quality work co-created with vulnerable young people, older people, and refugee communities.

We work in the sectors of arts, culture, wellbeing, health and personal heritage.

Our beneficiaries

Our beneficiaries are all of the individuals and communities we work with to co-create artistic work, and the audiences who engage with these works. In our annual report we refer to our beneficiaries as *those we work with*.

Our aims

Skimstone Arts aims to create collaborative music, performance and art with artists and researchers, and to develop high quality artistic practice with diverse individuals and communities which reflect challenges in society.

Our motivations are inclusion, collaboration, ownership and respect for anyone who has a social and political right to make artworks but may face barriers to do so.

The creativity of those we work with challenges and instigates debate around the role of the arts in civic change and wellbeing.

As we said in last year's annual report, the pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement were not diversions, they are part of our development, growth, and sustainability.

We channel our collective innovation, resilience, creativity, and positivity to make work together (co-creation) with our participants in different parts of the world, by doing what we believe in — that the arts provide a powerful way of seeing, exploring and processing our worlds — and sharing provocations and activism to new and existing audiences.



Audience members from FODI (Friends of the Drop In) visit *One Day Changes* at PopRecs, Sunderland. Image: Ako Ismail



Photojournalist Shahor Omar speaks about his work at *One Day Changes*, Newcastle City Library for Holocaust Memorial Day Events. Image: Cristina Armstrong



Young Artist Collective member Emile creates pledge apples for *One Day Changes* Events. Image: Colin Davison



Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future performance. Image: Kev Howard



Presenters Steve Drayton and Claire Skimstone Radio for *UNITY Festival*. Image: Shahor Omar



Lead Artist Peter Saaremets works with young musician Maddie. Image: Kev Howard



Byker Commissioning Group work with North East Wilds to set up herb growing workshop for *UNITY Festival*. Image: Ako Ismail

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Our Goals & Ambitions

We use a Theory of Change (story of change) model to describe how and why our charitable objects serve those we work with, to evaluate our progress, track changes over time and show positive impact with our diverse communities.

By: working with diverse artists, people at risk of isolation and likeminded organisations

To: support them to create work that is with, for and about the world that matters to them and to share what we learn in the process

We will: engage increasingly diverse audiences in quality arts activities and stimulate debate and action around key social challenges

This will: help improve connectivity, confidence and wellbeing for the people and artists we work with and lead to greater skills and engagement in increasingly high-quality arts activity.

This model helps us to deliver our four key ambitions:

Ambition 1: Artists

To create nationally recognised, quality artistic work, with diverse artists, about the world that matters to people and communities today.

Ambition 2: Communities & audiences

To engage with people in diverse communities to produce artistic work that explores and shares engaging stories and is accessible and meaningful to a broader range of audiences.

Ambition 3: The wider sector

To collaborate with researchers and arts, health, and social sector professionals, to challenge and instigate debate around the role of the arts in civic change and help find more effective ways to use quality artistic work to improve engagement and well-being.

Ambition 4: Our organisation

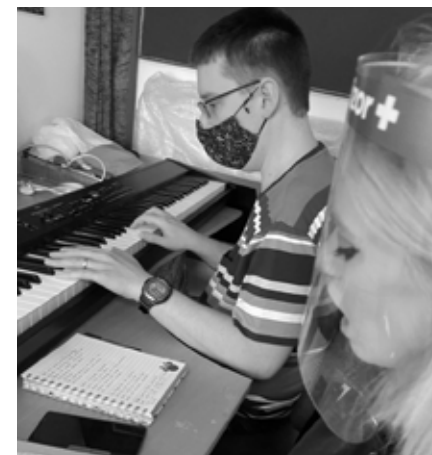
To ensure we are sustainable, with core funding and other grants in place to support diversity in all areas – Board, workforce, commissions, projects, performances, with and for audiences and participants, and in line with our Charitable objectives.



Cast and Crew filming *The Sea Part 1* for *We Cannot Walk Alone* May 2021
Image: Kev Howard



Radio GaMashie working with women in Liberian Camp for *We Cannot Walk Alone*. Image: Samuel Lamptey



Tom Spence and Nicole Davis working on song for *We Cannot Walk Alone*.
Image: Claire Webster Saaremets



Lord Mayor of Newcastle Councillor Habib Rahman speaks to audiences about *One Day Changes* exhibition at Bewick Hall, Newcastle City Library.
Image: Colin Davison



Lead Musician Peter Saaremets presents Bronze Arts Award to Young Artistic Collective member Hadi Baraei.
Image: Claire Webster Saaremets



Claire Webster Saaremets introduces the inspiration and social action for *UNITY Festival*



Nicole Davis from Reality Boots sings with Katie Grace and Brooke Pyle From Standing Upright at *UNITY Festival*. Image: Shahor Omar

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Our Activities

We make accessible touring music-based theatre and site-specific performances, exhibitions and gigs which reflect stories and themes relating to today's cultural landscape, changes in heritage and identity, and we explore together what we think about the world today.

We have three core areas of delivery work:

1. Direct provision of weekly multi-arts opportunities with socially-vulnerable or isolated group of people. These take place at our Newcastle studio or in the places where people are, including Newcastle, Stockton on Tees, rural County Durham and the wider North East.
2. Production of professional touring, broadcast or screened artistic work, inspired by themes of: isolation and ageing, responding to Holocaust Memorial Day, and to Refugee Week. Our digital work has reached a global audience.
3. Contributing to national debates on social challenges, such as equality in diversity, inclusion, ageing, lived experiences of refugees, poverty, and hope. Our insights have been requested and featured at national and international conferences.

In 2021/22 we continued to adapt to the constraints and societal needs during the extended Coronavirus pandemic and its aftermath to co-create and support people by working in person in socially-distanced safe ways, and by innovating engagement and delivery in the digital-sphere.

Our actively-inclusive approach enables opportunities to work together for all less-represented groups including LGBTQAI+ identities, people of colour and across cultures, people who face challenges with struggling mental health, illness, poverty, and people with lived-experiences seeking asylum and refugee status.

This year we blended the needs and concerns of those we work with by creating artistic opportunities and platforming events which shared artworks with audiences. The art works and events created have been both uplifting and challenging. Here are four examples:



Exploring the theme of *We Cannot Walk Alone* in Heaton Park during lockdown. Image: Claire Webster Saaremets

We Cannot Walk Alone

Associate Artist Kema Sikazwe and Artistic Director Claire Webster Saaremets welcomed audiences live via Zoom to take part in a free interactive journey of discovery to explore songs, stories, spoken word and soundscapes created by diverse communities in response to ***We Cannot Walk Alone*** which was the theme for Refugee Week 2021.

Audiences were guided along an animated map and met artists and communities who shared the work they'd created — uplifting and thoughtful songs, films and stories, giving people opportunities to come together to understand refugee and lived experiences from across the globe, and to recognise the importance of shared humanity.



Animateur Sheryl Jenkins creates animated object with a young person at The Bostey for *We Cannot Walk Alone*. Image: Joe Hodgson

The collaborative process brought together many communities:

Skimstone Arts' Young Artist Collective and ECHO Artists, the Bosnian community in the North East of England, Friends of the Drop-In for Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Sunderland, Neighbourhoods in Byker, the INSPIRE group in the West End of Newcastle, young people at The Bostey Community Centre in Walker, and partners working with refugee communities from Libya and Iraq. ***We Cannot Walk Alone*** was also broadcast on our online Skimstone Radio show.



Character Kathleen performs with her band in *Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future*. Photograph: Kev Howard



Photojournalist Shahor Omar talks to an exhibition visitor about his work. Photograph: Cristina Armstrong



Associate Artist David Stickman Higgins leads a movement and rhythm workshop inspired by nature for *UNITY Festival*. Image: Shahor Omar



Associate Artist Martim Dinis (Madame Teatro, Portugal) leads a warm up for *UNITY Festival*. Image: Shahor Omar

Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future

As the pandemic social restrictions eased during summer 2021, Skimstone Arts' produced for touring a new version of the music-based performance, in partnership with ageing and housing research partners Northumbria University, Elders Council, and Care & Repair England.

Performances explored contemporary and critical decisions we make about housing and support networks as we grow older - encapsulated in the story of lone householder Kathleen. The performance, post show Q&A and research-led discussions with audiences were provocations to explore housing in later life, access to information, changes in policy, and how people decide where to live when they or a loved one grow older.

One Day Changes

Reflecting and evaluating our journeys of collaboration, such as working with refugee communities for Refugee Week in June 2021, led to two Kurdish photo/video journalists, who have lived-experience of seeking asylum, becoming Skimstone Arts' Associate Artists.

