



A New Form of Theatre

Older People's Involvement in Theatre and Drama

By Kate Organ

The Baring Foundation



Richard II – Gold Theatre of Saitama. Photo © Maiko Miyagawa

About the author

Kate Organ has been Arts Adviser to the Baring Foundation since 2007, working on many aspects of the Arts and Older People programme across the UK. Having graduated in Drama at Birmingham University, she began her career working predominantly in community theatre – as a performer, programmer, teacher and director, creating original productions with youth theatres and community casts of all ages, including work in day centres and residential homes for older people. As a free-lance consultant she supports many arts organisations and national arts programmes across all artforms, providing evaluation and organisational development processes, staff training and individual coaching.

www.kateorgan.com/contact

About the Baring Foundation

The Baring Foundation was established in 1969 as an independent funder. It tackles discrimination and disadvantage through strengthening civil society in the UK and abroad. The arts are one of the Foundation's three funding strands. Since 2010, this has focused on arts and older people. A brief account of this work up to 2015 can be found on our website – 'Getting On'.

Foreword

Since 2010, the Baring Foundation has focused its arts programme on work by and for older people. This has been across all art forms and with a strong emphasis on older people's own creativity especially with the involvement of professional artists.

In 2015, on a trip to Tokyo, organised by the British Council and co-financed by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, we were privileged to see the extraordinary work of the Gold Theatre of Saitama, a company specifically for people over 55. It was formed and continues to be led by the legendary Director Yukio Ninagawa, himself now 80. Inspired by this, we asked our Arts Adviser, Kate Organ, herself a theatre professional, to map relevant practice in the UK.

Kate Organ's report, for the first time, shines a spotlight on the exciting development of Older People's Theatre Companies from Bristol to Portstewart, from Cardiff to Edinburgh. Many of these have formed quite recently and mostly outside London and the South East. In some ways they parallel the burgeoning development of Older People's Dance, which, amongst other things, has led to Sadler's Wells' Elixir Festival. 25 companies have been identified in this report (though more may exist) and 14 are described in more detail as case studies.

The report is careful to place these new developments squarely within a broader context of the development of drama and theatre in recent decades, both in the professional sphere but also very importantly in the extensive world of amateur theatre. In addition to Older People's Companies, theatres and arts centres have been seeking to involve older people in many ways, from play reading groups to dementia friendly performances.

Why is this important? Firstly, it is another sign of the dynamism and health of arts and older people as a field. It is continually evolving. Secondly, there are many benefits for participants and some of these are described. Thirdly, and most significantly, it is artistically full of potential – Ninagawa described his company as **'a new form of theatre'**.

David Cutler

Director

Baring Foundation

Contents

Foreword	i
Introduction	1
Characteristics of drama as an art form and theatre as a medium.	1
Widening Participation	2
Breadth of practice	2
Financial support	3
Benefits to older people	4
Benefits to artists	5
Case Studies	7
Arcola Theatre	7
Belgrade Theatre	7
Big Telly	8
Collective Encounters	9
Entelechy	10
Frontier Theatre	11
Kaleidoscope	12
London Bubble Theatre Company	12
New Vic Theatre	14
The Performance Ensemble	17
Re-Live	17
Salisbury Playhouse	18
Spare Tyre	19
West Yorkshire Playhouse	19
Amateur Theatre	23
Relationship to professional theatre	23
Numerous opportunities for involvement	23
Sense of community and agency	24
Lifelong connections	24
Plays and productions	24
Opportunities for older men	25
Inter-generational	25
Appendix	29
Older People's Theatre Companies and associated programmes	29
Acknowledgements	36



Arcola 50+ production of Shared Memories. Directed by Kali Theatre.
Photo courtesy of Arcola

Introduction

Characteristics of drama as an art form and theatre as a medium.

Enactments and embodiments of human relationships, behaviour and emotions are at the heart of drama. A relationship between a performer and a spectator in a live shared moment is an implicit element of the form, though those boundaries are constantly blurred and have always been played with. Spontaneity and playfulness, empathy and imagined/simulated situations and above all a form that is essentially collaborative and sociable. In relation to a person-centred approach to care settings and with people who have a dementia, drama techniques and playful improvisational skills help in relating to that person in their “here and now” and accepting and validating their full personhood.

The medium of theatre can encompass many art forms – music, visual arts, dance, physical movement, craft, writing, spoken word and drama. The social place of theatre has gone through major changes in the second half of the 20th Century and these first decades of the 21st. This is the lifespan too of the many older people who are participating in, working in or attending live theatre and those who are discovering it for the first time in their later years.

The 1960s and 70s saw many theatre developments: an expansion of people training and participating as drama and theatre studies came onto the school curriculum and into universities as a distinct academic subject; youth theatres were born and new genres such as documentary theatre, reminiscence theatre, total theatre, physical theatre, theatre in education (TIE) entered the professional theatre arenas. The spaces in which people saw live theatre expanded to working men’s clubs, village halls, schools and outdoor spaces of all kinds. “Community Plays” were created from the stories of a locality throughout the 1980s, bringing professional playwrights, directors and production teams together with local amateur performers to create large scale and often site-specific works.

Each of these forms have continued to evolve to create new theatre styles and conventions – immersive theatre, work which combines live action and screen-based media, simultaneous live and online performance, such as Fluxx Improvisation’s Citizen’s Theatre model and Big Telly’s live shows viewed by the cast of elders’ relatives across the world via online webcasts. Not to mention the

recent and now routine possibilities of watching the Royal National Theatre live from your local arts centre, cinema or even your care home.

Widening Participation

Throughout these developments there has been a sustained impulse towards widening access, diversifying the voices and stories told and increasing a sense of community and public understanding through theatre arts.

The advent and continued re-inventions of community arts/participatory arts/ collaborative arts is a vital force in the opportunities for older people in our increasingly ageing society to make themselves heard and understood and to enjoy discovering their own creativity through the medium of theatre and drama. The connections between older age and isolation make this inherently sociable art form a powerful medium for combating that isolation.

Breadth of practice

Surveying the current state of involvement of older people in theatre has uncovered a complicated pattern of growing and diversifying practice. Routes to older people's involvement in theatre and drama include:

- Producing and Presenting Theatres with explicit offers for older people; including specific attention to the needs of people living with dementia and connecting to audiences in residential care.
- Theatres with a strong inter-generational offer, complementing their youth theatres with an inclusive community theatre for all generations.
- Professional arts companies with strong or dedicated interests in theatre by, for and with older people, including greater involvement by older people in the governance and direction of the company's work.
- Professional theatre companies of older professional theatre makers.
- Companies of older people – some of which are established standing groups and many more which are assembled for a specific production or project. There are also the beginnings of franchise models such as multiple 'Spring Chickens' events and shows across Northern Ireland and Kaleidoscope's workshop programmes expanding from Northern Ireland into England.
- Play-reading groups in theatres and libraries.
- Involvement in the traditional amateur theatre sector by significant numbers of older people as creatives as well as board members and organisers.

