



Skimstone Arts

Skimstone Arts Annual Report and Accounts 2023 - 2024



**Our Mission: To support
diverse artists, people and
communities at risk of
social isolation to create work
with, for and about the world
that matters to them.**

About Skimstone Arts	04
Our Activities and Aims	06
Report From Our Chair of Trustees	08
Artistic Director’s Report	10
Leadership Team Report	12
Young Artist Collective & Reality Boots	14
Freeflow Café	16
West End Refugee Service and St Peter’s Stockton - on - Tees	18
Refugee Week 2023	20
Ouseburn Festival 2023	22
Impact Case Study: Peace Night Hexham	24
Impact Case Study: Holocaust Memorial Day	26
Impact Case Study: The Upstartz	30
Structure, Governance and Management	34
Statement of Trustees’ Responsibilities	36
Independent Examiner’s Report	37
Statement of Financial Activities	38
Statement of Financial Position	39
Thank You Funders & Partners	42
Contact	44

01

About Skimstone Arts

“Such a powerful performance that evoked so much emotion. The work exploring the heart and the burdens we share, a powerful reminder to the need of community.”

Audience Feedback

Skimstone Arts is a welcoming, safe yet risk taking charity, passionate about promoting equality and visibility in the arts and society. Established in 2007 by Artistic Director/artist Claire Webster Saaremets

Our mission is to support diverse artists and communities and those at risk of social isolation to create work with, for, and about the world that matters to them.

We produce and embed social action, equality and visibility in our:

PROGRAMME

We produce an annual programme of accessible live, radio and online events, with local, national and international communities for: regional UNITY Festival exploring the (themes of humanity and our environment), National Holocaust Memorial Day, and national Refugee Week.

COMMUNITIES

We collaborate with local, national and international artists, co-creators and audiences with skills, talents, ideas and potential and are living with life challenges, needs and societal isolation, to work with us and create authentic artworks for our annual programme.



Image: Colin Davison

We support our Young Artists Collective and their band Reality Boots run by our young people's Leadership Team. The Lead Musician supporting our young people is Peter Saaremets, funded by Youth Music.

Our bands create and record original work about what they want to say about the world for our programmed events.

PARTNERSHIPS

We work with regional universities, cultural venues and a range of partners regionally, nationally and internationally to create work that contributes to important research, festival events and invites audiences to think about and respond to arts and social action.

The process of hearing stories, exploring themes, and working together with such a rich diversity of voices to create this work has been a very powerful journey. We hope that audiences are moved by our songs, performances, images, films, poetry and events, which respond to lived experiences.

We invite people who have a right to be visible to join us in being positive activists, nurturing and recognising humanity and our living world... to bring peace, respect and open hearts.

02

Our Activities and Aims

Our general aims include:

- Creating a voice for our diverse artists, communities and all those we work with to promote inclusion, collaboration, ownership and respect, for anyone who has a social and political right to make artwork but may face barriers to do so.
- Making accessible artistic work including performances, exhibitions, radio broadcasts and gigs, that reflect current stories and themes that engage diverse audiences.
- Being actively inclusive and supporting and nurturing opportunities for all those made isolated by society; recognising and celebrating skills and talents, despite the multiple life challenges they may be experiencing.
- Presenting free events throughout the year, giving audiences the chance to enjoy: live music, performance, arts, exhibitions, stories and workshops, that celebrate humanity, the environment and positive social action.

How we do this

We bring the artworks created by the different artists and co creator communities into the same public platform e.g. our young people's band Reality Boots, commissioned artists, photographers, musicians etc and community members perform original songs, poetry, exhibit work from creative sessions for our UNITY Festival/Holocaust Memorial Day Events and Refugee Week. This creates equal visibility and invites audiences to be inspired and engage with a broader spectrum of experiences, stories and social action.

Why do we do this

We believe in equality of opportunity, of being curious and playful about the world, and expressing ideas and thoughts in different art forms that help us to think more deeply about humanity and the environment. We are passionate about travelling together, listening, responding and learning about the diversity of voices, ideas and artworks. Then we can begin to change individual, community and world perceptions, and recognise how artistic processes and artworks can reinforce equal worth, visibility, and appreciation of a new lens on the world, and positive relationships that make us feel good TOGETHER.



Image: Colin Davison

03

Report From Our Chair of Trustees

Welcome to the Skimstone Arts Annual Report for 2023/4!

Enjoy our report and linger over the joyous images. As you will see, it's been another hugely successful year, artistically and culturally for Skimstone, working alongside an ever-widening range of different communities across our region in the face of huge social and environmental challenges nationally and internationally.

However, the year has also had challenges for Skimstone itself. The amazing work that Claire and Peter and the team have yet again produced this year, is all the more striking when you remember (and who could forget?!) how much else was going on under the surface.

Claire's health issues not only impacted on her and Peter and their wider circle of family and friends but meant that many of the wider team had to step up to new roles and responsibilities – something they did with dedication and no small success.

Similarly, from the beginning of the year, the new board had to get to know each other, get to grips with our role and maintain strategic continuity – as well as supporting Claire and Peter. I'd like to take this

opportunity to thank all my board colleagues for their unstinting commitment and dedication to the work throughout the year.

The Board has also taken the opportunity to review our Theory of Change – the core document that helps the whole team focus on what we're doing, why we're doing it and how we're doing it. In the year ahead we expect to refine and focus that thinking further.

We can't wait for you to join us on the next stage of our journey.