They were commissioned to produce an exhibition displaying their images of war and refugee camps in Iraq and Syria while drawing out themes of hope and resilience. Their exhibition was launched at Newcastle City Library as part of Newcastle's Holocaust Memorial Day Events in January 2022, along with their new documentary *The Smell of Apples*. It tells the story of Azad, who now lives in England, and who survived the Halabja chemical attack in northern Iraq in 1988.

One Day Changes was a live-streamed event and radio broadcast involving artists with refugee lived-experience from Bosnia and Kurdistan, researchers with Holocaust and childhood war stories, as well as Skimstone Arts' Associate Artists, Young Artist Collective, and Reality Boots band exploring how humanity can share understanding, care and support that positively affect people's traumatic lives.

Unity Festival 2022

UNITY Festival was a weekend of FREE live music, performance, arts, exhibitions, stories and workshops.

This year it moved to a new venue - the beautiful surroundings of Newcastle's Ouseburn Valley, Byker. Festival-goers of all ages were able to take part in a jam-packed programme of live events to celebrate community, nature and social action. We retained our online offer to people around the

world and those unable to attend in person.

National and International diverse artists were commissioned to create new work and host a wide variety of accessible workshops. To support the development of the *UNITY Festival* programme, a new Byker residents commissioning group was established to co-programme and undertake event management.

Due to our September 2021 move to new studios in the East End of Newcastle, we created new partnerships and new hosting venues with Seven Stories The National Centre for Children's Books, St Silas' Church in Byker, and with Brinkburn Street Brewery, Kitchen and Bar. The Festival was attended by our neighbouring communities still navigating societal isolation; it opened up opportunities for festival-goers and performers to meet.

To find out more about these projects please go to our Impact Case Studies on pages 36-43.

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Participation

Our multi-generational work is with audiences, co-creators, and artists who are varied in their needs, lives, and isolation - experiencing poor mental health, poverty, social isolation and anxiety, disabilities and facing challenges when identifying as neuro diverse, LGBTQAI+ and/or with status as asylum-seekers and refugees.

We built on strong relationships which we have established with our at-risk communities in Stockton, Durham, Sunderland and Newcastle, and our contact ripples out nationally and internationally, such as with partners Radio GaMashie, in Ghana.

During the period covered in this report we worked directly with 261 beneficiaries and co-creators, with 103 artists, and we reached audiences of nearly 3,500 people. Together, artistic and co-creators originated 37 artistic pieces at or from 185 artistic events.

This year's change in reach is partly attributed to some moves back to in-person delivery while working with safe social-distancing measures, and to a change in our annual delivery cycle.

In our next three years, from our annual programme of Holocaust Memorial Day events, **UNITY Festival**, Refugee Week, touring original music and theatre, and exhibiting visual arts, we aim annually to reach 300+ participants in sessional activities, to produce 30+ projects, engage 300+ artists, and work with 400+ co-creators to reach 10,000 audience members.

In our annual programme of activities and creativity, we work together to express what matters to each person - individually and collectively - seeking to influence social understanding, compassion and positive change. We:

- **Produce** touring performances, online radio, exhibitions and festival events
- **Contribute** to social action and academic research with partners
- **Collaborate** with communities to create authentic and relevant artworks locally, nationally and internationally about humanity, environment and climate
- **Support** our Young Artists Collective, Echo Artists and their band Reality Boots to create work for our programmed events.



Associate Artist Kema Sikazwe (right) works with Daniel Hassan on his song in Blast Studio. Image: Claire Webster Saarems



Filming scenes for *The Sea Part 1* for Refugee Week. Image: Kev Howard



Clare Matthews (right), member of Byker Commissioning Group joins the protest song choir at *UNITY Festival*.



Associate Artist Simon Tarrant works with Reality Boots member Arthur Vane on recording software. Image: Kev Howard



Song-writing: Associate Artist Kema Sikazwe (left), Byker co-creator Loretta Donnelly (right), and Assistant Project Manager Joe Hodgson (middle). Image: Kev Howard



Young Artist Collective member Emile Tarrant helps audiences to create their own origami butterfly at *UNITY Festival*. Image: Shahor Omar



Skimstone Arts sing songs with members of St Anthony's Care Services, Walker. Image: Lynda Watson

3473

Audience members reached

14 Projects
Delivered

3 CPD

Regional and national Continuous
Professional Development
sessions for the sector66 EVENTS
In person / live / broadcast103 ARTISTS
Engaged or employed

37

ORIGINAL ARTWORKS

Created

185

Sessions

7

What We Achieved & Learned

This year we've continued to measure what we do through consulting, collecting stories and gathering data from those we work with (including audiences, partners and Trustees) to help us better understand the difference we are aiming to make.

Examples of recorded outcomes include:

- being proud of high-quality work that is recognised and responded to by audiences
- a shared sense of purpose, being visible and making a positive contribution
- supporting cultural, artist and community diversity
- providing creative, safe, inclusive, accessible spaces.
- feel listened to and nurtured.

We've continued to work with those at risk of social isolation in the North East of England, with existing communities (young people, Bosnian community, older people in day centres) and new communities such as the Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showmen and Boaters (GTRSB).

The Open Page

The Open Page project involved collecting responses from GTRSB communities exploring access and barriers to further education. A radio show called *The Open Page* broadcast these stories and songs and was co-hosted with Martin Gallagher (a Traveller with lived experience).



Live Broadcast of *The Open Page*. Pictured clockwise from bottom right: presenter Martin McNaughton, tech manager Nii Kwartey Owoo, lead musician Peter Saaremets, presenter Claire Webster Saaremets. Image: Claire Webster Saaremets

"I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed The Open Page for Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month in June 2021 which helped Northumbria University to research how complexities of equality, belonging and identity affect access to higher education, and how places of learning can be respectfully and passionately developed for members of GTRSB communities."

"I felt it opened up your thinking (& ultimately others) & how we work together to reduce barriers & prejudice at all levels."

- Martin Tom (living with Traveller experience)

Organisational Resilience

As social distancing and travel opened up we were able to implement our ambition to work in person with more co-creators and beneficiaries in Stockton-on-Tees and Sunderland.

Success with Arts Council England's Cultural Recovery Fund allowed us to turn the pressure of losing our city-centre premises into a sustainable move to studios in Newcastle's East End. We continued to develop as an artistic and social action organisation with open access for local, regional and national co-collaborators and partners.

Our diverse professional artists also face risks of social isolation, partly for economic reasons, and in May 2021 we were able to research and align their fees to the nationally-recognised rates of The Musicians' Union and Artists' Union England.

We continued to revisit policies and action plans for health and safety, safeguarding, equality and diversity, and the environment and sustainability.

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Our Approach

We use a co-creation approach to be supportive to regional, national and international artists, who are diverse and under-represented - working with them in pathways from early-stage, through to Emerging Artist, and established Associate Artist.

Young people in our Young Artist Collective progress to established ECHO Artist and can join our Leadership Team.

We lead on training, delivering embedded practice in Silver and Gold national Arts Awards, and support independent freelancers in the cultural sector. Our years of established co-creation practice mean we engage people to work together as participating creators, promoting an ethos of equality and shared ownership.

This encourages creators to share stories and ideas, learn new skills and techniques and respond, challenge and co-create authentic, original, and innovative artworks - **with** rather than **by** professional artists. It also drives quality as artworks become part of our programmed public events and, to do so, must meet standards through the rigours of craft-building, rehearsal, recording, performance, and exhibition. Our creators AND artists are reflective of the diversity of underrepresented

communities. Our 'create with us' approach emphasises how making artwork together shares a new lens on the worlds we inhabit; it increases engagement and visibility and creates work to provoke thought, ownership and powerful responses through social action.

The Garden Song

We worked at St Anthony's Day Centre creating a project called **The Garden Song**. Our Artistic Director Claire Webster Saaremets and Lead Musician Peter Saaremets worked with centre visitors to co-create a song a day with five groups inspired by their new garden area, exploring why green areas are important to our own lives and the planet.

"The work you did [with the music and photography] was fantastic especially now that we can do some of this ourselves and I am hoping to purchase a couple of iPads."

- Claire Dodd (Day Care Manager) St Anthony of Padua Community Association



Claire Webster Saaremets and Peter Saaremets compose songs about the importance of gardens with resident Claire. Image: Claire Dodd

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Working Regionally, Nationally & Internationally

Our inter-generational work is with co-creators, artists and audiences with varied needs and experiences of being at risk of social isolation.

We brought together communities (young people and older people) from Tyne and Wear and County Durham with national and international artists, and built on our existing partnership with Radio GaMashie, in Ghana, to work with lived refugee experience co-creators in Liberian camps. All artworks created were shared alongside each other at every project event as part of our annual programme.