- Volunteer and audience engagement programmes including involvement in archiving, education, front-of-house and fund-raising.
- A Dementia Friendly theatre movement – training front-of-house staff and volunteers to be Dementia Friends and adapting performances to be “Dementia Friendly” – are the two main ways in which this is developing.

From across this spectrum the artistic opportunities include:

- Workshops for skills and creative exploration of ideas through drama but not aiming for or leading to performance as such.
- Masterclasses and talks.
- Performances for specific themed events such as conferences, training contexts and local celebrations.
- Performances touring to community spaces.
- Performances on mainstages with professional production and technical support.
- Site specific, outdoor, processional and one-to-one theatre.
- Extant plays, devised or commissioned new plays.
- Processes and productions reaching wider collaborations and audiences through digital and online means (including international links).

Financial support

To pay for the professional support and facilities required, the majority of theatre by/with older people has relied on funding from trusts and foundations – either with direct focus on Arts or across other objectives such as social welfare and health. Some of its infrastructure is supported by the Arts Councils’ regular funds. Arts Lottery project funds are supporting work which focuses on older participants, but generally on the basis of an innovation or development – not an ongoing or long term provision basis. A few projects have successfully accessed Clinical Commissioning Group funding. Big Lottery Funds are supporting some work on the basis of clear social or health outcomes. Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and other academic research resources have been important in supporting action research and evaluations. Some programmes make a charge (ranging from £3-£6 per session) to its participants (as a contribution towards but rarely meeting all the costs) while some are strongly committed to making it free for all participants.

Benefits to older people

Artists, amateurs and professionals alike, do not, on the whole, start from the perspective of a state of health, even if their projects are ostensibly in the field of health or funded by health or community development stakeholders. In practice they concentrate on the artistic possibilities—such as innovative forms of expression, smashing stereotypes of old age, building on skills and insights, looking to the future, valuing the diversity of people and their experiences and



Elders Company, Royal Exchange Theatre. Photo © Joel Fieldes

making something to be enjoyed and meaningful in the wider world. The many testimonies of older people confirm a strong link between the activity and their sense of well-being and zest for life, but they haven't necessarily joined the group for therapeutic or health reasons. The social side, as well as the possibility of being involved in something meaningful and making a difference to the wider society, is most often cited as what participants value most.

Benefits to artists

Many artists pay testimony to the inspiration they gain from working with older generations. The concentration of resources and policy on the creative needs of young people has created a large and skilled workforce for participatory arts in the UK. Much of this practice is relevant for work with all ages.

There have to date been very few opportunities for those managing programmes with older people to share their practice and experience with a specific focus on theatre and drama. This is true for the older participants as well as the professional practitioners. Youth theatres have festivals and networks. The larger Producing Theatres have a forum of education departments, whose workforces meet fairly regularly to share practice and advocate for the value of their work. Older People's Theatre practitioners are, however, relatively unaware of each other's work.

"....the important role theatre can play in times of transition in later life – particularly in relation to retirement and widowhood. Many of the theatre volunteers we have interviewed are widowed women who either started volunteering or became more involved with the theatre after becoming widowed. Widows have talked about the theatre as a 'lifeline' and have mentioned the 'camaraderie', 'security' and sense of 'home' it provides. Volunteering can provide a new kind of beginning, enabling widows to negotiate their shifting identities, giving them confidence to pursue their interests on their own, while also developing and broadening social networks.

The theatre really comes alive for some long standing audience members following retirement, when they increasingly participate in its social and cultural life."



Photo courtesy of Spare Tyre

Case Studies

The following Case Studies provide a selection of examples of practice, in the UK.

Arcola Theatre

Founded by Mehmet Ergen to create theatre to relate to the lives of the Turkish/ Kurdish diaspora in Dalston in Hackney (London), Arcola's work has expanded to become a venue which is locally engaged and internationally minded, staging a diverse programme of plays, operas and musicals and offering research and development space for diverse artists. It runs two weekly workshops with around 15 people aged over 60 in each, plus an intergenerational group where they aim for 50% of the group to be over 50.

Their 60+ group experiments with all kinds of theatre-making – sometimes finding their own language through improvisation, sometimes working on fully scripted works and sometimes combining devised, scripted and improvised methods. Their performances have included: collaboration with Punchdrunk to create the creative and reflective tour, *The Uncommercial Traveller*, based on Dickens' London stories; the creation of giant outdoor puppets for Hackney Carnival; one-to-one theatre for the Glastonbury Festival's Shangri-La space; and a collaboration with Kali Theatre to create an installation of light, glass, sound and stories of the diverse communities of Dalston. They have also explored and adapted several classic plays – including *The Insect Play* by Josef and Karel Capek, and a "frolicsome adaptation" of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* by Francis Beaumont.

Belgrade Theatre

With funding from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and a goal of demonstrating connections between arts participation and health outcomes (in partnership with Coventry University), the Belgrade is responding to the ageing demographics of the city (a higher than average population of people aged over 85) and its growing ethnically diverse communities. They ran a project called 'Arts Gymnasium' which led to the establishment of a regular group of participants called 'Shine On', whose 20 or so members meet regularly (aged between 55 and 85). Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the theatre's seminal theatre-in-education work, Shine On worked with the theatre's long-established youth theatre on a production called *I Burn, I Pine, I Perish*, exploring first loves.

Their latest initiative is to begin a “befriending group” to capitalise on the theatre as a community space during daytimes. It is to be developed along the lines of the U3A model, with participants selecting topics and interest areas as well as linking to obvious interests in drama and theatre. This is connecting to the City’s aim of meeting the Age Friendly Cities criteria.

Big Telly

As one of the biggest professional theatre production companies in Northern Ireland, Big Telly have had a longstanding commitment to making theatre across the country, particularly reaching rural communities beyond Belfast and Derry and outside of formal theatre buildings. They began to create specific touring work and forged participation opportunities specifically for and with older people in 2007 by founding their ‘Spring Chickens’ programme.