Simon James
Chair



Simon James
Chair



Jess Johnson
Secretary



Angela Mortimer
Trustee



Talha Ozleblebici
Trustee



Lya Vollering
Trustee

04

Artistic Director's Report

“An uplifting year, despite great personal challenge.”

Claire Webster Saaremets

Our Annual programme continued to create significant opportunities to create artistic work with such a wide diversity of people. Highlights include: having positive coverage from ITV for our audio and poetry work with creative members of West End Refugee Service, in partnership with Newcastle University; listening to quiet thoughtful audience responses at our Fear or Freedom Holocaust Memorial Day Events in January 2024; the creation of our new band The Upstartz at St Anthony's Day Centre, Walker; devising and directing a new performance group from the Ukrainian community; being asked to speak at the Human Rights Activism Panel and Networking Event the joyful commissioning by Ouseburn Trust to programme their woodland area, giving us a great platform for our diverse artists, and our own band Reality Boots to perform... despite the torrential rain on the first day!!

2023 to 2024 was a significant year of personal challenge for me. Having been diagnosed with a brain tumour in November 2022, but being able to still work until two weeks before my brain tumour removal operation in August 2023, resulted in a three-month recovery period. I'm so grateful for the kindness, care and support from Chair Simon James, Board of Trustees, Skimstone staff, artists, partners



such as St Anthony's Day Care and our young people to Peter Saaremets (Lead Musician/ my husband) and myself. I remain indebted to the skills of our NHS. I was able to return to work at Skimstone Arts on 1st November.

We made a strategic change to put our UNITY Festival into October 2024 allowing us to fund raise and have a longer lead in time and we were thrilled to match our existing funds and secure £65,000 from Arts Council England National Lottery Project Grants and further core funding from Garfield Weston alongside existing multi year funding from Youth Music and Newcastle Cultural Investment Fund. This alongside developing new partnerships with Great North Museum: Hancock, Newcastle upon Tyne and Kirkleatham Museum, Redcar who will be hosting our UNITY Festival '24.

We're so excited that UNITY Festival '24 will be our biggest and most ambitious yet!

Claire Webster Saaremets
Artistic Director/CEO

05

Leadership Team Report

“I enjoyed seeing some of our young people debut at their first gig at BOP Fest with our partners from Jack Drum Arts. It was great to take part in something you believe – an ecological awareness raising event.”

Young Artist Collective Leadership Team

This year has been another packed year with recording in a studio, print workshops at Northern Print and creating new songs around the themes of Holocaust Memorial Day and the local environment.

A lot of achievements within a variety of artforms – music, film and print and very productive despite Claire’s absence.

Ouseburn Festival was a new venture for us and a lot to organise, especially putting up tents in the pouring rain.

Here are some personal reflections from the Young Artist Collective and members of the Leadership Team:

“Ouseburn Festival was a particular highlight for me and I put the most into and got the most out of. Major reason – was an event from the ground up, using a space that is land left to the side and not thought about all that much. We created almost a type of village in that space with constant programme of music from bands and individual buskers, art, dance, stuff that people could take away. I really enjoyed the process of organising, being part of the festival staff itself and coordinating the volunteers. Arranging a tent that was vital for the festival to run in the pouring rain, was important for me.”

“For me the Ouseburn Festival was a milestone – doing the evaluation and organising a project for another company, the Ouseburn Trust,



was a first. It was a new challenge for me – helping to set things up and taking on a new role... Interacting with the public and asking questions face to face for feedback then editing it to a deadline as it had to be delivered to the Ouseburn Trust. It was a lot of work but worth it, a highlight of Skimstone Arts 2023.”

“Being in the recording studio was a great chance to be together and have all the different elements come together in Blank Studio. It had a welcoming atmosphere. We started with the theme of Fragility of Freedom and we used everyone’s input into the song. We had to make sure that we were well practiced. We tested it out at a Dwellbeing event at Christmas and it was well received by the audience. They were dancing!”

“I was wearing quite a lot of hats for HMD as I did the marketing, performed my own song and spoke on behalf of Reality Boots, to present the song Human Will that we had worked on.

I think HMD was quite a challenging event as it’s difficult subject matter but that’s why it was important. At each performance audiences were very engaged and you could see this in the audience discussions afterwards. It was nice for me to write up that feedback and see the impact it had had.”

We’re looking forward to writing new material, welcoming some new members, being part of the programme for UNITY Festival 24 and hopefully recording and collaborating with more young people across the region.

06

Young Artist Collective & Reality Boots

“It’s a chance to express a lot of things I wouldn’t be able to express in daily life. It can be a calm place. I can be social and interact with other people who aren’t my children. It gives opportunities to do events that I wouldn’t be able to do otherwise.”

Young Artist Collective member

Our Young Artists Collective (YAC) and their band Reality Boots is made up of a diverse group of young people who work in and beyond the studio to create an individual and collaborative arts practice.

“It helps people come out of their shells, and express our feelings through art and music.”
- Young Artist Collective member

In 2023 – 24 Our Young Artists Collective continued their journey with weekly sessions that provided opportunities for anyone 16 to 25 years of age with an interest mainly in music, sound and other art forms to create work with a diverse group of people in a supportive, nurturing environment. Our young artists create work responding to national themes such as national Holocaust Memorial Day and Refugee Week events and our own UNITY Festival.

Reality Boots performed at Ouseburn Festival with their original songs as a band and members also had the opportunity to be part of the busking programme, performing some of their solo material.