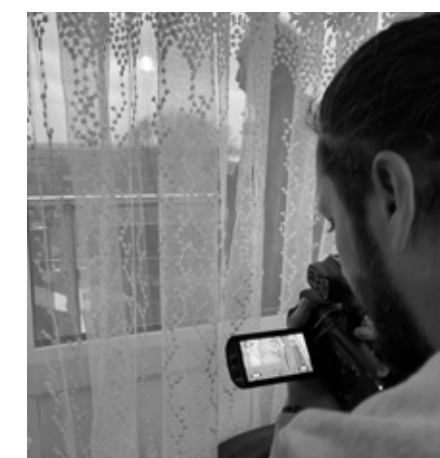
Our radio broadcasts, live and online events extended our audience reach and engagement to different parts of the world.

UNITY Festival brought together Associate Artists and audiences from Portugal, Ghana, Iraq and Kurdistan Iraq as well as live performances from London based band Asasaa and workshops by Associate Artists from Nottingham, East Yorkshire and Stockton.

This year's project delivery moved towards embedding an established annual programme of events that involved in-person delivery, safe social-distancing measures, online sessions and one-to-one tuition.



Volunteer photojournalist Shahor Omar, Associate Artist Ako Ismail and our long term partner originally from Bosnia, Smajo Beso meet to talk about ideas for *One Day Changes* Radio and Live Zoom event (Holocaust Memorial Day Events). Image: Claire Webster Saaremet



Volunteer photojournalist Shahor Omar films Azad and his story in Birmingham for *One Day Changes* Radio and Live Zoom event (Holocaust Memorial Day). Image: Claire Webster Saaremet



Nii Kwartey Owoo leads an African Dance workshop at *UNITY Festival*. Image: Shahor Omar



Associate Artist Cath Hodson works with co-creator Loretta Donnelly to create flags for *UNITY Festival*. Image: Ako Ismail



Movement Director Martim Dinis (Madame Teatro, Portugal) gives a live interview from the exhibition tent at *UNITY Festival*. Image: Shahor Omar



Radio GaMashie working with co-creators in the Liberian Camp, Ghana for *We Cannot Walk Alone*. Image: Samuel Lamptey



London based band Asasaa perform at *UNITY Festival*. Image: Ako Ismail

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Quality & Ambition

For 14 years we've created high-quality work with diverse artists, young people, researchers and communities, inspired by their lived experiences.

"...I believe this organisation continues to make a genuine difference to the people they work alongside, rather than simply alleviating the symptoms or current problems, they successfully do this by: continuing to champion the arts as away of giving positive recognition, active voices, opportunities to those who have been forgotten, neglected, unpopular, addressing social injustice and isolation ... enabling groups to visit their accessible Studio space in the city ... and beyond."

- Arts Development Officer, Newcastle City Council

"It was very down to earth and real life. It was a real eye-opener and a lot of people go through this.... I loved all the songs. The acting was brilliant."

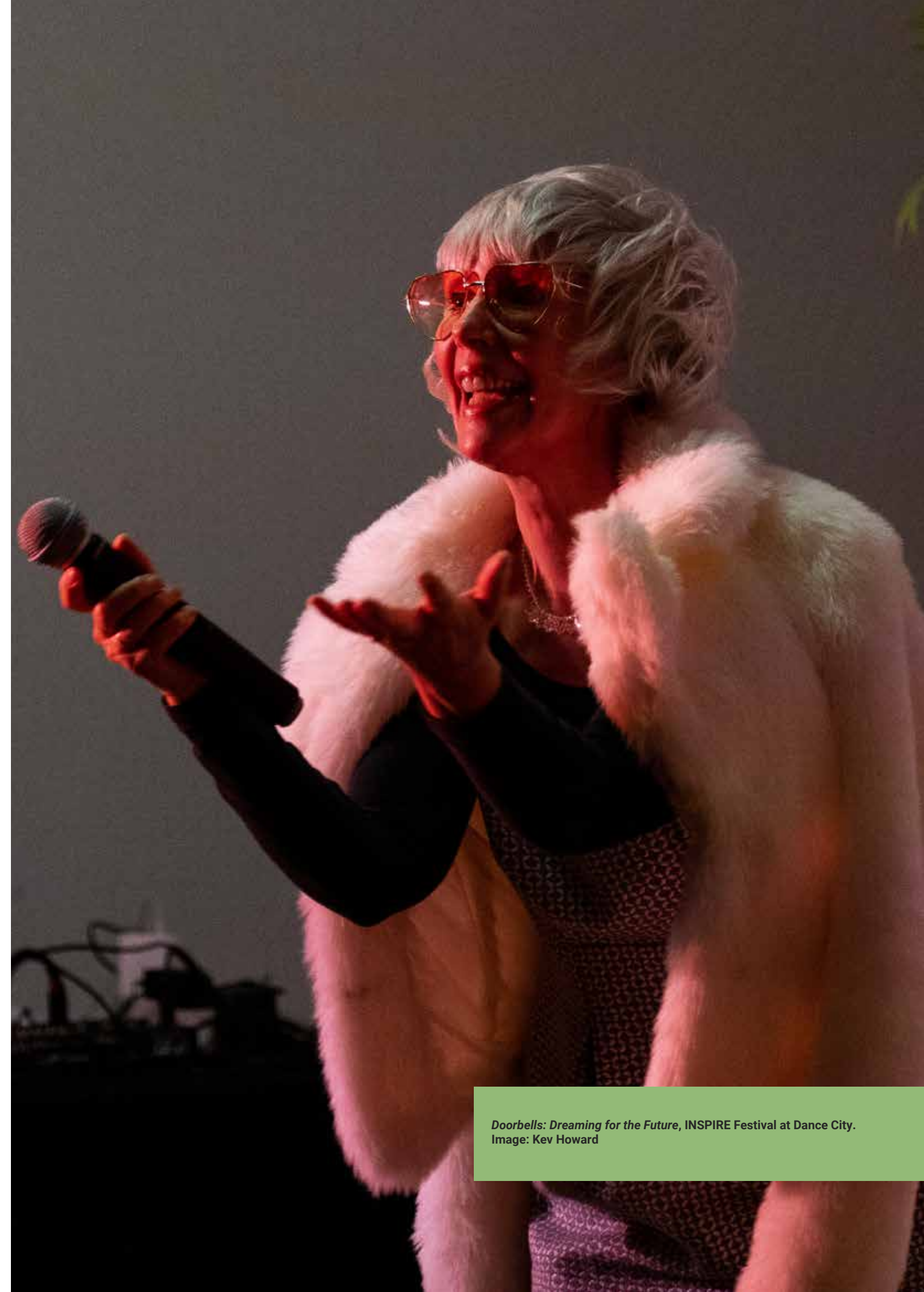
- Audience Member, **Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future**, October 2021

"It's made my day. What a fantastic and engaging audience today, clapping along with the songs ... & asking if we are making a CD of the songs!!!"

- Audience Member, **Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future**, October 2021

We have significantly grown, especially during the COVID pandemic and in response to the 2020 Black Live Matters movement, to build resilience and expand inclusivity and the quality of our work.

Quality is embedded in our approach where we constantly review and strive for excellence in the process of collaboration in making new work and in its production value.



Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future, INSPIRE Festival at Dance City.
Image: Kev Howard

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Inclusivity & Relevance

“An Artist-led organisation of such a diverse community of artists is one of the things that stands the organisation apart from many countryside”.

External Organisational Review, Spring 2022

We strongly believe in our work as a charity to address unfairness experienced by people who have a difficult start in life due to poverty, social injustice towards their racial identity and heritage, towards their personal LGBTQAI+ identity, and experiencing war and oppression.

People are labelled as ‘migrants’, ‘refugees’, ‘youths’, ‘benefits-seekers’, ‘old’. We want art to help change this narrative out of respect for each person’s right to express and own their personal story, and to learn about others by getting to know them, building relationships, and creating a cohesive society to directly overcome racism and other ‘isms.’

We believe art can change ways of thinking, to regard the world in new ways. We believe co-creative practices of writing songs,

creating radio broadcasts of real and reinterpreted stories, producing photographic exhibitions, building a UNITY Festival, touring performances, all help to bring a better way of saying ‘look at who we are as humans in our precious planet.’

So we plan projects to identify shared themes WITH our communities (we call people who work with us co-creators). There is no hierarchy of ‘we’ll do this for you’, instead there is a ‘journey we can go on together to explore the world.’

This change expands out into our co-creating communities and gives a different narrative and identity. We have included some of our new Impact Studies in this report to show what, why and how we work to create change.

“We see how individuals and communities at risk of social isolation are as they struggle

to find energy and purpose, especially when waiting for a Home Office interview (feeling

life is on hold during a wait of three years), or being a young artist and mum of four children and needing to access a food bank, as well as emotional support for tiredness and depression.”

- Claire Webster Saaramets, Artistic Director Skimstone Arts



Associate Artist Keith Hill teaching Reality Boots Member Arthur Vane clarinet technique whilst keyboard player Thomas Ewart works on his own piece. Image: Maggie



Evaluation Picnic. Pictured clockwise from left: Ako Ismail, Romans, ECHO Artist Maggie and Project Coordinator Annalisa Burrati.