Their programme has seen ambitious professionally supported stage productions performed live and live-streamed across the country and to the overseas relatives of many of the older performers. They have been artistically adventurous, experimenting with flash-mobs and site-responsive work. Groups have participated across Northern Ireland, involving older people as participants and audiences, 98% of whom are not theatre-goers.

In 2012 they produced *Webs of Intrigue* where older people were invited to work with creative writers over six weeks to develop script writing skills and create short moments of theatre. Zoe Seaton, Artistic Director, then worked with two professional actors to dramatise them. Over 240 older people participated in the creative writing process producing over 40 pieces of short scripts some of which were dramatised over two weeks of rehearsal. 210 pupils aged 14 – 18 years (from Belfast, Armagh, Portstewart, Newry and Ballymoney) attended a 60-minute professional showcase performance of the Spring Chickens creative writing. All performances were attended by local script writers, some of whom also performed (live and on film). A post show intergenerational discussion was led by the Regional Directors on the themes surrounding the writing and the staging of the professional performances. So inspired were the pupils they used some of the scripts for their respective GCSE and A level practical performances. The show became a part of Derry-Londonderry, UK City of Culture 2013.

Collective Encounters

Collective Encounters combine a programme of professional theatre production, made in Liverpool, with an extensive participation programme, part of which has established a very strong commitment to the creation of theatre work for and by older people.

In 2011 they established Third Age Company (with support from the Baring Foundation). The group's work has been funded by the Liverpool Care Commissioning Group, through their "prevention" focus. The older participants demonstrate the value of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through their engagement in new skills, having a powerful voice in their community, enjoying the social and physical benefits of a weekly workshop and the empowerment and confidence of processes of creativity and drama which drive a sense of purposeful activity and agency in their community.

Their latest show is written by Sarah Thornton and directed by Mandy Redvers-Rowe, following extensive input and collaboration with the group. Entitled *Wealth is Health*, it concerns the inequalities of health, and continues the Third Age Company's interest in creating theatre that explores the personal and political experiences of older age. Premiered at an Arts and Health Symposium in Anfield in September 2015, it will tour to GP surgeries and libraries in Liverpool.

Collective Encounters also work on drama-based work for people living with or caring for people with dementia diagnoses and have produced the *Arts and Dementia Pocket Guide* for carers. In 2013 they produced a poetic and nuanced play aimed at home-based carers and others caring for people living with Dementia. It brought theatricality and engagement and participation into play with a professional cast of four actors and ingenious design elements. It was commissioned by Liverpool Museum's 'House of Memories' programme and wrapped around by a day's training course to link its audience directly to the further extensive services of the Museums Services.

Entelechy

Entelechy offers arts projects across all art forms and has developed a strong partnership with Albany, Deptford to create 'Meet Me at the Albany' a creative arts club for older and often isolated people. Its Elders Company has created many innovative and often epic theatre works. In 2014 they worked with Casa das Fases (Brazil) and Freedom Studios (Bradford) to create The Home, which wove together the imaginations of elders from multi-cultural communities in London, Bradford and Brazil.



Entelechy Arts "BED" Touring live art street performance event addressing issues of ageing and isolation. Commissioned by Without Walls Street Arts Consortium to tour festivals in 2016. Photo © Roswitha Cheshier

Now, with support from the Gulbenkian Foundation's Sharing the Stage initiative, they are in the R&D stage of exploring "the art of flying, falling and the older body" and through a series of workshops that bring together isolated older people, circus artists, poets, writers and filmmakers to explore ideas of uncertainty, vulnerability and change in later life and to balance the intimacy of

small-scale encounters with large-scale live streamed events linking performance sites across England.

Frontier Theatre

Addressing not only the lack of parts for older professional actors, but also the continued appetite and energy of his peers for making theatre and a belief in the value of older generations passing on their skills to the next generations of the profession, James Roose-Evans (88), former Artistic Director and founder of Hampstead Theatre, has launched Frontier Theatre as a space for sharing theatre skills and seeking out new production opportunities with the Third Age at the centre.

Frontier Theatre's aims are:

- To stage plays from the classical repertoire in exciting new productions which will place the Third Age at their centre – i.e. works by Ibsen, Strindberg, Beckett, Pinter, the Greeks etc. – that have older performers at their heart.
- To find, develop and produce new plays by contemporary writers dealing with the Third Age.
- To provide opportunities for older actors in their productions.
- To pass on skills to younger actors through workshops and working together through workshops, masterclasses and other activities. In a time when continuity with the past is being lost and younger actors are getting fewer and fewer opportunities to explore the classics or hone their skills, we feel this is doubly important.
- To foster and produce other events – poetry readings, play readings, new writing competitions etc. – which will give voice and opportunity to older artists and deal with themes of the Third Age.

They occupy a central London base for workshops, rehearsals and performances. In 2016 James Roose-Evans will lead an investigation into Samuel Beckett's *Come and Go* with nine senior actresses.

The company has already garnered a number of high profile older actors as its patrons including Dame Judi Dench, Sir Ian McKellen and Vanessa Redgrave. Professional playwrights, such as Ray Cooney (83), and actor Richard Wilson (79) are sharing skills with the next generations of theatre professionals.

Kaleidoscope

Kaleidoscope was established in 2006 by Artistic Director Kerry Rooney to produce theatre, film and television. It has its origins in the theatre and produces a number of theatrical pieces annually including new works from emerging authors, as well as established favorites from the likes of Alan Bennett and Jane Austen.

From an original focus on young people they have expanded to form their 'Acting Up' groups for over 60s. Thanks to Big Lottery Funding they have set up groups across Northern Ireland and have plans to expand into further regions of the UK in 2015-16. They hire spaces (usually arts spaces) and recruit groups of over 60s for a series of workshops often leading to performance. With Big Lottery as their main funders currently they evaluate the outcomes for participants, in terms of health and well-being, social engagement, mobility, cognitive developments and confidence.

Workshops are free to all participants and the range of activities they can be involved in spans all aspects of putting on a show. Each group may have a different set of interests reflected in the kind of drama they explore – from issue-based pieces about age, to pure escapism of murder mysteries and comedy sketches.

One of their developments over the next period will be the commissioning of new plays by recognised authors to create a repertoire of plays that can interest casts of older people requiring more women's parts, as Kaleidoscope's experience echoes so many others in finding men in the minority in these groups.