“The Young Artists Collective expands peoples’ social and artistic circles.” - Young Artist Collective member

Reality Boots took part in Skimstone Arts’ Holocaust Memorial Day 2024 events A Night of Fear and Freedom, at Newcastle City Library and NewBridge project. They wrote a song



called Human Will that they then recorded at Blank Studios. The recording was also played on Skimstone Radio broadcast A Night of Fear and Freedom.

The Young Artist Collective then worked with Northern Print based in the Ouseburn Valley, Newcastle to use the lyrics of their song to create different compositions with a variety of printing techniques.

Young people are given the opportunities to apply for specific roles and join the staff team e.g. marketing, recruitment and evaluation.

Opportunities for young people have included:

- Paid artistic and leadership skills development.
- Gaining experience in understanding professional recording studio experience.
- Paid marketing and website management, evaluation and event management, and volunteer coordination.
- Key leadership within the band and providing 1:1 support for members with additional needs.



07

Freeflow Creativity Café

“The Freeflow Creativity Café was a delightful experience. Working with other creatives and people from different backgrounds, we shared our experiences and stories. As a collective, we collaborated and deliberated on ideas to bring forth something that has become a testament to the power of creative diversity. As a poet, I was able to view other perspectives and feel like I was part of a community.”

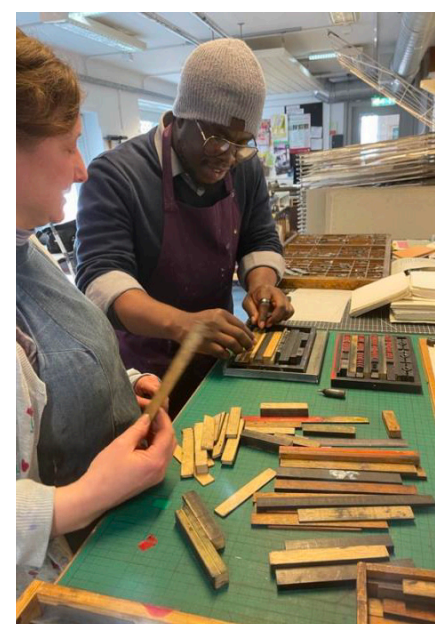
- Lanre Sonde, Project Member

Freeflow Creativity Café explored the theme of ‘Our Home’ over 6 x free sessions, writing lyrics, poetry and monologues, inspired by real stories and our own ideas, with Skimstone Arts’ Claire Webster Saaremets (Artistic Director) and poet/performer Clare Matthews (Associate artist).

Skimstone Arts’ Freeflow Creativity Cafés brought together a wonderful diversity of people, including residents in Newcastle and those with lived refugee experience. Together we collaborated and co created a range of poetry about the theme of HOME, which will be recorded at Blank Studios, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Audio and printed poems will be featured in the XL Gallery at Newcastle University as part of Skimstone Arts’ Refugee Week events 2024.

One collective poem from Freeflow was made into a stand alone artwork using Letterpress with Northern Print based in the Ouseburn Valley, Newcastle upon Tyne.



West End Refugee Service and St Peter's Stockton-on-Tees

**“Thank you ...support you have given to such a good cause...helping us make such a difference.” - Peter Noble
Chief Executive West End Refugee Service**

West End Refugee Service

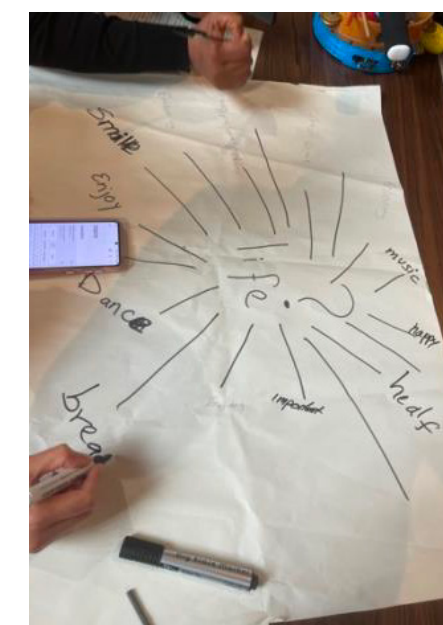
At Skimstone Arts we actively support members of the refugee communities to co-create and experience:

- artistic opportunities to perform and exhibit work of a high standard that expresses hope, integration, cultural value and moving stories we can all learn from.
- ways of engaging positively with new audiences through talks and discussions about their work and lives, skills and talents that helps understand importance of integration and social cohesion.
- event management opportunities that platform the skills and talents of refugee communities ie being part of Skimstone Arts' administrative, production, stewarding team.

All our experiences have been so positive in learning how communities commit to being involved and helping to co design our projects with us.

WERS

“We’ve made music together, from all these different places in the world. Today I felt togetherness.” - WERS member, St Peter's Church – Newcastle upon Tyne



We have formed a very new band called Shirley & the gang inspired by the lead singer – Shirley – and her amazing voice. The band will work together to make songs to perform at Refugee Week 2024.

“Today we made a song about Hope. It gave me hope.” - from Shirley & The Gang, St Peter's Church, Stockton-on-Tees



“My grandparents were holocaust survivors. As I came into the room with this identity I was unsure what to expect. I have been blown away by how beautifully “Where Do You Sit” links Holocaust Memorial Day to our current world and highlights its relevance for people who are marginalised in so many ways. It does an excellent job of showing how we are all connected wherever/whoever we are. Thank you.”

