



tva
autumn
newsletter

greetings all!

Autumn

I cried over beautiful things knowing no beautiful thing lasts.

*The field of cornflower yellow is a scarf at the neck of the copper sunburned woman,
the mother of the year, the taker of seeds.*

*The northwest wind comes and the yellow is torn full of holes, new beautiful things come in the first
spit of snow on the northwest wind, and the old things go, not one lasts.*

Carl Sandburg, 1918

That poignant poem is made even more so if you note the date when it was written.

Autumn is traditionally seen as a reflective time in the wheel of the year, the time of the Mabon, looking back and looking forward, enjoying the in-gathered harvest while preparing for hard times ahead.



Poppy by Adrian Moule, produced during MIND residency for One Planet Middlesbrough

So – looking back, of course this last half year has been as busy as we always are, with lots of project activity, and lots of partnership development, much of which will be covered in other contributions to this newsletter.

We have enjoyed very positive and productive partnerships with the local authorities through the excellent Moving On project, working with young people in their care – this project has been funded for three years by the J Paul Getty Junior Charitable Trust (which is now closing) so big thanks to them. We have been joined by Miki Rogers to develop our work with adults, thanks to the Lloyds TSB Foundation (now closed), and our Wider World project, working with newly arrived people, has continued, thanks to the Northern Rock Foundation (in the process of changing/ closing). With this picture of change and challenge to charitable funders, it is no wonder that the voluntary sector is so volatile and characterised as such – though I do point out that much of this turbulence within the world of funders arises entirely from the turbulence in the world of 'high finance' ...

As Maurice Dezou will tell you in his contribution, we nearly delivered two WorldFest events – one that was a great success, and one that we had to cancel at the last minute, due to the very unwelcome nearby presence of the English Defence League – all a bit unexpected.

Looking forward, we are currently refreshing/ enhancing/ re-invigorating our relationship with Teesside University, which is great, and there is a sense of the green shoots of a potential coherent, cohesive, sensible and useful Tees Valley Cultural Strategy being created – you know it makes sense!

Miki is making great progress with a potential project to work in partnership with housing/ support providers, to help their clients develop the 'soft' (but vital) skills of personal resource, reflectivity and imagination alongside the more obvious practical ones, and I am working in partnership with Darlington Council to develop a project around hearts and minds engagement with railway heritage – which, of course, has its keen followers, but probably not across wide age ranges and varied community groups. We will also be developing another bid to Comic Relief, in partnership with Barnardo's SECOS programme, to continue the excellent work of the Risky Biz project, to work with young people at risk of sexual exploitation – horribly in the news as I write this, with current reports from Rotherham (which absolutely will not be the only place where these things are happening).

I don't want to end on such a sombre thought, so I wish all our readers well for the in-gathering, may all your harvests be fruitful, and may your hawthorns be weighted with red berries, as you prepare for colder months to come.



Rowena Sommerville

Rowena Sommerville
Director, TVA

refugee arts

This Summer has been a mix of good and bad things for me as Refugee Arts Worker, and working in this sector you do see the worst the world can do, and the best efforts that human beings can make to rebuild themselves and their lives.

In June we put on two events – the WorldFest Youth and Community event and the main WorldFest event, both with the support of our key funders the Northern Rock Foundation, and the Youth Music Foundation, and Middlesbrough Town Hall. On Friday June 27th in Middlesbrough Town Hall Crypt we saw some young Dhol drummers, youngsters from the Musicmix project, the Tees Valley Afro-Women's Creative Group (stars of stage and BBC1!), the Teesside Roma band and the very cool Don-E (soul singer, song-writer, producer and member of Grace Jones' touring band) all perform to a packed MTH Crypt audience. It was a great night, with a very diverse line up and audience, and a very happy atmosphere – what's so wrong 'bout peace, love and understanding, as the song says!

Then on the Saturday we were looking forward to more of the same positive atmosphere, and to music from a lively Zimbabwean band, from our very own Shurooq Abu Alnas and her Sudanese Band, and from British reggae maestro Dennis Bovell; however – as most of you will know – that all didn't happen.