London Bubble Theatre Company

Jonathan Petherbridge, Artistic Director of Bubble Theatre in SE London, aims to make Bubble's building a "place of congregation and creativity". From a pilot project in 2011, funded by Baring Foundation's Creative Homes programme, Bubble began a process of connecting to nearby sheltered homes, and employing an intergenerational approach to gathering first hand testimonies about the Blitz. From this starting point and with new funding for three years from Big Lottery, Tea-break Theatre has emerged. This has provided a bridge between access in sheltered homes towards involvement in the resident group programmes at Bubble's building. Table-top theatre, seated drama workshops, and play readings are some of the forms used to encourage the sharing of creative adventures. The most recent event saw 70 people from five different groups sharing drama, fish and chips and a brass band!

They have refined a successful model which links teenagers and older people as researchers into living history and casting young people to play the older people as their younger selves. These methods have been employed in their shows about the Blitz, and their recent exploration of the anniversary of Hiroshima. This latter piece became a “flatpack” script which was consequently performed around the world by several casts of all ages. They successfully bridge the very personal roots of the work to the connection to a wider world and sense of public and historic significance.



Creative Homes. Photo courtesy of London Bubble

New Vic Theatre

The New Vic, in Newcastle-under-Lyme, mounted its first explicit creative research project with older people in 2004 and has maintained an ongoing commitment to what became their 'Ages and Stages' Programme.

Founded in 1962 and under the direction of Peter Cheeseman CBE, the theatre began to realise a vision of making live theatre which spoke to and of its local



A Borough United by Jacksons Lane. Photo © Ludo Des Cognets

people, whose lives and communities were closely steeped in the local pottery, steel, mining and associated industries. The development of theatre-in-the-round, a permanent company of professional actors living in the town and making theatre that "springs from our contact with this community" were critical to his vision.

Cheeseman expanded on traditions laid down by the pioneering documentary radio and film makers Charles Parker, Philip Donnellan, Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger, to create a celebrated live Documentary Theatre genre. At its height, this work was not simply drawing on the histories and experiences of local people and capturing them as testimony theatre, but was involving the workforces who were active in the industrial labour struggles of the time, (notably the fight to oppose the closure of the Shelton Bar Steelworks in 1974), daily updating the stories of the struggle as they unfolded. Audiences who were living through the realities of these turbulent times saw themselves, their colleagues and their neighbours portrayed on stage. Recordings of the witnesses were often incorporated into the shows, and audience members might be listening to their own speech framed in the story. As one member of the audience recalls:

“We knew something fresh was coming up. It was like the atmosphere at Stoke City’s first home game.” (John Abberley, The Sentinel, 2008)

Over the last 20 or so years, the outreach and participation programmes at The New Vic (‘Borderlines’) have focused on young people. This has developed a new generation of local people involved in the theatre and loyal champions of its role in enriching and representing communities and lives of the area.

In 2009 Jill Rezzano, Head of Education at the New Vic and Professor Miriam Bernard of the Department of Social Gerontology at nearby Keele University began a series of influential research projects beginning with looking at the archive of the Documentary Theatre era, now held in Staffordshire University.

Professor Bernard initially suggested that the Theatre create an intergenerational performance for the British Society of Gerontology’s annual conference to take place in Stoke in 2005. From that starting point, she and Jill Rezzano collaborated on a series of research projects funded through the New Dynamics of Ageing programme (the only one based on an arts approach).

The first programme explored “The Place of Theatre in Representations and Recollections of Ageing,” and drew extensively on the archive of the New Vic Documentaries produced in the 60s, 70s and 80s. The research reflected that the theatre has had a strong role in constructing individual and community identities and creating and preserving community memory. It went on to explore contemporary recollections and representations of ageing through interviews with older people who were: Vic documentary sources, theatre “vols”, audience members, actors or employees who had continued to live in the Potteries. These became the core members of Ages and Stages.

By 2012 (coincidentally the 50th anniversary of both the Theatre and Keele University) this material was used to create a new social documentary called

Our Age, Our Stage, which was performed in the main house of the New Vic alongside an exhibition – a documentary theatre show about documentary theatre.

Follow-up AHRC funds enabled creative work to continue within the “cultural value” research context. The New Vic and the University developed an inter-professional training course which focused on the use of intergenerational drama in professional practice for artists, social workers, housing workers, and care professionals – a group which, by chance, included trainees aged from 20 to 75, and which involved the intergenerational Ages and Stages members as trainers.

Happy Returns toured in 2013 and involved a cast aged from 18-93 made up of youth theatre members, Ages and Stages core group members and professional actors (an interactive piece exploring intergenerational relationships).

In 2014 a symposium was mounted to disseminate the learning from these series of programmes. This was beamed to University of Alberta to link with the Institute of Health Research there and their group of older theatre activists – the GeriActors, set up and led by Professor David Barnet, Professor of Drama.

The Theatre has enjoyed many benefits from this expansion into widened involvement of older people – from marketing insights to opportunities for shows which represent older people. The youth theatre members are selected to work with the older members and it is competitive! Older members have a strong say over the plans and ambitions for each season. The company has a better insight into their older audiences, and a strong connection to its home towns. Some of the members of Ages and Stages have begun to be cast as chorus members in main house productions, some have retrained as audio-describers, several continue to assist with the ongoing digitisation and cataloguing of the archive at Staffordshire University and several are volunteer ushers.

The core theme of Ages and Stages’ work is FUTURES. In 2014 Ages and Stages performed at Manchester’s Future Worlds festival, loving the challenge of a new venue and making new friends. Health is never the starting point for the Keele University Social Gerontology Department, and while at times the research basis of the theatre work has thrown up themes that may not have been the first choice for the theatre and its members, they would be loath to seek funds which asked them to design projects to seek health outcomes per se and thereby focus on or promote a deficit view of old age.

The Performance Ensemble

Alan Lyddiard, former Artistic Director of Northern Stages, and a leading advocate of community arts and the ensemble theatre model, has established The Performance Ensemble – a company of performers over the age of 60 working in the space between community, amateur and professional arts practice. In collaboration with West Yorkshire Playhouse, he has recently directed the first stage of development of a new dance theatre work, involving veteran dancers, working with choreographer Royston Maldoom. Funding permitted, this work, entitled Anniversary, will be a centre-piece of a focus on theatre engaging older people for the anniversary celebrations of West Yorkshire Playhouse and their Heydays Company.

This work was part of the Late Style Commissions series enabling older professional artists to make unique new artworks on the theme of age.

Re-Live

Re-Live is Wales' principal specialist theatre company working with older people. Co-directors Alison O'Connor and Karin Diamond have produced powerful participatory testimony theatre, including Memoria, which was performed by people living with dementia and live-streamed to over 4,000 views across 12 countries.