Audience Member

2023 marked the 25th anniversary of Refugee Week. Taking place from 19 to 25 June, the theme for this year is **what compassion looks like in action**. It aimed to encourage people to explore what we can do together to create a shared understanding of compassion which is extended widely to all. This year, we were delighted to return to Newcastle University to share two exhibitions, *Where Do You Sit?* and *Underneath, Within, Beyond*, along with a new sound installation, *Sanctuary of Sound*, created by refugee and asylum seekers we’re working with who live in Newcastle, Sunderland and Stockton.

Sanctuary of Sound took place in the atmospheric Arches at Newcastle University, where audiences could experience the collaborative sound installation created by The Resonators - a collective of people with lived refugee experience. The sound piece, which explored urban and natural soundscapes of Newcastle, was created with the West End Refugee Service, artist Martin Heslop and our Artistic Director Claire Webster Saaremetts. Participants explored areas of Newcastle to listen, capture field recordings and write collective poetic compositions which were woven together in this immersive piece.

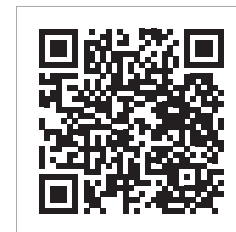
“I am proud of my voice. I sounded like a journalist. Maybe I could do something like this in the futures. That day I believed in myself.”
- Member of The Resonators



ITV recorded and broadcast the experiences and impact of taking part from The Resonators and Claire Webster Saaremetts.

“Here in the park, beside the ducks and geese, we began to make our poetry. I would like to go again.” - Member of The Resonators

You can watch The Resonators on ITV as they listen to their sound piece:



“We all sat under the fallen tree. There was a difference in recording sound, what we were listening to, and making our own sound.”
- Member of The Resonators



Ouseburn Festival 2023

“Following the success of UNITY Festival 2023, we were thrilled to be commissioned by Ouseburn Trust to programme the Woodland spaces and this year’s Ouseburn Festival. We aimed to create a programme that reflected diversity of artists and all that lives in the woodland, from original songs and sounds to dance and observing mushrooms in a microscope. We celebrated all that Ouseburn Valley had to offer as a home for humans and wildlife.”

**Claire Webster Saaremets,
Artistic Director at
Skimstone Arts**

Ouseburn Festival was a free, community-led family-friendly festival that celebrated the Ouseburn Valley, its people and its businesses.

This year visitors to the Festival enjoyed over 50 different activities and events. This included live music and performances, craft and food markets, boat trips on the river and much more.

Skimstone Arts was commissioned by Ouseburn Trust to programme the Ouseburn Woodland and present a diverse line-up of performers and creative workshops in beautiful spaces across the Ouseburn, including:

- **The Bandstand** - in the heart of the woodland under the railway viaduct
- **The Orchard** - behind the gate by Crawford’s Bridget, the cobbled bridge heading into the woodland
- **The Stone Circle** - by the Cumberland Arms

Ouseburn Festival - Woodland Takeover

Audiences were invited to build beautiful bird feeders with artist Anne Curtis, discover the hidden beauty of mushrooms with illustrator Fran Thomas, and experience a Kenyan musical journey with Rapasa Nyatrapasa Otieno, join a joyful exploration into African dance with Nii Kwartey Owoo and the electrifying Afrocentric sounds of Asasaa, make a clay pot with Will



Benson and listen to live music from buskers. Skimstone Arts also presented songs co written by St Anthony’s Day Centre members The Upstartz with the Orchard Song Book Band, original songs by our young people’s band Reality Boots.

“I think it’s really good and multicultural, I think it’s good for my daughter to see people from different cultures... and it’s just happy isn’t it?”
- Audience Feedback

At the stone circle festival-goers created beautiful water marbling pictures with artists Tuguy and Melike Yalcin. There was something for everyone.

“Fantastic live music, great lyrics, real energy, really enjoyed it, well done.”
- Audience Feedback

Hear what festival-goers thought of our Woodland Takeover by watching one of Skimstone Arts young artists Phillip Melody’s evaluation video:



11

Impact Case Study: Peace Night Hexham

“Claire Webster Saaremets... You directed and created a wonderful composed event, which followed the peace journey perfectly and that the audience understood the message of the evening. Well done and thank you. Well done and thank you, to you Peter and all your team and for introducing us to wonderful poets as in Clare, Verity for her gorgeous voice and song and Rapasa too for his words and music too. Fabulous.”

**Member of Hexham Together
Feedback**

Peace Night Hexham Together for Ukraine in collaboration with Skimstone Arts

Performances and stories from our Holocaust Memorial Day event A Night of Fear and Freedom were invited to be part of Peace Night, an event made in collaboration with Hexham Together for Ukraine.

Together at Hexham Abbey, we hosted a two-part Peace Journey, inviting the local community to reflect on the devastating impact of war, urging us all to join our voices for the cause of peace, as we marked the second anniversary of the beginning of the war in Ukraine on 24 February. Powerful music, movement, and performances from Ukrainian community with our diverse artists/musicians. We also exhibited Fear or Freedom Exhibition again alongside Ukrainian Tapestry entitled Trees of Manifestation.

Peace Night Hexham video on Facebook:



12

Impact Case Study: Holocaust Memorial Day

“Hearing real stories from people was a very impactful experience... experiencing the emotional power of music and the thoughts it provoked when discussing important sensitive topics. It felt a very friendly accessible event.”

Audience Feedback

Skimstone Arts presented A Night of Fear & Freedom 18 to 24 January 2024 as part of the National Holocaust Memorial Day Programme and Newcastle City Council’s Holocaust Memorial Day Events 2024.