The English Defence League held a Northern rally in the town that day, and their base, from which they marched and to which they returned to spend the night drinking, was the bar immediately opposite the MTH Crypt entrance for artistes – potentially a very tricky situation. There was a truly poisonous atmosphere in the town that day, with some arrests, and as the afternoon wore on the Police expressed concerns for public safety, if we proceeded with our event, so we reluctantly decided to cancel. It was awful to have to do this, but it is the price of free speech, whatever you think of the EDL and what it stands for. So – what is so wrong 'bout peace, love....etc. However, we will be showcasing these artistes again in the future, and I have been working with Shurooq to help her record her music, as she lost almost all her professional archive of recordings when she left Sudan.

We have been working closely and positively with Teesside University, and on October 29th, to celebrate Black History Month, and in partnership with Platforma the national network for refugee arts, we will be putting on an event at the university for invited guests – artists and project workers from across the region working in the 'diversity' sector – followed by a public event (everyone is invited!) featuring Shurooq, the Zimbabwean band, and ending up with Dennis Bovell and his dub sounds – look out for publicity in due course.

Musicmix 2 – our second grant from Youth Music Foundation – is now coming to an end. This year we have worked with young people from the UK, Poland, Nigeria, Libya, Iraq, Zimbabwe and India, all of whom performed brilliantly at WorldFest. I'm delighted to say that we've been able to enter seven of them for Arts Award this time around, and both my co-worker Gabriel Mulangu and I have enjoyed helping them improve their music, and learn a bit about the professional world of recording and performing.



Maurice Dezou
Refugees Officer, TVA

WorldFest / 2014



projects

What a busy summer it has been! Since the last newsletter, I have managed to get on top of the mountainous pile on my desk, become an Arts Award Advisor Trainer... and move to Norton. TVA now has a representative North of the Tees! We have welcomed new artists to the company, who have been great to work with and have produced some brilliant work!

Moving On has, well... Moved On! All four Boroughs have come to the end of their projects. There has been song writing, drumming, glassmaking, clay sculpting and loads of other arts activities! 25 young people have completed their Bronze Arts Award and we will be having a celebration event to culminate the project in September. I have visited the sessions throughout the project, and it has been fantastic to see these individuals grow.

Our involvement with the **One Planet Middlesbrough Project** as arts partner continues to see successful results. We welcomed two new fab artists to TVA for a project with Macmillan Academy in July. Filmmaker, Mark Jobe and Creative Writer, Niel Bushnell worked fantastically with a group of Year 8 pupils at the school to create a wonderful digital animation about flooding... aptly named: Nightmare on Flood Street. Our patron, Steph McGovern, took a visit to the school during the residency, and made a short documentary with the pupils about the creative process. Keep an eye out on our website for the finished product! You may even catch it being screened on the Big Screen in Central Square, Middlesbrough at the Town Meal. On behalf of the team, Mark has been busy entering the film to various festivals, even one in Hollywood! I can also announce that we have been shortlisted for the Young Filmmakers Award in the Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival. Get the red carpet out...

We are just about to start a new project with The Avenue Primary School in Nunthorpe. We are to work with a group of Year 5 pupils on a drama piece that will be written and performed by the group! We also welcome new artist, Helena Fox, who will be the lead Drama Practitioner on this. This will be showcased later in November, so watch out for updates on this!

This Autumn sees the return of the **stART project**. The project aims to work with a group of NEET young people from Stockton who work towards completing the Arts Award with a Host Arts Worker. We are thankful to the Georgian Theatre in Stockton, who will be hosting the project - great to be working in your venue! We welcome back both Robin Vickers as our Host Artist and musician Fran Hammill who will be supporting the project.

In other news... We reached 3,000 followers on twitter! Our winner, Louise Taylor, received a bag of TVA branded balloons! We are now on our way to 4,000 and I am on the hunt for an appropriate prize... Thoughts on a postcard please! (Or a tweet...)



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, looped 'R' followed by a horizontal line and a small dot.

Ree Collins
Projects Officer, TVA



adults

It's a few months now since I started my role as Adults Officer at Tees Valley Arts, and although I am still the 'new girl' I really have to say I have been warmly welcomed by everyone I've met within the organisation, and am really starting to feel like part of the scenery.