'Age' performed at Chapter Theatre, June 2013. Photo courtesy of Re-Live

In 2014 they produced *Belonging*, professionally performed and now planned to tour to 10 theatres in Spring 2016 (funding and bookings permitting). Their expert drama practice and extensive collaborations with older people have set ethical and artistic standards which make them respected nationally and internationally as leaders of theatre which engages with older people.

Their work has been particularly powerful in its ability to enable people to understand great transitions in life, some involving pain and loss but always providing a vehicle for people to take ownership of their experiences, edit them, fictionalise them, find catharsis or closure through the ritual, structure and camaraderie of a theatre performance and share their testimonies.

They aim for their work to inform and entertain and to influence policy makers by providing authentic insight into the experiences of such conditions as dementia and post-traumatic stress disorder. Their work with forces veterans and their partners/carers to create the production *Abandoned Brothers* was awarded the Royal Society for Public Health Arts and Health Award 2015.

Salisbury Playhouse

Mind the Gap is the regular group of over 50s that are creatively engaged at Salisbury Playhouse. Founded in 2010 as an intergenerational project in collaboration with Wiltshire Dancing, with support from the Alzheimer's Society, their work is now integrated fully into the programmes of the Playhouse, complementing the long-established Stage 65 youth theatre and sometimes working with them.

Members of Mind the Gap (who are aged between late 50s to early 90s) all live independently, but have begun to make work specifically to tour into local Residential Homes. Mentored by the Alzheimer's Society, their director, Rebecca Seymour, has developed ways of meeting the needs of care homes with performances of short scenes, elements of participation through props and music and plenty of spectacle.

Mind the Gap explore a range of performance forms including taking part in a commissioned dance-based film, at and about the National Trust property Mottisfont House – this required a commitment of 6 weekly 4 hour shoots. The resultant film was shown at Sadler's Wells' Elixir Festival, giving participants the chance to expand their creative ambitions further.

Although Rebecca has a strong track record as a practitioner working in hospitals, her emphasis with Mind the Gap is not on health – friendship, social connection and creativity are the aims of the group, in which they share

knowledge, love and experience of life and hopes for the future.

Spare Tyre

Older people have been engaging with Spare Tyre in various ways since the early 1990s. In 2000 they began their 'Seniors Confronting Alienation through Theatre' (SCAT) programme and went on to found the HotPots – a group of older performers. They have recently re-organised their work with and by older people to move from managing a standing older people's group to developing the integrated Spare Tyre Company of Artists - moving away from the "participatory context" to the creation of original new works by writers aged 70+. In this context Vicky Lee, amongst others, wrote *Women, Word and Film*, inspired by Carol Ann Duffy's *Salome* and Jim Mulligan wrote, *What's It Worth?* – a play about end of life to be presented in small London theatres.

Spare Tyre have also developed a strong programme of work to engage people with a dementia using multisensory techniques such as touch, taste, sound and smell within a strong narrative structure (*Once Upon A Time*). Accompanying this is a programme of training courses for care staff.

Under the direction of Arti Prashar, the company draw on expert theatre and drama techniques within this training to safely illicit unheard stories. Individual sensitivities, skills, and empathy can be fully explored through drama techniques and the art form is especially good at exploring unique personal and inner stories as well as developing thoughtful and responsive interactions with residents.

West Yorkshire Playhouse

West Yorkshire Playhouse was envisaged from its inception to combine the highest of professional theatre production and presentation with being a vital part of the community it serves. On its opening weekend in March 1990 around a dozen older people turned up, having picked up invitations, left on café tables, to attend arts and crafts sessions on Wednesdays.

This programme became known as 'Heydays' and swiftly grew into weekly workshops in performing arts, singing, creative writing, etc. The programme now features 18 weekly classes taking place each Wednesday, involve around 300 people, using every available space of the Theatre. Heydays members also volunteer in the marketing department and at dementia-friendly performances and have received training to support storytelling and performing arts programmes in primary schools. So Heydays is fully embedded in the fabric of the organisation.

Productions

In 1999 Feeling Good Theatre Company was formed when some members of the Heydays drama group wanted to step up a level in terms of regular performance opportunities. Feeling Good are still going strong. Their work is a positive representation of ageing – focused on aspects of their own experience and common themes of growing older. They have been commissioned by several public agencies including:

- Trading Standards (for a show to educate older people on the dangers of distraction crime on the doorstep and recently revised to include some of the more sophisticated scams involving technology today);
- National Osteoporosis Society – to raise awareness of the risk factors relating to osteoporosis;
- Leeds Public Health Directorate – to create a show on the benefits of hydration as we age (now adapted for an educational film for NHS England).

Feeling Good also make work based on their own experiences – for example, Benchmark, which the Playhouse commissioned for its Open Season programme in 2013. This play explored moments in the lives of company members including family life, romance and grief, and is still in their repertoire today.

Other productions include: Phoenix of Leodis, a community production written and performed by Heydays members charting the effects of two world wars, the building and demolition of the Quarry Hill Flats, and the development of the present buildings including the playhouse now occupying the site. Once Upon a Quarry Hill, devised and performed by Heydays members and members of other WYP community projects for adults with learning disabilities; Arts Exchange – a project which introduced people from BME communities to Heydays through an exchange of visual and performing arts.

Play-reading

Heydays play-reading group meets weekly as part of the programme and has included members writing plays themselves – these being performed at International Older People's Day events and at the 25 years of Heydays celebration.

Inspiring others

Heydays has informed and inspired other theatres to establish their own models of working creatively with older people – The Byre Theatre, St Andrews started



Heydays member Barbara Newsome, 87, rehearses *Anniversary* with Namron, formerly a principal dancer with Ballet Rambert, London Contemporary Dance Theatre, Phoenix Dance and Northern School of Contemporary Dance. Photo © Tom Hirst

its own 'Haydays' programme. Heydays also inspired the Sapporo Grandparents Group in Japan, and the Activate8 programme at Bolton Octagon when a Heydays member moved to Bolton.

Responding to Dementia

In 2010, Nicky Taylor, Community Development Manager, started to look at different options for people with a diagnosis of dementia. With the local Peer Support Service for people living with dementia and in partnership with Leeds Museums and Galleries and Leeds Libraries they began to provide regular stimulating, creative activity for people with dementia and their partners.

Through taking groups of people with dementia to see WYP's shows and noticing the profound impact it had, Nicky developed the idea of specific dementia-friendly performances, which could welcome a whole audience of people affected by dementia and respond to their individual needs. This has now developed into a regular part of Playhouse programming and its example and learning will be shared with other theatres through a training programme.