Tech manager Nii Kwartey Owoo setting up tech process for our Radio broadcasts and live Zoom events. Image: Peter Saaremets



Researcher Dr Beate Muller records for One Day Changes Radio/Live Zoom event. Image: Claire Webster Saaremets



Member of Byker Commissioning Group Angela Mortimer featured in the Change of Life exhibition as part of UNITY Festival. Image: Ako Ismail

“I got more confident. I feel more able to talk to people and less self-conscious”

- Participant feedback from Refugee Week 2021

“Heartwarming. At the end I felt I belonged more, developed friendships.”

- Participant feedback from Refugee Week 2021



Associate Artists, staff and young artists reflect together at a hybrid evaluation session for One Day Changes with Peter Saaremets on Zoom with young people and partners in Ghana. Image: Cristina Armstrong

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Dynamism

“I think you made something very important happen. I hope you managed to appreciate what was happening while it was happening.”

**Steve Drayton,
Co-Presenter Skimstone
Radio**

We developed programme content for Skimstone Radio and podcasts online with presenters Kema Sikazwe (Associate Artist/actor), Smajo Beso (Bosnian Educational Trust), Steve Drayton (former BBC producer), and Claire Webster Saaramets (Artistic Director).

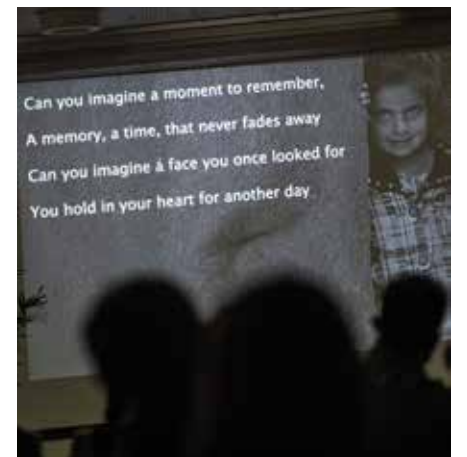
Utilising an accessible digital platform our free to access internet station Skimstone Radio saw us share important stories demonstrating the impact that the work created by Skimstone Arts and our co-creators has had.

“The project really brought home the issues faced by the refugee community and local communities. Poetry, music, film and animation told the stories, wonderfully. They showed us all hope and a sense of belonging but also the pride increasing the work and openness in telling their stories which takes great courage to do so.”

- Audience Feedback, **Unity Festival**



One Day Changes Radio Broadcast and Live Facebook Event, Bewick Hall Library for Holocaust Memorial Day Events. Image: Colin Davison



One Day Changes Radio Broadcast and Live Facebook Event, Bewick Hall Library for Holocaust Memorial Day Events. Image: Colin Davison



One Day Changes Radio Broadcast and Live Facebook Event, Bewick Hall Library for Holocaust Memorial Day Events. Image: Colin Davison



Participants taking part in an African Dance Workshop live/Zoom Image: Shahor Omar



Audience members view film *The Smell of Apples* from One Day Changes Exhibition at Pop Recs, Sunderland. Image: Ako Ismail



Member of the audience shares his Peace Pledge Flag from workshop with Cath Hodson at UNITY Festival



Taking part in Movement Workshop Live and on Facebook Live at UNITY Festival. Image: Shahor Omar

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Environment

“There’s definitely a hope when you see other artists. It doesn’t seem like a lot changes day to day, but when you get a load of artists who are like minded and believe in similar things come together and get the activist and creative juices flowing it instils a kind of hope and faith in humanity.”

– Skimstone ECHO Artist,
UNITY Festival evaluation and
reflection session

Our annual **UNITY Festival** celebrated community, nature and social action. Key environmental themes of climate change and environmental responsibility prompted social action across our Festival programme and specially-created artworks.

This free accessible Festival was underpinned by our core programming values of representation, inclusivity, quality and equality. Workshops included: nest building alongside commissioned music titled **For the Sake of Humanity, Dance of Colours, No to War**, music from Kurdish composer Rzgar Hama Rauf, and a live link presentation from President of the RSPB Miranda Krestovnikoff.

Skimstone Arts’ commitment to our Environmental Policy includes promoting lower emissions and encouraging and influencing others to do so; we operate a recycling programme for all studio users.

In September 2021 we moved premises to set up our new Studio at i4 Quayside, which is a Newcastle City Council-run building. This move supports minimising carbon footprint as studio users are encouraged to car-share, use public transport, and walk to our premises. We are planning to adopt Creative Green Tools to gain insights into staff, artists, board, community and audience carbon footprint, and for support with accessibility.



Co-creator and Byker resident Steven Office records his work about the importance of how we treat each other and our planet. Image: Ako Ismail

14

Knowledge & Exchange

“Exceedingly grateful engaged and enthused”

- Online participant

In 2021/22 we were invited to lead on a number of knowledge and exchange seminars with regional and national partners. These included:

- Middlesbrough based Musinc exploring the theme ‘Differentiation and Working with Mixed Ability Groups’. We planned our input with Leadership Team members Nicole and Magpie who attended and took part.
- Culture Bridge, to lead on a session at their Arts Award Conference on our approaches to engaging young people who undertake Gold and Silver Arts Award. Artistic Director, Claire Webster Saaremets worked with one of our Gold Arts Award engagers Philip to co-create a video.
- At our Skimstone Arts UNITY Festival 2022 we also planned and delivered a session about how we approach song writing across our Youth Music projects. This was a joint presentation by members of Reality Boots and Standing Upright, and was led by Lead Musician Peter Saaremets. It finished with a song created on the spot by members of the audience!



Leadership Team member Phillip Melody records a video about his Gold Arts Award for Culture Bridge's Arts Award Conference. Image: Claire Webster Saaremets

“Thanks Claire and Peter, really enjoyed the event and working with you...Here's a few comments from the chat function...”

“Hi, found this really useful and would be up for attending another”

“Thanks everyone, lots to mull over, and some really interesting ideas.”

“I'll be planning a programme for next year (22-23) and will keep in touch on this, there may be some interest in a repeat event.....always fab working with you”

- Tim Coyte (Him/he) MUSINC Workforce Development Co-ordination Support Cultural Services

“Just wanted to say thank you once again for being a part of today, and for the time and thought that went into your presentation, and

for really supporting the advisers and being your wonderful selves in the session. Please do pass on thanks and good luck to Phillip.”

- Jane Gray, Freelance Arts Project Manager, Culture Bridge

Our learning from the Sector Development sessions is around continuing to co-create and deliver with our young people and this brings authenticity and new perspectives to the knowledge sharing, and embedding opportunities for sector development in our Annual Programme of events going forward. We are excited about extending this to other partners in areas of the volunteer sector including those supporting lived refugee experience, health and wellbeing alongside arts and industry.

Impact Case Study

Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future

Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future is a humorous and moving performance inspired by the latest research about national housing issues. Featuring live music and original songs, the theatrical performance explores the critical decisions we make about how and where we live as we grow older. Originally created in 2015 and featured as part of the Edinburgh Fringe, *Doorbells* has been developed and adapted in response to new research and global changes.

In 2020, in response to the pandemic and making the performance more accessible to audiences, *Doorbells: Covid 19* was developed and re-staged as a short film. It premiered as part of the Centre for Translational Research into Public Health FUSE seminar series and included two webinars with Q&A and discussion. In October 2021, a newly revised version of the performance toured to eight venues across Newcastle upon Tyne and Gateshead engaging 200 new audiences. Each performance was followed by a short Q&A and the opportunity to take part in a discussion about housing, access to information, changes in policy and information to help decision making about where to live when you or your loved one grow older hosted by Northumbria University and Elders Council.

Outputs/Outcomes

- 9 performances in cultural and community venues reaching nearly 200 in COVID-19 safeguarding conditions.
- Provided an accessible and safe place to engage audiences in meaningful conversations around housing options as we grow older.
- Attracted support by Elders Council of Newcastle, Care & Repair England, Northumbria University, Rayne Foundation, Well Newcastle Gateshead and Arts Council England.

Impact

Developed strategic partnerships with Elders Council, Northumbria University, and Care & Repair England to gain relevant research and to support vital messaging around national housing issues. Performances, touring and film screenings of *Doorbells* have led to us finding new and engaging ways to provide information for audiences, and to help inform and influence decisions around where they might live in the future.



Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future performing to audiences at Newcastle City Library. Image: Kev Howard



Barbara Douglas from Elders Council introduces performance of *Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future*. Image: Kev Howard

“Covered a wide range of issues delivered in a clear and thought-provoking and imaginative manner. Covered practical issues. Music and singing excellent... The political backdrop broadcast on radio was very good and pertinent.”
- Audience Member



Claire Webster Saaremets performing at *Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future*. Image: Kev Howard

“The performance made me realise that I am not the only one struggling to cope with the issues highlighted in the play and that someone out there recognises the difficulties that many people are faced with. Thank you Skimstone Arts. Thank you Elders Council. Thank you Northumbria University. Thank you Care and Repair England. Thank you Chopwell Community Centre!”

- Audience Member

“I think this film is a fantastic way to engage people in talking about age, loneliness and social interactions during lockdown. I think this film is far more powerful to people than a Powerpoint.”

- Audience Member

Impact Case Study UNITY Festival 2022

Skimstone Arts **UNITY Festival**, which took place from Friday 4 to Sunday 6 March 2022, was a weekend of FREE live music, performance, arts, exhibitions, stories and workshops.

Set across three locations - St Silas' Church in Byker, Seven Stories The National Centre for Children's Books, and Brinkburn Street Brewery Bar & Kitchen - festival-goers of all ages and backgrounds were invited to take part in a jam-packed programme of events to celebrate community, nature and social action.

In a first for the Festival, Skimstone Arts' young people in three bands - Reality Boots, Standing Upright, and Jazzy Distopia - came together to perform in a Youth Music Showcase of original songs, and gave a seminar called 'Youth Music approaches to song writing'. It particularly explored themes of Community and Environment to a large public audience.

Another first was our established Byker Commissioning Group (of residents) BCG, who organised their own events with their budget, and which gave a very positive contribution to the festival, along with an exhibition of photographic works by Associate Artist Ako Ismail.

Outputs/Outcomes

- 41 diverse artists were commissioned and delivered 31 events over 2.5 days underpinning our core programming values of representation, inclusivity, quality and equality.
- 17 interactive workshops and participatory events, 6 live performances which attracted 726 unique attendances. Accessible venues for people attending in person, and accessible as livestreams via Facebook Live, and via broadcasts from Skimstone Radio online.
- 3 radio broadcasts were hosted with 684 listeners from the UK, Netherlands, USA, Belgium and Ghana
- 810 online attendees took part in the Festival via Facebook Live.

Impact

The UNITY Festival external evaluation documented stories of how artists, Byker Commissioning Group, and audiences felt a clear purpose, felt valued and recognised. It has resulted in a new resilience, positive mental health and confidence for people when taking part in a positive festival with social action. In total UNITY Festival reached 2,220 people in person and virtually.



Associate Artist Bethany Ellen Coyle leads a positive protest song workshop at St Silas' for UNITY Festival. Image: Ako Ismail



Nii Kwarty Owoo, tech manager/dance artist at UNITY Festival. Image: Shahor Omar

"It was just what was needed for my head. For other people's heads too. The spirit of love, compassion, acceptance, inclusion, excitement and creative enthusiasm was evident throughout with a few almost moved to tears moments."
- Audience Member



Claire Webster Saaremets chats with Miranda Krestovnikoff, Wildlife and television presenter about her experiences of exploring our planet and environmental change at UNITY Festival. Image: Shahor Omar

"I'm really grateful to be perfectly honest because I don't think I would have come out of my shell so much if I hadn't done any of this..."

- Byker Commissioning Group member

"I'm grateful that I got to meet lots of lovely people. I think that's a thing we've all missed doing, what with Covid happening..."

- Reality Boots band member

"Such a diverse group of artists and audience members came together for the Festival, that is so unusual and such a great thing to see."

- UNITY Festival Participant

Impact Case Study Reality Boots

In 2013 Skimstone Arts' band Reality Boots, made up of a diverse and at-risk group of young musicians, was formed.

Comprising passionate voices, each with unique experiences, the band has composed and released two albums **Louder Than Words** and **Void/Evolve**, and toured their music around the region, visiting schools and colleges to inspire the next generation of young musicians.

They continue to co-write songs inspired by their own and others experiences and views of the world.

In June 2022 Reality Boots toured the North East of England on a six-date tour. Working with other like-minded young musicians and artists across the region Reality Boots created a number of powerful new songs, each inspired by the world that matters, such as humanity, peace and our environment.

Partners included Standing Upright (North Tyneside), Jack Drum Arts (County Durham) and Band Jam at Musinc (Middlesbrough) as well as musician, rapper and actor Kema Kay - each joining Reality Boots to support a gig on their home turf.

Reality Boots new album **Breaking Barriers** launches on Thursday 29 September 2022 at the Cluny2 venue in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Outputs/Outcomes

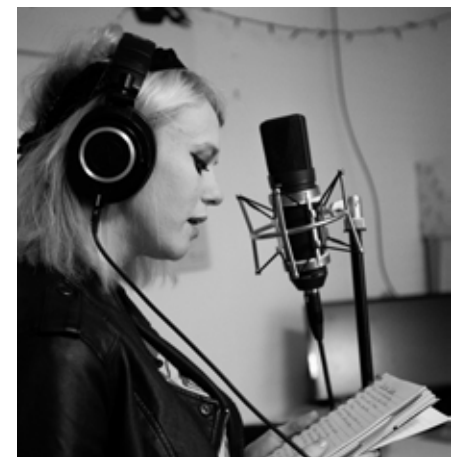
- Since launching Reality Boots, 26 diverse young people have gained experience with and performed together as a band
- 14 Associate Artists and musicians have been employed to mentor and nurture the vast talent of band members
- Young people have learned skills across songwriting, performance, collaborative working and music tuition across a range of musical instruments
- As part of the 2022 tour, Skimstone Arts will support Reality Boots to deliver 10 songwriting workshops with partner music groups to co-create 4 new songs on themes of social action and environment

Impact

The project has supported young people to have opportunities for paid artistic development and also leadership skills. They have gained experience and understanding of different roles involved in managing gigs and marketing, event management and stage management.



Reality Boots member Arthur Vane performing at UNITY Festival. Image: Shahor Omar



Lead Singer Nicole Davis records her lyrics for *Memories Lost*, a song written in response to a real story from research by Dr Beate Muller. Image: Kev Howard

"I really liked the song *Stronger Together* - the lyrics were powerful and her voice complimented them perfectly."

Ana Miron (new Young Artist Collective member)



Reality Boots perform to a large live audience at UNITY Festival. Image: Shahor Omar

"It gave performers (the chance) to express their feelings through music and a chance to do what they enjoy "

- Audience Feedback

"Great to hear some great personal lyrics - fighting stereotypes and hearing a range of people."

- Audience Feedback

"Showing young talent. Giving people opportunities to perform."

- Audience Feedback

"Great performance." "Lovely music and singing."

- Audience Feedback

Impact Case Study One Day Changes

One Day Changes is an exhibition by Kurdish Iraq photojournalists Ako Ismail and Shahor Omar who now live in the North East of England. The exhibition and film, **'The Smell of Apples'**, commissioned by Skimstone Arts, premiered as part of Holocaust Memorial Day 2022 at Newcastle City Library in January, and featured a location broadcast for a live audience as well as via Skimstone Radio and Facebook Live.

The broadcast featured original music, alongside film, poetry and spoken word - all inspired by real stories, research and lived experiences, exploring how we can build a better future, one change at a time.

In March 2022, **One Day Changes** toured to Pop Recs, in Sunderland, coinciding with the anniversary of the Halabja chemical attack. The exhibition toured to St John's College, Durham, in May, and to Newcastle University to coincide with Refugee Week 2022. **One Day Changes** is accompanied by compositions from international Kurdish composer Rzgar Hama Rauf, commissioned by Skimstone Arts.

The touring format is for the film, **The Smell of Apples** to be screened and followed by a panel discussion.

Outputs/Outcomes

- Exhibition and film toured regionally to four high profile venues, and has received national expressions of interest to host the work
- Over 550 people have attended the exhibition and film screenings, live and online

Impact

- Ako and Shahor are now established Associated Artists embedded in Skimstone Arts' practice and support project development, documentation and film production
- We have established regional and national connections with University partners and members of the National Union of Journalists
- Social action has been embedded across this project by inviting audiences to pledge messages of support for Ukraine and all those affected by war and oppression
- The project has received positive promotional coverage regionally, national and has featured on Kurdistan media channels.



The Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Councillor Habib Rahman, meets Azad and his family and the Skimstone Arts film-making team. Azad's story inspired the film *The Smell of Apples* for *One Day Changes* for Holocaust Memorial Day. Image: Colin Davison



Audience view *One Day Changes* Exhibition at PopRecs, Sunderland. Image: Shahor Omar

"Unless and until we get to hear these testimonies in unique and mesmerising ways will we learn, and once we learn we will say no... we must learn and in order for us to learn organisations such as Skimstone, it is absolutely vital for you to create the platform and the opportunity."
- Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Councillor Habib Rahman, January 2022



Artwork from *One Day Changes* Exhibition. Image: Shahor Omar

"I wanted to tell people about peace and working for humanity. I was a child and teenager in the war. I want to change things. I feel very good that you've helped me and everyone at Skimstone Arts to understand and make this film and exhibition."