In an effort to express what being part of TVA means to me, being in the office finds me surrounded by likeminded people who completely 'get' what I have seemingly been battling on with over the past few years; a sort of club for those who know and truly believe the changes creative intervention can make. I'm very grateful to be a member, and all my thoughts of funding applications and my ideas as to who and how to make them work are no longer conversations I have with just myself, which has to be a good thing.

Outside of the organisation, I am busy setting up markets and getting ready for festivals, so I'm not one to waste time, but pleasingly I have managed to submit an application for funding already (with much help from the other members of the team), which has really thrown me in at the deep end as far as applying for funding for TVA goes.

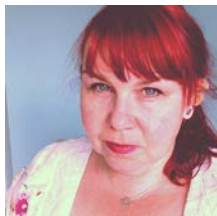
To get the information I needed, and start to build a picture of how this first project would work, I have been in touch with some fabulous women over on the Thorntree Estate, who are already involved in several separate groups actively offering support to those living in the area through creativity, befriending and financial advice.

We have submitted, with their help, an application to the Health Lottery's 'Health Improve' fund which will bring these groups of women together for creative sessions based around their stories of life on the estate, empowering them to take on their own larger projects in the long run, and make them stronger as a bigger group.

Alongside this, I'm in the early stages of putting together a larger bid to the Big Lottery to provide projects for groups in the Tees Valley area who are vulnerably housed. In my discussions with several groups who would benefit, I have been party to the truly inspirational work being done in the area to help those who find themselves homeless.

Gladly, those involved so far totally support what we intend to do and appreciate the value of creative projects, and the voice they can give their clients, as well as the changes that can be made to lives when self-esteem building creative projects are involved.

With all this going on I feel I have hit the ground running somewhat, so will try and keep up the momentum, hopefully with some positive outcomes to report the next time I write.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Miki Rogers'.

Miki Rogers
Adults Officer, TVA



keep typing

Or rather start typing! It's been a busy quarter and I'm the last to finish my piece for the newsletter as I've been run off my feet helping to prepare for the Moving On celebration event, where we've made a real effort to reward the participating young people, who are drawn as Ree has said from across the Tees Valley, with not only a record of the work they have created, but a little something from each of the four groups, we'll also be throwing in a few little goodies that we hope will allow them to continue their personal growth.

Earlier this summer I went through the process of reviving our registration as a publisher - our last work being published as Cleveland Arts in 2004 - so we could register our first new publications. INTUNE: Creativity, Caring, Community will be published on 13th September as part of the Middlesbrough Town Meal and is a collection of poetry and creative writing produces as part of our collaboration with Middlesbrough and Stockton MIND for One Planet Middlesbrough, meaning our participants are now published writers!

Although working through the TVA's finances is not the fun part of my job, it is perhaps the most important and I've spent the past couple of months revising all of our financial systems, including finalising our annual accounts, revising our management accounts, and perhaps more excitingly continuing to renegotiate our contracts meaning it'll soon be hello new printer (cheaper, better) and good bye old water cooler (we'd welcome advice on sustainable water when you've no running drinking water onsite... .)

I've also been working on plans for the long term future accommodation and have produced a report exploring the exciting possibilities of our acquiring the old Captain Cook Public House, 'over the border' (or so I am told, not being a Middlesbrough lad), on Durham Street on a Community Asset Transfer as a potential permanent base for TVA. It's all very exciting, but still in the earliest of stages, though I was amused by our accountant who seemed very eager for us to become the first charity she works with that has its own pub!

Finally you can continue to stay up-to-date with what's happening here at TVA through our website; on twitter **@teesvalleyarts**; on Facebook **facebook.com/teesvalleyarts**; as well as on Google+ **plus.google.com/+TeesvalleyartsOrgUK**; and not forgetting **vimeo: vimeo.com/teesvalleyarts**.

Plus - hold the presses - we hope very soon to be launching our own channel on Soundcloud to feature the work of our participants in Music Mix 2, as well as adding in archive material from participants from our past.



Peter Neal
Office Co-ordinator, TVA





Prizes!



Tees Valley Arts can work with you to plan and setup a programme of creative activities, find a suitable artist, help to frame a budget and secure funding, and then manage the project, both artistically and administratively. If you have an idea you would like to discuss, please contact us at:



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