In January 2024, communities across the North East were invited to join our A Night of Fear & Freedom - a series of free events to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, part of Newcastle City Council’s programme. The national theme for Holocaust Memorial Day 2024 is Fragility of Freedom.

A Night of Fear & Freedom included a powerful new photographic and text exhibition, the chance to hear live and recorded performances of true stories, original songs, music, spoken word and poetry in a compelling, thoughtful and uplifting event, and the opportunity to listen to highlights from the project during a special broadcast on Skimstone Radio.

As Skimstone Arts’ Artistic Director, Claire Webster Saaremets, explains:

“When we look at what is happening across the world with war and conflict and how it is irrevocably affecting the lives of those caught up in the onslaught, we need to, as artists and activists, create work together with diverse artists and communities that explore how freedom is an intrinsic part of all our lives, and how we can consider ways to contribute to the strengthening freedoms of those we live alongside and those much further away.”



Image: Colin Davison

"A Night of Fear & Freedom is a chance for people to come together to pledge not to take our freedoms for granted and consider what we can do to strengthen freedoms around the world."

Live events

On Wednesday 24 January, at Newcastle City Library's Bewick Hall and on Thursday 25 January at The NewBridge Street Project's Cinema Space, visitors were invited to join Skimstone Arts' Artistic Director Claire Webster Saaremets, Associate Artist Ako Ismail, musicians and story sharers to sit around a 'gathering light' and listen to live and recorded performances of true stories, new and original songs, music, spoken word and poetry.

This powerful, thoughtful and uplifting experience highlights stories from diverse contributors about how freedoms have been stolen, lost and found.

"The variety of voices and stories shared. It's great to hear the work from such a diverse range of artists and individuals. The volunteers and staff members were also very welcoming and warm." - Audience Feedback

Fear or Freedom? Exhibition

Thursday 18 to Wednesday 24 January 2024, 10am to 4pm

Exhibition space outside Bewick Hall, Level 2, Newcastle City Library

Skimstone Arts presented this powerful exhibition consisting of fragments of real stories, poems, songs, photographs, drawings and lyrics that have been contributed by artists, photographers, musicians and young people in the North East of England. Contributors and collaborators included those with lived experience of war and oppression, from Bosnia, Ukraine, Kurdistan Iraq, Guatemala, Poland, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Iran, with additional research from Holocaust survivors.

Skimstone Arts worked with the above diversity of people in a series of story sharing, song writing, recording, creative and reflective sessions, including our regular Freeflow Creativity Cafe and Youth Music project alongside individual interviews and recorded conversations. They explore the national Holocaust Memorial Day Events 2024 theme - Fragility of Freedom.

"Thank you for bringing individual voices and our shared humanness and hope amongst people's trauma and pain." - Audience Feedback

Supported by Fine Art Department at Newcastle University, Fear or Freedom? exhibition was collaboratively created by connecting together how war, oppression,



genocide and conflict erodes our freedoms, and how humanity is forever affected, whatever country or era of time. Torn fragments represent how our identities, loved ones, being human, respect and closure for those who have died and we have lost, and our natural world can all be taken away. How do we find forgiveness and new freedoms?

Fear or Freedom? considers our own fragility of freedom and asks us to consider: How does 'what's happening over there' in war torn parts of our planet affect how we treat each other and our world? How can we support others to find a new freedom of hope, healing and peace?

"Very moving exhibition. Words can't express how sad this is. What is wrong with this world we live in." - Audience Feedback



Bottom Image: Colin Davison

13

Impact Case Study: The Upstartz

“I think it went well. After last week (public performance) I just felt, go for it, you can do it! That dragon on my shoulder’s gone now.”

Upstartz Member

Skimstone Arts have been commissioned by St Anthony’s Day Services on a three-year project.

Inspired by the garden project at St Anthony’s, sessions initially focused on creating songs about the importance of our living planet and how we need to care for our trees, flowers and the natural world. This sense of social activism helped to create a series of songs, with original lyrics, that we were all proud of. We crafted lyrics that: expressed what we wanted to say about the world; promoted individual and collective voices within the group; provided a focus for each session; introduced skills in vocal training, lyric writing, percussion, song structure and production, performance.

A public performance of this collective of 5 x songs was performed at Conaty Awards to an audience of 120 people in December 2023.

We now have a band called The Upstartz that recorded their songs at Blank Studios in May 2024.

Together with the support of all the staff we’ve observed:

- Regular attendance at every session - from 14 - 18 people every week with new people attending and being welcomed into the band.
- Willingness to actively participate e.g. in the physical and vocal warm ups at the start of each session, lyric writing, percussion and



singing elements and the end of session feedback and the public performance.

- Warmups – physical and vocal e.g. being familiar with a routine that keeps us fit and enables us to care for our bodies, brain and voice.

- Increase in self confidence, self esteem and resilience e.g. L used to sit at the back but now sits at the front and is a lead singer. J attends even when feeling down or depressed.

"I am me!" Catherine. "Beforehand, I wouldn't have done anything like this."

- Working together as a whole band. This identity means that there is a collective ownership of the songs created and where people feel we can craft, edit, change and adapt the songs to make them 'the very best'.

"I think it's original."

"I think they've got incredible team work."
- Staff Comment

"I was quite impressed with the way we were improving."

- Extending musical abilities e.g. recognising Tango, Ska, Reggae as musical forms and singing in two part harmony.