- Shahor Omar, Skimstone Arts' Associate Artist & Filmmaker, February 2022

"Powerful, simple, truthful messages in film, poetry, song and images"

- Audience member, January 2022

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Our Year Ahead / Artistic Director's report

As I reflect on the 2021/2022 year, so many highlights are remembered for how they opened up new worlds for our communities and for us, to change how we view life through the art and the people who help us to make it.

One Day Changes exhibition and film, alongside our Skimstone Radio broadcast, opened up opportunities to work with talented photojournalists from Kurdistan Iraq. Their striking and powerful images of capturing one day experiences in war-torn areas also spoke about humanity and this definitely resonates with me about a shared commitment to social action. Along with this, the chance to create a new film-short together that explores extensively the theme of surviving genocide has prompted many responses from audiences and listeners across the world.

This is one of our arts-led campaigns for recognition by us all to better-understand the world we continue to navigate, and to respect those whose lives are completely disrupted by war - including artists - totally beyond their choice. I also never thought Skimstone Arts would be featured on Kurdish TV!

Lockdown and moving to new premises also enabled us to move all our projects into a strong annual programme, giving equal visibility to the stories, songs, performances and research that our diverse communities and artists create together from across the world.

We were so excited to see this at UNITY

Festival 2022 where we were able to produce and host a live and online festival to those who may never have experienced or helped to programme diverse bands and workshops, talks and social action before.

I particularly want to thank the amazing team of staff and artists, young people and communities who have shown such resilience, innovation and artistic integrity throughout this year. It remains an honour to work with you. Thanks also to our continuing Board of Trustees who give of their time and talents so readily and to all our funders and partners regionally, nationally and internationally.

Going forward into 2022/23 we're excited about taking **UNITY Festival** to Stockton on Tees, and involving a new performance group based in St Peter's Church. Also, the tour and launch of a new and very exciting album by Reality Boots, and our continued commitment to touring and making new work that we hope, even in small but significantly positive ways, changes views of the world, including our own.

We continue to pursue stability, radical and risk-taking programmes and most of all, keep opening and welcoming artistic and event management, production and administration for all those who still should be better represented in society. We're excited about the future!

Claire Webster Saaremetts
Artistic Director



Skimstone Arts team with co-creating communities and associate artists at the Evaluation Picnic for *We Cannot Walk Alone*, June 2021. Image: Joe Hodgeson.

Leadership Team Report

When we were doing **We Cannot Walk Alone**, we worked hard to get the balance right between face to face and online working. Meeting different faces from new communities brought new energy. Working in Heaton Park together to create new songs was a novel and invigorating experience.

UNITY Festival 2022 was very inclusive and had a lot of energy and everyone doing the workshops were so positive. I felt it went very very well. There was so much to do but we also had space so you could go in and out and still feel included.

The songs we created for the radio broadcasts – Just one Day and Memories Lost for **One Day Changes** were very powerful and emotional and especially the way we came together.

Hearing refugees' stories helped us to shape our songs and how it affects people. **One Day Changes** is about giving positive energy in the world, **Memories Lost** is inspired by a real story and remembers the tragedies that happened, but moves forward in the hope to stop other tragedies from happening.

This coming year will be very interesting as we have Reality Boots Tour and Album Launch and will be working on Holocaust Memorial Day Events 2023. I'm really looking forward to writing new and special songs with more young people from across the North East.

I'm also very excited about our extended regional UNITY Festival in 2023.

Nicole Davis
Leadership Team, representing
Young Artist Collective

Our Trustees

“Skimstone is inclusive and ambitious in its approach, considering both the people it directly works with and the impact its work can have on humanity...who has been encourage by a supportive board - to use art as a vehicle of change for those who are at risk of isolation.”

- Organisational Review 2022

For the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, the Board of Trustees is the Board of Directors of the charitable company and is referred to as “the Trustees” throughout this report. The Trustees of Skimstone Arts during the year and signatories to this report are as follows:

Wendy Scott
Chair

Carol Candler
Secretary

Katherine Sargeant
Treasurer (formerly Katherine Dixon)

Sarah Drummond
Vice Chair

Dr Liadi Mudashiru
Trustee (appointed 2021)

Garry Robson
Trustee (resigned April 2022)

Rebecca Wilkie
Trustee



Wendy Scott (Chair) at the Organisational Review sessions. Image: Beckie Smith



Trustee Liadi Mudashiru attends Board Meeting at Skimstone Studios. Image: Peter Saaremets



Rebecca Wilkie and Carol Candler attend Organisational Review sessions. Image: Beckie Smith



Trustee Carol Candler taking part at Skimstone Arts' UNITY Festival with artist David Stickman Higgins. Image: Ako Ismail



Vice Chair Sarah Drummond talks with Associate Artist Ako Ismail about his exhibition at One Day Changes. Image: Cristina Armstrong



Chair Wendy Scott, Treasurer Katie Dixon and Secretary Carol Candler attend UNITY Festival. Image: Shahor Omar

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Structure, Governance & Management

Structure

Skimstone Arts is a company limited by guarantee (registered number 06261728) and a registered charity (registered number 1182284) and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

A board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the organisation meets all its statutory, contractual and social obligations.

Skimstone Arts currently has six Trustees who take decisions collectively. Trustees meet formally every quarter for full board meetings at which they review activities, finances, company performance, business management, public benefit, strategy, and the voluntary input of Trustees.

The Board also holds an Annual General Meeting, typically in September, where we celebrate and showcase our collaborative work with our artists, beneficiaries, funders and invited guests. Our annual meeting in 2021 took place compliantly as a blended-attendance meeting, in person at our new studio and online.

This year we had sub-committees for Trustees on equality, diversity and inclusion; policy and governance; strategic planning and impact; funding strategy and proposals; communications, marketing and knowledge-sharing.

We have no committees which take decisions on behalf of the full board. The rules for the authority and delegation of the Trustees are set in our governing document and terms of reference, as is the scope of our subcommittees.

Appointment and Induction of Trustees

Our annual governance mapping exercise conducted by trustees this year integrated:

- our Theory of Change plan
- our externally-conducted organisational review, and
- the Arts Council England Let's Create strategy outcomes of creative people, cultural communities, and a creative and cultural country.

We identified areas of knowledge and experience which we need to change and develop in the Board within the next 12-month to 24-month cycles.

Skimstone Arts is committed to deliver a fair, open recruitment process and is expanding its outreach methods to raise awareness of our vacancies in a diverse range of communities, places and sectors.

In June 2021 we welcomed Dr Liadi Mudashiru who was appointed as a new Trustee at our AGM.

New Trustees are typically inducted by the Chair and are provided with a range of resources and support to help grow their understanding of the charity's activities.

Trustees participate in an annual 'awayday' and attend Skimstone Arts events and performances, connecting with our artists, co-creators and beneficiaries. The Treasurer and Vice-Chair handle communication of updates from the Charity Governance Code, and Continuous Professional Development type training for Trustees.

Management

Skimstone Arts' team of artists, executives and volunteers is led by Artistic Director Claire Webster Saaremets. There is an annual appraisals cycle for the core delivery team of Artistic Director, Lead Musician, Creative Producer, Financial Administrator, Marketing and Communications Manager, and Project Coordinators.

Public Benefit

The Trustees understand and have discussed the implications of the provisions of the Charities Act 2006, which states that all charities must demonstrate that they are established for public benefit, and have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission.



Vice Chair Sarah Drummond and photo-journalist Shahor Omar at One Day Changes exhibition, Newcastle City Library, January 2022. Image credit: Claire Webster Saaremets

For the year ended 31 March 2022 Skimstone Arts recorded a net surplus of £18,828 (2019-20: deficit £15,084).

Much of this surplus relates to grant income received in advance of project activities due to take place in 2022-23.

Our principal risks and uncertainties: The principal risks for Skimstone Arts are financial, social, and safeguarding of young and vulnerable people; these risks are recorded and monitored with all risks in our secure risk register which is monitored and reviewed quarterly by the Trustees.

Financial risk: Financial risks stem partly from the pandemic and post-pandemic economic conditions so many are facing - such as rising costs of premises, additional costs to achieve a blended delivery offer in-person, on location, and digitally.

Societal risk and uncertainties: Societal risks for us include the wellbeing and health of our beneficiaries, our artists, and our freelance staff. We work with health-sector and academic experts to understand and tailor our current and future work.

Safeguarding risk: we maintain a Safeguarding Policy which is reviewed annually by freelance staff and Trustees. All new Trustees, freelance staff and artists are inducted into the Safeguarding Policy.