Anniversary

Most recently in collaboration with director, Alan Lyddiard, Heydays members have had new performance opportunities. Dancehall of Dreams involved around 100 older performers and their own reflections on dancing and romance, performing on the Playhouse's Quarry Stage. In 2015, West Yorkshire Playhouse was supported through Baring Foundation's Late Style Commission series to develop a dance theatre piece – Anniversary – choreographed by Royston Maldoom, directed by Alan Lyddiard and performed by five members of Heydays and four veteran leading professional dancers.

Work with older people is absolutely part of the identity of West Yorkshire Playhouse – they value the talents, skills and experience of older people and people living with dementia. The theatre aims to make people feel at home at the Playhouse and continue their connections throughout their lives. Barbara Malthouse and Betty Milner, sisters who attended the first Heydays session, are still attending Heydays today.

Amateur Theatre

Relationship to professional theatre

In the discourse concerning arts policies and arts development the amateur sector is rarely considered. However, it reaches a far greater geographical spread than the professional sector and many more people of older age as active volunteers, performers and audiences. While its traditional dependency on mainstream extant plays limits its capacity to challenge stereotypical representations of old age, especially for women, the amateur sector nevertheless offers many opportunities beyond performance for older people to share, discover and learn new skills and to be active in their communities. For very many theatre enthusiasts their local amateur group will be their main or sole realistic (in terms of travel) access point for regular engagement with live theatre.

The amateur theatre sector has a particular relationship to the theatre profession. The foundations of the professional repertory theatre system in the UK were laid by the amateur theatre protagonists of the earlier part of the 20th century. In the 1950s amateur theatres often took the place of the diminishing commercial theatres of the UK and in the 1960s and 1970s a wave of new civic theatres were built, many of them through the lobbying, fund-raising and commitment of the amateur arts sector. Many of these civic theatres continue to provide an important space for the amateur sector productions.

Numerous opportunities for involvement

Today in England and Wales there are over 100 groups who own or lease and manage their own theatre buildings and are members of the Little Theatre Guild. In addition to the "Little Theatres," there are 2,500 amateur theatre groups staging musicals, operas, plays, concerts and pantomimes in a wide variety of hired venues, from the country's leading professionally managed theatres to village halls. In Scotland there are around 40 amateur theatre groups in Edinburgh alone and an association of members across Scotland active since 1928. The National Operatic and Dramatic Association (NODA) has over 2,500 members.

Sense of community and agency

François Matarasso has vividly told the story of one such company in his book, *Where we Dream*. A tale of “artistic ambition and pride in quality” revealing the history, the people and the production processes that make up the West Bromwich Amateur Operatic Society. The Society was founded in 1938 and continues to create large scale musical theatre, in professional venues, selling up to 5,000 tickets for each show. Companies such as this have active members including several generations of families and a mix of age groups included in all its efforts.

Lifelong connections

NODA offers a way of marking and honouring the commitment of its members through long service awards. In 2014 three awards were given for 55 years of service, four for 60 years and one for 65 years. The boards and committees of the Little Theatre Guild members rely heavily on the skills and availability of retired people.

Plays and productions

A major difference between the opportunities afforded by professionally-led community theatre and the volunteer-led amateur theatre sectors is repertoire. The amateur sector’s principal activity is the production of published plays that began in professional production for traditional stages. This repertoire has for many years fallen short in its representations of women. In the amateur sector the opportunities for men to take part on stage are many, whilst the parts for women are few and for older women even fewer.

Vice Chairman of Little Theatre Guild, Andrew Lowrie, indicated that it is not uncommon for parts for older women to be difficult to cast, due to a lack of women auditioning for them.

“For The Crescent Theatre’s forthcoming production of *Great Expectations* we could cast Estella a hundred times but only had a handful of women auditioning to play Miss Havesham”

In the USA and Canada there is an extensive network for older people wanting to engage in amateur theatre through play-reading and seated performance groups with fellow minded older people. Senior Theater Resource Center provides access to 300 plays written especially for older casts, around 60 books and published

guides to starting and developing a senior theatre group. This “movement” has developed over a 30-year period with a group of dedicated leaders encouraging it to spread from state to state.

Phil Thomas explored this phenomenon during his Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Travel Fellowship in 2012 and set up Readers Theatre of Wales to emulate the North American examples. Kerry Rooney in Northern Ireland has Big Lottery Funding for his company, Kaleidoscope, to commission new plays for performance by older people’s groups.

Opportunities for older men

While the professional arts and older people sector often worries about how to involve more men, the amateur sector attracts many retired men to its work. They can enjoy the continued status of being useful and engaged through roles in management and governance, casting and directing opportunities and by involvement in backstage and technical work.

Inter-generational

The intergenerational nature of amateur theatre is also, for some, a positive aspect. While the amateur societies have tended over the years to develop youth sections, their adult members span all ages (and sometimes include the youngsters too).

Comparative practices of Amateur and Professional theatre in relation to older age.

Amateur

Predominantly rely on extant plays.

Predominantly explore traditional drama forms.

Older people are not separated from the main membership of the group.

Any of the skills of the older person can be employed e.g. carpentry, marketing, financial management, costumes.

Greater uptake by men and more performing opportunities for men due to male dominated play repertoire.

Continued and long-term membership possible.

Professionally led

Create, devise or commission new theatre relating to the interest and themes of the group of participants; sometimes adapt an extant play for an older group.

Predominantly interested in exploring original and authentic stories and experiences of its members – using devising and workshop techniques and sometimes commissioned playwrights.

Extant plays sometimes used as a stimulus for an original creation, or adapted to reveal new insights into old age.

Some exploration of current trends of performance forms such as one-to-one theatre, immersive theatre, site specific/responsive, improvised, installations, circus, multi-media.

Mostly providing special workshop or group for an older age-group. e.g. over 55s, over 60s or “retired”; sometimes mix with a youth theatre.

Mostly offering participation as performers, researchers, or sources of research.

Increasing opportunities for archiving and other volunteer work in theatres, supervised/determined by professionals.

Men are usually in the minority.

Often a stop-start offer, depending on funding.

Amateur

Membership fees.

Recruitment policies are linked to casting and to income generation through fees and ticket income.

Usually older participants have access to the main stage and full resources of the company.

Over 3,000 known groups to join – situated in small towns and villages as well as the major cities.

Professionally led

Sometimes free.

Active policies to reach older people who are isolated or from lower social economic or less active theatre-goers.