"I like the idea of bringing in different styles of music."

"It's just a proper mixture, different things each week. Each weeks different and not the same as the week before. It makes it more enjoyable."

"I like the rock and roll and the waltz!"

- Lyric writing e.g. exploring language to convey ideas, form, rhythm etc.

"It's really good to see how it (songwriting) all comes together." - Jan

- Staff support – band feel at one with the room, working to a practice schedule for the public performance and the recording at Blank Studios.

- Events – Conaty Awards – visibility and collective pride. This event was a very strong platform for the group to show their work to the community and for their skills, creativity and talents to be recognised. Linda introduced each song when performing at the Conaty Awards.

"Everyone was fantastic because they all joined in!"

"People thought our songs were very good."

"Great... exciting." (to perform our songs tonight)

Their songs were also presented by Skimstone musicians at Ouseburn Festival and Memory Studies Conference.

- Community and Shared Humour – people often comment on everyone being together. Shared humour demonstrates friendships and how we are all a social group with new connections and networks e.g. Sean wanting to have the royalties for the songs and our performances!!

"When you're singing with quite a lot of others and you're guitar playing, your voice can get in amongst them and hide."

"Everyone's been brought together."



"Friendship and companionship."

"Everybody has been lovely."

"Great....It's always great – every day."

"It was the way you coordinated and helped them to produce what they did. To achieve that level of performance you held them together but you didn't take away from what they did, that it was their production."

- Audience Feedback



14

Structure, Governance and Management

Legal and Administrative

Registered office address:
Skimstone Arts, The Newbridge Project,
Clarence Walk, Shieldfield Centre,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 1AL

Directors

Simon James (Chair)
Jessica Johnson
Angela Mortimer
Alida Vollering
Tahla Ozleblebici

Bankers

Co-operative Bank



Image: Colin Davison

15

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

Skimstone Arts – Company No. 06221728 Charity No. 1182284 - Year end 31st March 2024

The directors for the purposes of company law have pleasure in presenting their report and the unaudited financial statements of Skimstone Arts (The Company) for the period ended 31st March 2024

Objects

Skimstone Arts is established to advance the arts, particularly but not exclusively, the visual arts, drama, music and film, by the production of plays, exhibitions, concerts, films and performances involving diverse groups of disadvantaged people for the benefit of the public.

Statement of trustee's responsibilities

The directors for the purposes of company law are responsible for preparing the Directors Annual Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and UK Accounting standards.

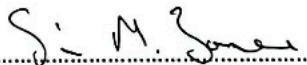
Company Law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the company for that year preparing the financial statements the directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation

The Directors are responsible for keeping accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the 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 company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within part 15 of the companies Act 2006.

On behalf of the board

Director Signature  Name Simon JAMES

Date 4.9.24

16

Independent Examiner's Report

Skimstone Arts – Company No. 06221728 Charity No. 1182284 - Year end 31st March 2024

Independent Examiners Report

I report on the financial statements of The Company for the period ended 31st March 2024.

Independent Examiners Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - i. To keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
 - ii. To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (the FRSSE) (effective January 2015);
- (2) To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable to proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed



Date 9th July, 2024

Mark Thompson MAAT

42 Lesbury Road

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE6 5LB

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

17

Statement of Financial Activities

Skimstone Arts – Company No. 06221728 Charity No. 1182284 - Year end 31st March 2024
Statement of Financial Activities – 31st March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 2024 Total £	2022 2023 Total £
Income					
Donations and Legacies	2.1	340	0	340	2,140
Charitable activities	2.2	21,000	92,154	113,154	174,028
Other Trading Activity		12,950	1,000	13,950	4,442
Total		34,290	93,154	127,444	180,610
Expenditure					
Raising funds			0	0	
Charitable activities	3.2	20,927	87,004	107,932	185,655
Donated services				0	
Total		20,927	87,004	107,932	185,655
Net income/(expenditure) before tax for the reporting period		13,363	6,150	19,512	-5,045
Transfers between funds		-107	107	0	0
Net movement in funds		13,256	6,257	19,512	-5,045
Reconciliation of funds:					
Adjustment to Opening Reserves		259		259	
Total funds brought forward		26,262	30,595	56,858	61,903
Total funds carried forward		39,776	36,852	76,629	56,858

18

Statement of Financial Position

Skimstone Arts – Company No. 06221728 Charity No. 1182284 - Year end 31st March 2024
Statement of Financial Position – 31st March 2024

	Note	At 31 March 2024 £	At 31 March 2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	6	-	-
Total fixed assets		-	-
Current assets			
Debtors	7	960	21,527
Cash at bank and in hand		85,577	64,186
Total current assets		86,537	85,713
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	9,907	28,855
Net current assets/(liabilities)		76,630	56,858
Total assets less current liabilities		76,629	56,858
Funds of the Charity			
Restricted income funds		36,853	33,571
Unrestricted funds		39,777	28,332
Total funds		76,629	61,903

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/03/2023 THIS COMPANY WAS ENTITLED TO EXEMPTION FROM AUDIT UNDER SECTION 477 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 RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLYING WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ACT WITH RESPECT TO ACCOUNTING RECORDS AND FOR THE PREPARATION OF ACCOUNTS

THESE ACCOUNTS HAVE BEEN PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO COMPANIES SUBJECT TO THE SMALL COMPANIES REGIME

Approved by the Board for issue on 31.10.24.