Reserves and going concern: The Trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees aim to hold a level of Unrestricted Reserves to enable normal operating activities to continue for a period of up to three months should a shortfall in income or significant unforeseen expenses occur. This policy will be reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis as part of the charity's budgeting processes. Skimstone Arts currently holds Unrestricted Reserves of £28,332 as at 31 March 2022 (31 March 2022: £25,710). The fundraising sub-committee continues to work with Trustees and funders to look for opportunities to build up our reserves to meet our target range of three to six months' average operating costs.

The Trustees have reviewed and considered relevant information, including the annual budget and future cash flows in making their assessment. Based on these assessments, given the measures that could be undertaken

to mitigate the current adverse conditions, and the current resources available, the Trustees have concluded that they can continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

Principal source of funds: We seek always to diversify our funding. Our Trustees are involved in face-to-face advocacy of the benefits to society from our work and are themselves donors to Skimstone Arts. We also receive specific funding in relation to the areas of work we have reported upon, and our funders include:

- Newcastle City Council
- Arts Council England
- Youth Music
- Community Foundation Tyne & Wear
- Garfield Weston Foundation

- Newcastle Fund
- Well Newcastle Gateshead
- Big Lottery Community Fund
- Newcastle Cultural Investment Fund
- Quaker Legacy Fund
- Wellesley Foundation



Image: Shahor Omar

Young Artist Collective member John Paul Goossens shares the debut of his film *Boxed In* at *UNITY Festival*

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Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The charity Trustees (who are also the directors of Skimstone Arts for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

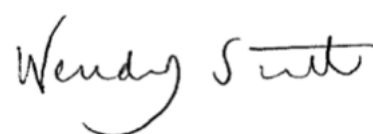
- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any

material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report was approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:



W Scott
Chair of the Board of Trustees

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Statement of Financial Activities

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	6	1,058	1,500	2,558	5,493
Charitable activities					
Grants and contracts	7	20,000	191,982	211,982	122,542
Donated services	8	-	-	-	7,485
Other trading activities	9	10,812	-	10,812	17,080
Total income		31,870	193,482	225,352	152,600
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	11	-	-	-	440
Charitable activities					
Operation of the charity	13	33,879	172,644	206,524	159,759
Donated services	12	-	-	-	7,485
Total expenditure		33,879	172,644	206,524	167,684
Net income/(expenditure)		(2,010)	20,838	18,828	(15,084)
Transfers between funds		4,632	(4,632)	-	-
Net movement of funds		2,622	16,206	18,828	(15,084)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		25,710	17,365	43,075	58,159
Total funds carried forward		28,332	33,571	61,903	43,075

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities

The notes on pages 53 to 62 form an integral part of these accounts.

Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2022

Company No 6261728	Notes	£	Total 2022 £	£	Total 2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	22		952		1,428
Total fixed assets			952		1,428
Current assets					
Debtors	23	24,336		13,824	
Cash at bank and in hand	24	55,250		45,246	
Total current assets		79,586		59,070	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	25	(18,635)		(17,423)	
Net current assets			60,951		41,647
Total assets less current liabilities			61,903		43,075
Total net assets			61,903		43,075
Funds of the charity					
Unrestricted income funds			28,332		25,710
Restricted income funds			33,571		17,365
Total funds			61,903		43,075

The company was entitled to an exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

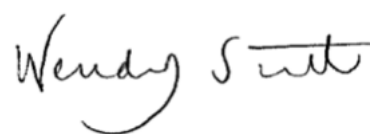
The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with the respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

The notes on pages 53 to 62 to form an integral part of these accounts.

These financial statements were approved by the Board on: 26 September 2022

and are signed on its behalf by:



W Scott

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Notes to the Financial Statements

1 Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation or uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

2 Basis of accounting

2.1 Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011. Skimstone Arts meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

2.2 Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees have reviewed and considered relevant information, including the annual budget and future cash flows in making their assessment. In particular, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trustees have revised their forecasts to take into account the impact on the business of possible scenarios brought on by the impact of COVID-19, alongside the measures that they can take to mitigate the impact. Based on these assessments, given the measures that could be undertaken to mitigate the current adverse conditions, and the current resources available, the Trustees have concluded that they can continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

3 Income

3.1 Recognition of income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the resources, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is more likely than not that the resources will be received and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

3.2 Offsetting

There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities, or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by FRS102 SORP or FRS102.

3.3 Grants and donations

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred. Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria of income recognition are met.

3.4 Donated goods and services

Donated goods are measured at fair value (the amount for which the asset could be exchanged) unless impractical to do so. Donated services and facilities are included in the SoFA when received at the value of the gift to the charity provided that the value of the gift can be measured reliably. Donated services and facilities that are consumed immediately are recognised as income with the equivalent

amount recognised as an expense under the appropriate heading in the SoFA.

3.5 Volunteer help

The value of volunteer help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the Trustees' annual report.

3.6 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when received and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

3.7 Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any purpose of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the Trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

4 Expenditure and liabilities

4.1 Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised when it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

4.2 Charitable activities

Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of production of plays, exhibitions, concerts, films and performances and other activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

4.3 Governance and support costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance and other support costs. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice. Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

4.4 Irrecoverable VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

4.5 Creditors

The charity has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts.

5 Assets

5.1 Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis as follows: Fixtures fittings and equipment Straight line over four years A full year's depreciation charge is applied in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal.

Analysis of income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
6 Donations and legacies				
Donations and gifts	288	-	288	613
Core grants	770	-	770	-
Community Fund High Sheriff Award	-	-	-	750
Care and Repair England	-	-	-	2,330
Newcastle City Council	-	1,500	1,500	1,800
	<u>1,058</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>2,558</u>	<u>5,493</u>
7 Charitable activities				
<u>Income from grants</u>				
NCIF Stabilisation Fund	-	35,000	35,000	-
Well Newcastle Gateshead	-	13,500	13,500	8,000
Big Lottery Community Fund	-	9,500	9,500	9,850
Newcastle Cultural Investment Fund	-	-	-	35,000
Youth Music	-	35,469	35,469	39,017
Arts Council England	-	75,513	75,513	20,550
Garfield Western	20,000	-	20,000	-
Newcastle Fund	-	13,500	13,500	10,125
Wellesley Charitable Foundation	-	9,500	9,500	-
	<u>20,000</u>	<u>191,982</u>	<u>211,982</u>	<u>122,542</u>
8 Donated Services				
Donated services	-	-	-	7,485
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,485</u>
9 Other trading activities				
Work with Young Artist Collective / Young People	-	-	-	14,000
Work with Elders (commissions)	8,000	-	8,000	3,080
Other commissions and sales	2,812	-	2,812	-
	<u>10,812</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,812</u>	<u>17,080</u>

Income was £225,352 (2021: £152,600) of which £31,870 was unrestricted or designated (2021: £25,928) and £193,482 was restricted (2021: £126,672)

Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
11 Raising funds				
Fundraising costs	-	-	-	440
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>440</u>
12 Donated Services				
Donated services	-	-	-	7,485
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,485</u>
13 Expenditure on charitable activities				
Reaching Out	-	47,696	47,696	52,410
Youth Music	-	26,626	26,626	36,425
Peace Procession	-	-	-	5,842
Arts Council England	-	75,514	75,514	21,050
Work with Young Artists	20,000	9,533	29,533	6,069
Work with Elders	8,399	-	8,399	2,330
FOGO Fund	-	-	-	10,000
Newcastle Fund	-	13,275	13,275	10,125
Other projects	5,481	-	5,481	15,508
	<u>33,879</u>	<u>172,644</u>	<u>206,524</u>	<u>159,759</u>
14 Analysis of charitable activities				
Reaching Out	39,929	7,767	47,696	52,410
Youth Music	23,775	2,851	26,626	36,425
Peace Procession	-	-	-	5,842
Arts Council England	28,010	47,505	75,514	21,050
Work with Young Artists	15,386	14,147	29,533	6,069
Work with Elders	6,540	1,858	8,399	2,330
FOGO Fund	-	-	-	10,000
Newcastle Fund	10,450	2,825	13,275	10,125
Other projects	4,632	849	5,481	15,508
	<u>128,722</u>	<u>77,802</u>	<u>206,524</u>	<u>159,759</u>

Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities continued

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
15 Support costs				
Consultancy	1,000	32,865	33,865	1,650
Management activity	-	6,911	6,911	2,867
Governance cost	-	2,021	2,021	1,020
Finance and administration	111	12,587	12,698	1,452
IT costs	-	865	865	949
Depreciation	476	-	476	955
Rent and overheads	747	9,980	10,727	8,868
Marketing and PR	373	9,866	10,239	-
Other	-	-	-	311
	<u>2,707</u>	<u>75,095</u>	<u>77,802</u>	<u>18,072</u>

Expenditure on charitable activities and raising funds was £206,524 (2021: £167,684) of which £33,879 was unrestricted or designated (2021: £13,554) and £172,644 was restricted (2021: £154,130)

16 Fees for examination of the accounts

	2022 £	2021 £
Independent examiner's fees for reporting on the accounts	1,122	1,020
Other accountancy services paid to the examiner	480	-
	<u>1,602</u>	<u>1,020</u>

17 Analysis of staff costs and the cost of key management personnel

	2022 £	2021 £
Subcontract staff costs	162,924	122,435
	<u>162,924</u>	<u>122,435</u>

No employee received remuneration above £60,000 (2021: nil).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees and the Artistic Director. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £49,945 (2021: £40,030).