Usually the older people's group has access to the studio or workshop facilities of the theatre and limited technical resources or support.

Only around 25 permanent groups in the UK – mostly in larger towns or cities.

The Amateur sector is a valuable part of the overview of lifelong involvement in theatre and drama and all it offers. It doesn't replicate or replace the work done by professional artists – whose work is distinct in creating original work or in the more specialist areas of work with vulnerable participants or training in the care context. The Amateur sector though, can offer a vital way of staying connected to one's own creativity, maintaining a sense of belonging to a community, enlivening the cultural life of a locality, mixing with other generations, learning and passing on skills, being occupied in a challenging and immersing activity and having enormous fun. These are the same benefits that are often cited from the evaluations of arts work that depends on professional support and charitable or public funding.

Appendix

Older People's Theatre Companies and associated programmes

Appendix

Managed by	Programme/ Company name	About the work
Acta Gladstone Street Bedminster Bristol BS3 3AY www.acta-bristol.com	Making time/the Thursdays	Several different performing and workshop groups at acta's centre and at community venues across Avon. Long-term collaboration with Malcolm X Elders Theatre Group for example on Grey Matters – a two-year project, making community theatre with older people across six European companies, and sharing work through touring each show to perform in another country.
Arcola Theatre 24 Ashwin Street London E8 3DL www.arcolatheatre.com	Arcola 60+	Arcola 50+ has one cycle per year working towards a professional production as part of the Creative Engagement Season. There are also opportunities to take part in intergenerational projects and other bespoke work throughout the year. Arcola 50+ has previously worked with the likes of Punchdrunk and Kali Theatre Company and taken performances to Glastonbury, Hackney Carnival and Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

Managed by	Programme/ Company name	About the work
<p>Belgrade Theatre Corporation Street Coventry West Midlands www.belgrade.co.uk</p>	<p>Shine On/ Arts Gymnasium</p>	<p>Shine On is a regular group of participants which emerged from the theatre's goal of demonstrating connections between arts participation and health outcomes (in partnership with Coventry University). They work with the youth theatre and on their own projects. The Theatre is collaborating with Coventry City's aim to be an Age Friendly City.</p>
<p>Big Telly Theatre Company 185 Coleraine Road Portstewart N. Ireland BT55 7HU big-telly.com</p>	<p>Spring Chickens</p>	<p>Operating across N Ireland, Big Telly established an elders programme called Spring Chickens, complementing their professional touring work. They have produced many original and ambitious productions in many types of spaces from theatres to shopping malls.</p>
<p>Bolton Octagon Howell Croft South Bolton www.octagonbolton.co.uk</p>	<p>Art-Beat</p>	<p>Art-beat is a project (created by Learning and Participation, Asian Elders, Age Concern, Housing for Art and Bolton Council) that aims to provide a range of arts activities for the over 50's at the Octagon Theatre.</p>
<p>Chichester Festival Theatre Oaklands Park Chichester PO19 6AP www.cft.org.uk</p>		<p>Various workshop programmes including intergenerational and dementia friendly music based programmes.</p>

Managed by	Programme/ Company name	About the work
<p>Collective Encounters MPAC 1-27 Bridport Street Liverpool L3 5QF collective-encounters.org.uk</p>	<p>Live and Learn/ 3AT</p>	<p>Live and Learn is the programme for older people: theatre sessions for older people, to up-skill health and social care workers, and family members of people living with dementia and mount performances and workshops in care settings. CE collaborate extensively with health and social providers and also work in partnership with National Museums Liverpool on their House of Memories training offer.</p>
<p>Entelechy The Albany, Douglas Way London SE8 4AG www.entelechyarts.org</p>	<p>Seven Ages & Elders Company</p>	<p>Entelechy offers arts projects across all art forms and have worked at The Albany to create 'Meet Me at the Albany' a creative arts club for older and often isolated people. Its Elders Company has created many innovative and often epic theatre works. In 2014 they worked with Casa das Fases (Brazil) and Freedom Studios (Bradford) to create The Home, which wove together the imaginations of elders from multi-cultural communities in London, Bradford and Brazil.</p>

Managed by	Programme/ Company name	About the work
<p>Frontier Theatre Productions Number 6, Frederick's Place, Off the Old Jewry London EC2R 8AB www. frontiertheatreproductions. co.uk</p>	<p>Frontier Theatre Productions</p>	<p>A new theatre company founded by James Roose-Evans to create theatre for the Third Age. Highly experienced theatre professionals providing training for the profession and making theatre with "third age at the centre".</p> <p>Aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To stage plays from the classical repertoire in exciting new productions which will place the Third Age at their centre – i.e. works by Ibsen, Strindberg, Beckett, Pinter, the Greeks etc. – that have older performers at their heart. 2) To find, develop and produce new plays by contemporary writers dealing with the Third Age. 3) To provide opportunities for older actors in their productions.
<p>Jacksons Lane 269a Archway Road, London N6 5AA www.jacksonslane.org.uk</p>	<p>A Borough United</p>	<p>A range of activities for and by older people including community plays, Social Lunches, enabling older people in Haringey to have arts experiences with West End singers, artists, actors and circus performers on a monthly basis.</p>
<p>Kaleidoscope info@kaleidoscopeni.com kaleidoscopeni.com</p>	<p>Acting Up/several different elders groups across Northern Ireland</p>	<p>Acting Up is Kaleidoscope's performing arts programme for older people, giving older people the opportunity to explore their creativity, learn new skills, make new friends and take on a fresh challenge. Weekly workshops, some leading to devised shows. Big Lottery Funding is set to establish new groups in England and enable the commissioning of new plays for older casts.</p>

Managed by	Programme/ Company name	About the work
<p>London Bubble Theatre Company, 5 Elephant Lane London SE16 4JD www.londonbubble.org.uk</p>	<p>Various groups</p>	<p>Creating original productions with multi-generational researchers and performers e.g. After Hiroshima; and projects designed specifically for older people e.g. Tea Break Theatre; London Bubble are committed to challenging bigotry and prejudice through their work by facilitating safe spaces and arts processes to bring different generations and cultures together to explore common issues emerging in their daily lives and locality.</p>
<p>Manchester Royal Exchange St Ann's Square Manchester M2 7DH www.royalexchange.co.uk</p>	<p>Elders Company</p>	<p>Elders Company and Elders Monthly sessions are for people aged 60+ who want to feel connected to new people and ideas, develop performance skills and make boundary-pushing theatre that challenges negative stereotypes of ageing. Also collaborations with the youth theatres at MIRE.</p>
<p>Mercury Theatre Colchester Balkerne Gate Colchester CO1 1PT mercurytheatre.co.uk</p>	<p>Mercury Theatre Act V</p>	<p>An active, friendly group enjoying theatre and movement workshops for senior adults. Seniors Matinee ticket holders FREE talk and tea or coffee.</p>