Director Name Simon James Director Signature Simon James

Company No. 06261728

Statement of Financial Position

Skimstone Arts – Company No. 06221728 Charity No. 1182284 - Year end 31st March 2024

1. Accounting Policies

1.1 Accounting Convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008)

1.2 Income

Income from fees is recognised in the accounts when invoiced unless it relates to future accounting periods, in which case it is deferred and included in creditors

Grants / Income receivable are credited to incoming resources on the earlier date of when they are received or when they are receivable, unless they relate specifically to a future accounting period, in which case, they are deferred.

Where a grant is received relating to a future accounting period, the profit and loss account shows the gross amount together with the changes in the amount deferred to future accounting periods. Deferred grant income at the year-end is included in creditors.

1.3 Expenditure

Expenditure is brought in to the financial statements on the accruals basis

1.4 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Fixed Assets are initially recorded at cost

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of the assets, less its estimated residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

20% straight line

1.5 Reserves Policy

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. In recognition of the significant number of projects which the organisation operates, the trustees have established a policy whereby unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be three months of core running costs

Skimstone Arts – Company No. 06221728 Charity No. 1182284 - Year end 31st March 2024

2. Donations and Legacies

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2023 2024 Total	2022 2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	340		340	2,140
			0	
Total	340	0	340	2,140

3. Charitable Activities

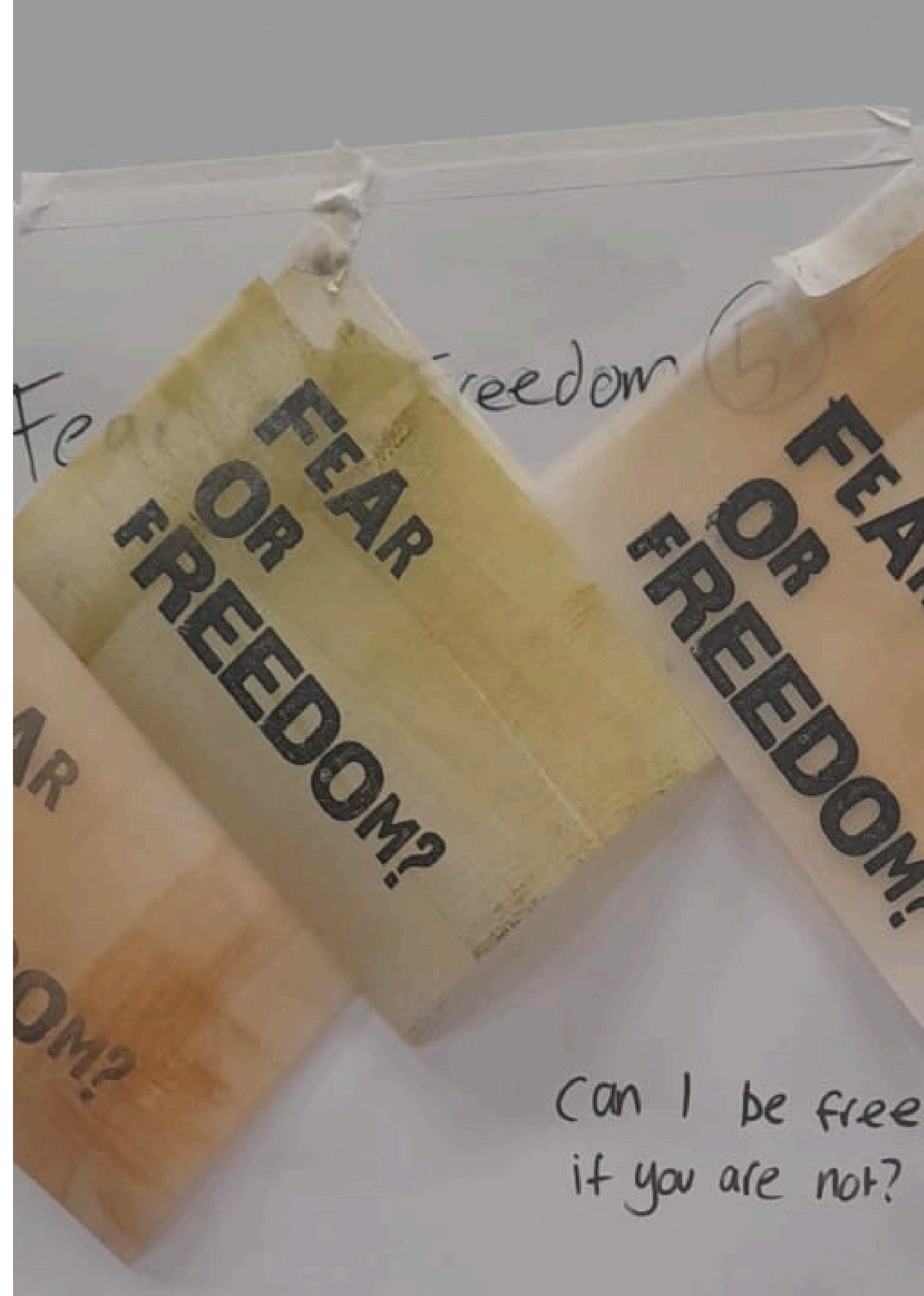
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2023 2024 Total	2022 2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
NCIF		25,000	25,000	25,000
Youth Music		42,327	42,327	42,237
Arts Council		4,327	4,327	64,691
Newcastle Fund		6,000	6,000	1,500
Garfield Weston	20,000		20,000	20,000
Well Newcastle			0	2,050
Gateshead			0	
High Sheriff	1,000		1,000	
Quaker Legacy			0	5,000
Community Foundation		0	0	3,000
Ringtons		5,000	5,000	0
Quaseburn Trust		9,500	9,500	
Wellesley			0	9,800
other	0		0	750
Total	21,000	92,154	113,154	174,028