18 Staff Numbers

The average monthly head count was 6 staff (2021: 6 staff) and the average monthly numbers of full-time equivalent employees during the year were as follows:

	2022 Number	2021 Number
The parts of the charity in which the subcontract staff work were:		
Charitable activities - core work	1.6	0.7
Charitable activities - direct work	2.4	2.4
	<u>4.0</u>	<u>3.1</u>

19 Transactions with Trustees

None of the Trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from an employment with their charity or a related entity.

Trustees' expenses

The following detail the expenses paid directly by Skimstone Arts on behalf of Katie Dixon.

	2022 £	2021 £
Microsoft Office Licence	33	33
	<u>33</u>	<u>33</u>

Transactions with related parties

There have been no related party transactions in the reporting period.

20 Defined contribution pension scheme

As all the staff are currently subcontracted the charity does not operate a pension scheme.

21 Corporation Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objectives.

22 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures fittings and equipment £	Total £
Cost		
Balance brought forward	4,974	4,974
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
Balance carried forward	<u>4,974</u>	<u>4,974</u>
Depreciation		
Basis	SL	
Rate	25%	
Balance brought forward	3,546	3,546
Depreciation charge for year	476	476
Disposals	-	-
Balance carried forward	<u>4,022</u>	<u>4,022</u>
Net book value		
Brought forward	<u>1,428</u>	<u>1,428</u>
Carried forward	<u>952</u>	<u>952</u>

23 Debtors and prepayments (receivable within 1 year)

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	24,336	13,824
	<u>24,336</u>	<u>13,824</u>

24 Cash at bank and in hand

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash at bank	54,794	45,118
Cash in hand	456	128
	<u>55,250</u>	<u>45,246</u>

25 Creditors and accruals (payable within 1 year)

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	18,074	16,403
Accruals		
Independent examination of accounts	561	1,020
	<u>18,635</u>	<u>17,423</u>

26 Events after the end of the reporting period

No events have occurred after the end of the reporting period, but before the accounts are authorised, that require adjustment to the accounts.

27 Analysis of charitable funds

Analysis of movements in unrestricted funds

	Fund balances brought forward £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Fund balances carried forward £
Unrestricted funds					
General unrestricted fund	25,710	31,870	(33,879)	4,632	28,332
Totals	<u>25,710</u>	<u>31,870</u>	<u>(33,879)</u>	<u>4,632</u>	<u>28,332</u>

Purpose of unrestricted funds

General unrestricted fund: The 'free reserves' of the charity.

27 Analysis of charitable funds continued

Analysis of movement in restricted funds

	Fund balances brought forward £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Fund balances carried forward £
Restricted funds					
Well Newcastle Gateshead	-	13,500	(13,500)	-	-
Big lottery Reaching Out	-	9,500	-	-	9,500
Newcastle Cultural Investment Fund	-	35,000	(28,050)	(1,008)	5,942
Arts Council England	-	75,513	(75,513)	-	-
Newcastle Fund	-	13,500	(13,500)	-	-
Newcastle City Council HMD	-	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
Quaker Legacy Fund	4,333	-	(4,333)	-	-
Wellesley Foundation	-	9,500	(9,500)	-	-
Youth Music	13,032	35,469	(26,748)	(3,624)	18,129
Totals	<u>17,365</u>	<u>193,482</u>	<u>(172,644)</u>	<u>(4,632)</u>	<u>33,571</u>

Purpose of main restricted funds

Restricted funds represent income resources used for a specific purpose within the charity as identified by the donor.

Well Newcastle Gateshead	Reaching Out Project - support young people to be cultural leaders and create work with communities.
Big lottery Reaching Out	Reaching Out Project - support young people to be cultural leaders and create work with communities.
Newcastle Cultural Investment Fund	Reaching Out Project - support young people to be cultural leaders and create work with communities.
Arts Council England	Culture Recovery to sustain Skimstone Arts and core staff team and costs.
Newcastle Fund	Young Artist Collective - supporting the work of vulnerable young people in the region to make work and develop leadership.
Newcastle City Council HMD	Holocaust Memorial Day Events Create work to be part of national Holocaust Memorial Day Events.
Quaker Legacy Fund	Reaching Out Project - support young people to be cultural leaders and create work with communities.
Wellesley Foundation	This grant supports work with young people.
Youth Music	Continue personal and musical development of our Young Artists Collective, supporting high-quality music making by young people facing complex life challenges.



Associate Artist Bethany Ellen Coyle working with Skimstone Staff for *UNITY Festival*. Image: Ako Ismail

SKIMSTONE ARTS

(A company limited by guarantee)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

For the year ended 31 March 2022

I report on the financial statements of Skimstone Arts for the year ended 31 March 2022, which are set out on pages 51 - 62.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees (who are also directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a Fellow of the Association of Charity Independent Examiners.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
- the accounts do not accord with such records; or
- the accounts do not comply with relevant accounting requirements under section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102).

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Jim Dodds
Connected Voice Business Services Ltd
Higham House
Higham Place
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8AF
Date: 26/09/22

27 Analysis of charitable funds continued

Transfers between funds

	Reason for transfer	Amount £
Between unrestricted and restricted funds	The transfer represents a contribution to Core Costs from Newcastle Cultural Investment Fund and Youth Music.	4,632

28 Capital commitments

As at 31 March 2022, the charity had no capital commitments (2021 -£nil).

29 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Tangible fixed assets	952	-	952	1,428
Cash at bank and in hand	21,679	33,571	55,250	45,246
Other net current assets (liabilities)	5,701	-	5,701	(3,599)
	28,332	33,571	61,903	43,075

Thank You

Our supportive team of board members, staff, co-creators, artists, communities, partners and funders made 2021/22 a year of growth, development and shared creative highlights.

We would like to thank all our funders and partners who have supported us in this challenging year of lockdowns and emerging from COVID.

From strategic partners who commission our work including our friends at Northumbria University and Elders Council, to national and international arts organisations such as Counterpoints Arts in London, Radio GaMashie in Accra, Ghana and Madame Teatro in Portugal, and cultural venues such as the service providers, Newcastle and Gateshead Arts Development Teams, Holocaust Memorial Trust UK, Elders Council, Care and Repair England, Connexions Youth Service and Social Services, Universities of Newcastle, Durham and Northumbria, St Peter's Church Esol Café, Stockton, Bosnian Educational Trust and researcher Dr Beate Muller.

We would like to include community and arts venues across the North East of England including Seven Stories The National Centre for Children's Books, St Silas' Church in Byker, Ouseburn Trust, and Brinkburn Street Brewery, Bar & Kitchen.

Thank you to those venues who supported our tour of Doorbells; Dreaming for the Future including INSPIRE Festival at Dance City, Chopwell Community Centre in Gateshead, St Martin's Centre and St Anthony's Day Services in Byker and Walker.

Thanks also to Artistic Director/Choreographer in residence Dora Frankel for her work with **Doorbells: Dreaming for the Future**.

Thank you also to our other partnership networks in Youth Music Including Jack Drum Arts, Standing Upright, Musinc and community partnerships including Walker Workers.



Skimstone Arts team, associate artists and members of the Byker Commissioning Group at UNITY Festival 2022.

"...this project has brought together so many more people and many more stories and to be able to be part of not just working on it, broadcasting it, but also hearing it and knowing many people who might have seen it will ..have a stronger connection...even if you don't speak the language, when you watch it or listen to it you got the idea of what we were trying to accomplish. It was universal."

- Nii Kwartey Owoo, Technical Manager and Associate Artist

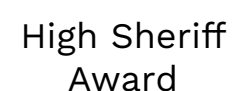
"...when I was at Skimstone Arts I could sing I could dance all of these things that I would be a bit shy of doing, I was thinking it's really taken me out of my comfort zone..people just wanted to see you having a good time, it was lovely so I sang and danced all weekend, I'm a different person coming out of the festival... it's been brilliant for me."

- External Evaluation Report UNITY Festival

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Funders & Partners

We would like to thank all our funders and partners that have supported us this year.






Skimstone Arts


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Lead Musician
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Young Artist Collective, young people)

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