

Interplay's main objective is to:

To enable young people who experience economic, social and sensory barriers to realise their potential by creating and experiencing the arts

This is achieved through a range of arts and media projects, work-based learning programmes, the I Love West Leeds Festival and a national tour to special schools, arts venues and festivals. Research and development of

Interplay often work in partnership in both development and delivery of the projects. Partners include other youth organisations, arts organisations and schools. In addition it has a high local profile, due to the success of both its community arts projects and the I Love West Leeds Festival, which enables Interplay to work with increasing numbers of local young people and community organisations and provide work and development opportunities for local artists and media workers.

Achievements over the past 12 months:

The numbers:

Number of performances, screenings and exhibitions days: 175

Audiences reached: 13400

Number of education and participation projects: 25

Number of artists contracted: 30

Number of sessions (half days): 350

Number of participants: 2200

National Tour for children and young people with learning disabilities

During the year, This Land – the story of Woody Guthrie was created to tour nationally to special schools. This Land transports the audience member back in time to the sights, sounds, smell and feel of the transit camps of 1930s and 40s America. This fast moving show, engaging across the five senses, recounts its story through the toe-tapping music of one man – Oklahoma folk hero Woody Guthrie. The show visited over 60 special schools, performed at I Love West Leeds Festival and reached over 6000 audience members.

Industry-based Learning Programmes – Tools for the Trade

Interplay was contracted by Connexions and Education Leeds Alternative Programmes Unit to deliver Tools for the Trade, an accredited programme of industry-based learning aimed at young people who are not in school. Tools for

the Trade uses the rigour of working towards a product, such as premiering films at the Leeds Young People's Film Festival to motivate the young people and develop both media-related and work-place skills, as well as offer pastoral support and signposting back to education and employment. Across all Interplay's projects this year over 75 young people, who find school challenging, will have achieved Bronze Arts Awards.

I Love West Leeds Festival 2007

The third successive and successful I Love West Leeds Festival took place in 2007. It provides a solid foundation for the continued growth and development of the I Love West Leeds Festival, in partnership with Leeds City Council Local Area Management Committee and a number of other statutory and community organisations. A diverse range of projects ran throughout the spring resulting in a full programme of spectacular events and exhibitions.

LS12 Film

Over 50 young people from across West Leeds come together on 3 evenings a week to learn film-making skills. The young people will be pitching their film ideas to a panel of professional film-makers and media industry moguls in January. 8 films will be selected and created with the assistance of local artists and media workers, as well, as mentors from national TV and Film, through Media Trust. Final edited films will be showcased at Leeds Young People's Film Festival on 2 April 2008 and distributed to national and international film competitions and festivals. Of course, they will also be streamed on various websites including our own and Youtube.

Extended Services Partnerships

Interplay has been working with a group of children from West Leeds on an ongoing project designed to support them through the move from primary to secondary school. This project is in partnership with inner Armley extended services cluster and specifically targeted looked after children about to make the transition from primary to high school. Using arts and media projects, the children explored their feelings around moving schools, met children from the high schools they would be attending and built confidence and self-esteem through the activities, to contribute to a more successful transition for this particularly vulnerable group of children.

Since the summer the project has been running a regular after-school filmmaking club led by filmmaker Shari Baker.

Interplay also has a very strong relationship with the Farnley extended services cluster and is meeting to identify joint funding and projects to fill large gaps in

provision. Already undertaken a number of joint projects and have a large intake of children now regularly attending the LS12 Film project from Farnley.

Other Highlights

Funding secured to undertake the first 2 phases of a 3 phase refurbishment plan for our building. This coupled with insurance monies to make good the teaching and studio areas in the basement, means we have a fantastic building in which to work. In turn the young people also have a place that reflects the quality of the work that takes place and of which they can be proud and feel part.

2006/07 also saw Artistic Director, Steve Byrne, make presentations at a number of National conferences on Arts and Special Needs, including the EQUALS conferences in London and York.

Finally, during the year, Interplay were delighted that Board member Hemant Patel of Asda Wal-Mart was named Individual of the Year at the national Arts & Business awards for his work with the company.

The Future

Interplay annually review its work and future with both Board and staff. Our vision is to continue to develop the quality of our work and expand aspects that respond to local need and meet our core aims.

Over the next 3 years, we expect to strengthen and build upon all of the above strands of its work. Specifically:

National Tour – 2008/09

Precious Bane written by Mary Webb and adapted by Jonathan Davidson.