Managed by	Programme/ Company name	About the work
<p>New Vic Theatre Etruria Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 0JG www.newvictheatre.org.uk</p>	<p>Ages and Stages</p>	<p>A continuing research collaboration between the New Vic's Education team and Keele University and encourages adults of all ages to enjoy drama and creative work. Members regularly work with other groups, such as the New Vic's own Youth Theatre programme and the Royal Exchange Theatre's Elders Company. Since 2009, the Ages and Stages project has looked at the impact of theatre on ideas about, and the experience of, ageing. The project has established an intergenerational theatre company which recently toured a piece of drama to schools and residential centres across Staffordshire.</p>
<p>Newcastle Theatre Royal www.theatreroyal.co.uk</p>	<p>Limelight Ensemble</p>	<p>Within the Theatre's Limelight theatre-goers' club programme of tours, teas and talks, meet the cast matinees, Limelight members can join in the Limelight Ensemble programme of participatory workshops. A core group of 16 people and some occasional members aged between 55 and 92 take part in term-long explorations of practical aspects of theatre – playwriting, acting and text analysis, leading to an annual production.</p>
<p>Nottingham Playhouse www.nottinghamplayhouse.co.uk</p>	<p>Golden Age/Club Encore</p>	<p>A theatre club for the over 50s who want to engage with theatre more closely. Each weekly session focuses on a different talk, workshop or Q&A session with a range of freelance art practitioners and industry professionals. The Playhouse is also a partner in a city-wide programme of arts in care homes - "Imagine".</p>

Managed by	Programme/ Company name	About the work
Oldham Coliseum www.coliseum.org.uk	Full Circle	Over 50s group, meeting fortnightly for talks and activities relating to the theatre and the local area. Each session starts off with a talk, followed by two workshops, which can include dance sessions, play readings, craft sessions, and practical drama.
Performance Ensemble www.theperformanceensemble.com		Ensemble company of performers over the age of 60 from a range of different performance skills and diverse cultures, directed by Alan Lyddiard.
Re-Live, Chapter Market Road Canton Cardiff CF5 1QE www.re-live.org.uk	Various	Specialists in Life Story work and Testimony Theatre, working with professionals and non-professionals to create productions to inspire change on a personal, community and political level.
Salisbury Playhouse Malthouse Lane, Salisbury, Wiltshire, United Kingdom, SP2 7RA www.salisburyplayhouse.com	Mind the Gap	Workshop and production group with some connections to the youth programme as well as touring to care homes. Programme echoes and connects to the main house programme.

Managed by	Programme/ Company name	About the work
<p>Spare Tyre The Albany, Douglas Way Deptford London SE8 4AG sparetyre.org</p>	<p>Company of Artists</p>	<p>Older artists are part of an integrated Company of Artists. Making new work in drama, storytelling, film, movement, music, visual and digital art. Spare Tyre use a multisensory approach across all their work, and enable participants to develop their creative skills, grow in confidence, increase in independence and take ownership of the art they create. Participants include adults with learning disabilities, people aged 60+ and older people with dementia.</p>
<p>Tricky Hat Edinburgh Scotland trickyhat.com</p>		<p>Specialists in creating and delivering theatre based projects with hard to reach and vulnerable people across Scotland. They have particular expertise in working with older people, people with mental health problems and forensic psychiatry patients and in creating Theatre and Digital Installations.</p>
<p>West Yorkshire Playhouse Playhouse Square Quarry Hill Leeds LS2 7UP www.wyp.org.uk</p>	<p>Heydays/Feeling Good Company/Our Time</p>	<p>An extensive and long-standing programme of participation opportunities for older people. Feeling Good Company is a performance group of elders. WYP also offers regular opportunities for people living with dementia (older people and people with young-onset dementia) and their partners or carers to attend creative sessions (Our Time).</p>

Acknowledgements

This review cannot capture the full picture of Older People's Involvement in Theatre. Glaring omissions are the theatres which do not explicitly promote separate offers for older people, but do welcome all ages into their programmes. Research suggests that we don't want to be labelled and separated by age, but it also reveals that without special efforts to target and include older people they can often simply remain invisible and feel unwelcome.

Arts Centres and presenting venues are scantily represented in this report, though many of them engage strongly with the amateur sector and many have drama-related classes, workshops, projects and productions which are geared to offer opportunities for older people.

While aspects of this work have been thriving in some places for many decades, it is clear that since the Baring Foundation first called out in 2010 for examples of work involving older people as arts participants, the work has expanded hugely, and the forms it takes have diversified and become increasingly artistically ambitious. Greater networking and exchange between practitioners/participants of older people's theatre can strengthen its clear potential to create exciting theatre and contribute to the opportunities that an ageing society offers us all.

Thanks to the following for their time, thoughts and sharing their experiences of theatre making:

Penny Allen	The Courtyard Arts Centre
Professor Miriam Bernard	Keele University
Nick Connaughton	Arcola theatre
Karin Diamond	Re-Live
Kate Duncan	Nottingham City Arts
Chris Gage	Ladder to the Moon
Kim Hoffmann	Newcastle Theatre Royal
Hanna Hotchkiss	Belgrade Theatre
Andrew Lowrie	Little Theatre Guild
François Matarasso	Baring Foundation
David Cutler	Baring Foundation
Jonathan Petherbridge	London Bubble Theatre Company
Liz Postlethwaite	Small Things Creative Projects
Prism Arts	
Mandy Redvers-Rowe	Collective Encounters
Paul Reece	Birmingham Rep

Jill Rezzano

Rachael Savage

Zoe Seaton

Rebecca Seymour

Nicky Taylor

Dottie James & Jack Trow for their help with research

New Vic Theatre

Vamos Theatre

Big Telly Theatre Company

Salisbury Playhouse

West Yorkshire Playhouse

Kate Organ

Arts Adviser to Baring Foundation



Photo courtesy of Spring Chickens.

Cover photograph: "Ticky Picky Boom Boom", performed by
Malcolm X Theatre Company and Acta community Theatre,
Photo © Graham Burke

The Baring Foundation

60 London Wall
London EC2M 5TQ

020 7767 1348
www.baringfoundation.org.uk

March 2016

ISBN 978-1-906172-25-1