4. Other Trading Activities

	12,950	1,000	13,950	4,442
--	--------	-------	--------	-------

19

Thank You Funders & Partners



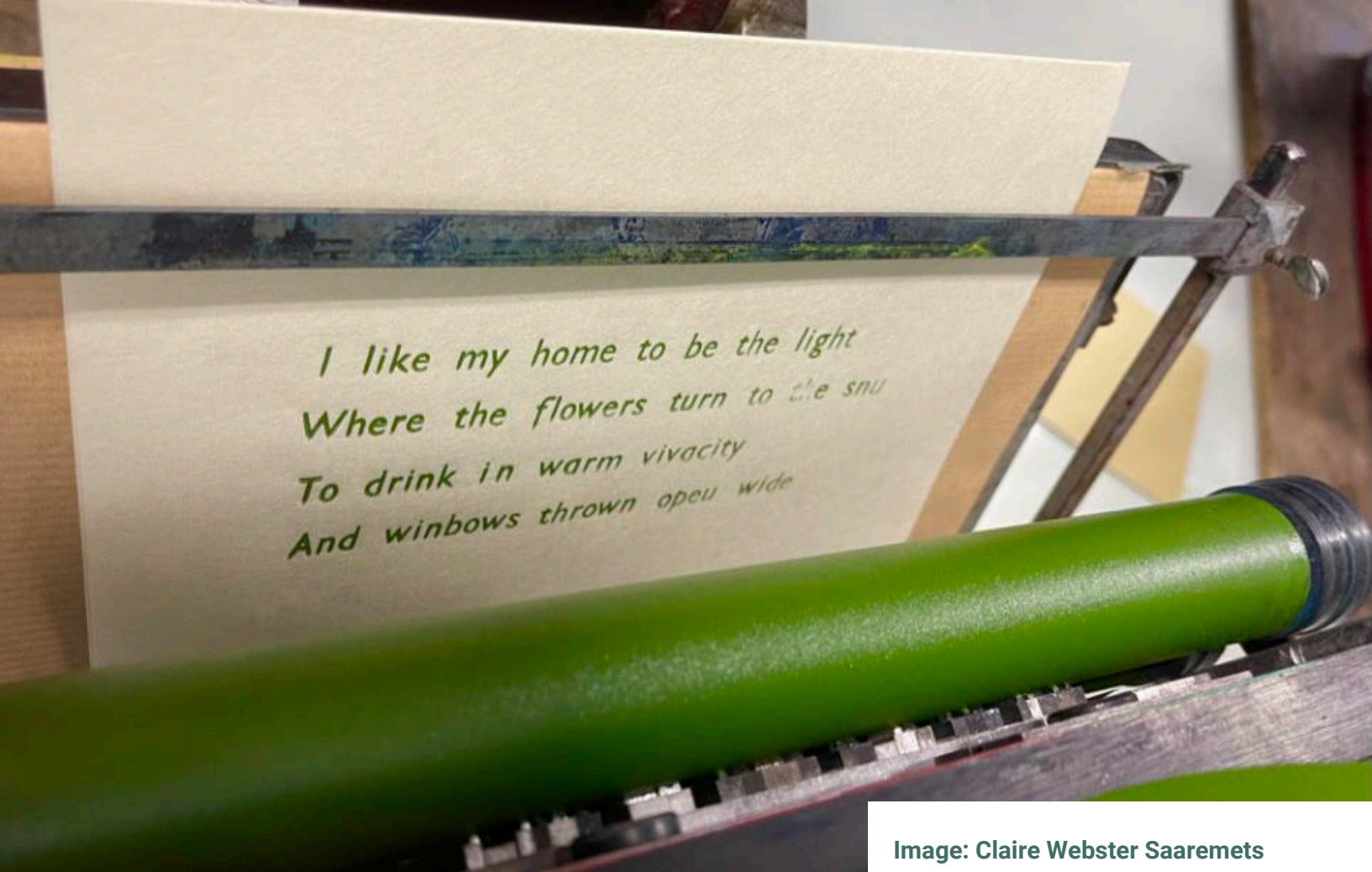


Image: Claire Webster Saaremets

Skimstone Arts

The NewBridge Project
Art Centre
Clarence Walk
Shieldfield Centre
4-8 off Stoddart Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE2 1AL

Online

www.skimstone.org.uk



@SkimstoneArtsEnsemble



@Skimstone_Arts



@skimstonearts

Registered Charity: 1182284

All photo credits Skimstone Arts
unless otherwise specified.

Contact

Artistic Director/CEO
Claire Webster Saaremets
claire@skimstone.org.uk
07803670654

Lead Musician/Operations
(Re: Reality Boots band, Young
Artist Collective, young people)
Peter Saaremets
peter@skimstone.org.uk
07855674012

Freelance Staff

Creative Producer
Cristina Armstrong
cristina@skimstone.org.uk

Comms Manager
Claire Cockroft
clairecockroft@skimstone.org.uk

Finance Administrator
Julie Maxwell
julie@skimstone.org.uk

Technical Manager
Nii Kwarty Owoo

Assistant Project Managers
Verity Alderman
verity@skimstone.org.uk

Rafael Bagott
rafael@skimstone.org.uk