“There is nothing quite like it in English Literature” *Independent on Sunday*

Precious Bane tells the stories of Prue Sarn and her brother Gideon. Prue is a free spirit whose life has been cursed by her facial disfigurement – a hare lip, referred to in the book as her ‘precious bane’. Living in the 19th century wilds of Shropshire she inevitably becomes a victim of malice and superstition. Locked into a life of rural toil, Prue finds solace in the countryside she loves so much and her seemingly unrequited love for Kester Woodseaves, the weaver.

Her brother's story is more tragic. Driven by a lust for wealth and power in a society which won't allow him to advance, Gideon attacks nature and destroys all those who are close to him. His self-destruction becomes a metaphor for the disastrous consequences of subverting nature's will.

Unlocking the senses

Over the years Interplay has developed a technique of unlocking the five senses in order to access young people with learning disabilities. Through its unique theatre productions the company has acquired a reputation for drama which is both accessible and emotionally challenging, and puts the audience at the very heart of the play.

Precious Bane has been adapted for both special schools and also for arts centres, theatres and festivals, and it will be performed in Interplay's unique portable dome. The play will go on national tour from June 2008 – February 2009.

I Love West Leeds Festival 2008

Increasing schools involvement and securing some long term relationships with both primary and secondary schools.

Tools for the Trade - Work-based Learning

Interplay will continue to develop its provision for young people who do not respond to school or who are at risk of social exclusion. This work is accredited for the young people and enables schools to gain points too. It is also an opportunity to signpost the young people back to education and training and future participation in other projects. Interplay are currently contracted by LCC Youth and Community Unit and EOTAS (alternative programmes unit) to provide 12 week and 36 week provision for upto 50 young people each year.

We are seeking to expand this position and are exploring the possibility of vocational training for students who benefit from a work-based learning experience and gain a qualification equivalent to GCSE A-C.

West Leeds Regeneration

Interplay believe that culture can play an active and viable role in the regeneration of West Leeds and are seeking to increase its involvement with proposals for economic and social development in West Leeds. Our building is a focal point for young people and arts activities, but resources are required to enable the building to become a centre for young people and the arts 24/7, all year round. Both Interplay's projects, programmes and the Festival continue to increase its use and the range of activities available, but Interplay want to ensure

that it is meeting a need for the communities of West Leeds, is strategically linked with the overall regeneration of the locality and is sustainable.

Issues and concerns

Commissioning – equity of conditions and contracting standards. For example, alternative programme provision with colleges offered block bookings at start of year regardless of take up. Vol sec offered hourly rate based on attendance. Clearly this inequity puts the vol sec at a disadvantage and makes the work unsustainable.

Genuine regard for added value and recognition that small vol sec organizations are often able to engage with groups marginalized by statutory sector and larger organizations. The need to ensure that local organizations continue to provide local services and that where provision has grown from grassroots, it needs to be supported and the value of what it brings outweighs cheapest bids put in by organizations who are able to benefit from economies of scale.

Rolling out of good practice must not overshadow the fact that the best and most effective local provision are those that respond to the specifics of a local need and often deliverable by local on the ground volsec organisations.

Commissioning – timescales and contract lengths. Need at least 3 years and plenty of lead in time as end of contracts approach to either implement an exit strategy or maintain staff with skill and expertise to continue delivery if contract renewed. In the past year on year renewing of contract has meant that redundancy notices have to be issued to work within Employment Law. Whilst these can be rescinded, it does not make for a good working relationship with employees or make the vol sec a good employer, leading to loss of personnel with skills and experience and detracts from people with relevant skills and experience entering the sector in the long term. We have just lost one member of staff after 4 years in post, because she was about to be issued with her 3rd redundancy notice in that time.

Full cost recovery. The full cost of running a building, line management needs to be recognized with the understanding that in small organizations this cannot be absorbed in to a big budget or cross subsidized.

Vol Sec representation

Where do we fit in to new structure of Local Area Management? Specifically within West we have a cultural sub group – how will this feed ideas into planning etc?

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Finance

How will budgets be affected by WNW amalgamation?

Regeneration – it would be really good to understand how the sector can benefit from LEGI and be involved in west and to have our possible contribution recognized

Partnership working

How do we ensure that the voluntary sector survive if they don't have the same level of resources to commit etc? And how do we ensure that all partners make an effective contribution and the sector are seen as an integral part rather than an add on or meeting targets?