

**THEHORSEBRIDGE
ARTSCENTRE**

**2018 THE YEAR
IN REVIEW**



2018 was an exciting year at THEHORSEBRIDGE. We started to truly put the arts at the heart of everything we do.

Our HORSEBRIDGEARTS initiative launched with an Open exhibition and new affordable creative workshops for all ages. Combined with significant grant funding successes we delivered a year packed with engaging and challenging exhibitions, classes and festivals to run alongside the diverse range of activities already available at the centre.

Low cost arts classes for all ages



In January we launched the first of our HORSEBRIDGEARTS initiatives, a weekly **Young Makers Club**. Our aim is to provide regular low-cost art classes for all ages. The Young Makers club, aimed at children over 6 was so well received that it was followed in October by **Creative Workshops for Adults** and **Parent and Toddler Messy Art Play**. The sessions are programmed based on the exhibitions taking place within the gallery spaces.

Social cinema and an expanding film offer

The modest facilities for screening within the centre provide opportunities for community events and accessibly priced screenings in relaxed surroundings. Our popular **matinee film** screenings continued this year, with funding from the Tesco Bags for Help scheme, and provided a fantastic opportunity for isolated members of the community to meet up with others and enjoy a hot drink with the film screening. In October we had a successful **Friday evening screening** and we are looking forward to offering more in 2019.

Under the New Ambitions programme we screened the **London Symphony** silent film in February and incorporated a well-received Q & A session. We continued support for the **Into Film Festival** and screened two films offering free places for local schools in November and participated in **National Lottery Cinema** day in September.



Digital arts programme shaped by local young people

Our **Young Digital Makers** project launched in January. Funded by Reaching Communities the project works with 12–15 year olds. The project specifically aims to reach young people who might not otherwise have such opportunities. This 18-month programme consists of free weekend sessions, a summer school and exhibition, all shaped by local young people.

It will investigate using technology creatively, including everything from creating apps and digital tools, social media, music, film making, websites, animation, design and coding.



A history of waste. A future of a plastic-free, clean Whitstable



Awards for All funding enabled us to present the **Waste Line** exhibition in July and deliver community workshops to build fantastic props and costumes for **Oyster Festival Parade** from repurposed materials. The exhibition included a huge sculptural historical waste map of Whitstable made from discarded materials.

We organised a large presence for the Oyster Festival parade bringing together schools, environmental groups, learning disability groups and volunteers.



2018 HIGHLIGHTS

- JANUARY**
 - The first HORSEBRIDGEARTS Open exhibition **Art is Something Much More Dangerous**. A **New Ambitions** and a **People's Choice** prize were awarded.
 - Launch of **Young Digital Makers** project.
 - Launch of weekly **Young Makers Club**.
 - Launch of **Horsebridge Monthly Art Talks**.
- FEBRUARY**
 - **London Symphony** Screening + Q and A.
- APRIL**
 - **This is What I Want to Show You**. This photography exhibition, sponsored by me:now, invited our Instagram community to share insights into their worlds. Bringing together images of passions, secrets, daily inspirations and insights into professional lives, the curated exhibition interwove stories from across the globe within the centre and digitally using #lmsy2018.
- MAY**
 - **Why Do You Never Speak?** Horsebridge curated exhibition, ACE funded, as part of the extended satellite programme of Journeys with The Waste Land at the Turner Contemporary in Margate.
- JUNE**
 - Key venue for **Whitstable Biennale**.
 - Family and community group workshops creating builds for **Oyster Festival**.
- JULY**
 - **Waste Line** exhibition and community builds for **Oyster Festival parade**.
 - Performance of **Peaking in the Portrait** by Golkk Theatre Group.
- AUGUST**
 - **Young Digital Makers** summer school for 40 children who all earned a **Discover Arts Award**.
- SEPTEMBER**
 - **Young Digital Makers** Exhibition **Digital X**.
 - Screening of Loving Vincent as part of the **National Lottery Cinema**.
- OCTOBER**
 - HORSEBRIDGEARTS launches **Creative Workshops for adults**.
 - HORSEBRIDGEARTS launches weekly **Parent and Toddler Messy Art Play**.
 - **Friday evening screening** of Three Billboards outside Ebbing, Missouri.
 - First **Repair Café** Whitstable held at the Horsebridge.
- NOVEMBER**
 - Free film screenings for schools as part of the **Into Film Festival 2018**
 - **Think of Me** exhibition and **Children's Festival**.
- DECEMBER**
 - **Family Lantern Making** Workshops as part of Whitsparkle celebrations



November brought our **Think of Me** exhibition funded by WW1 Heritage Lottery Fund to the centre, with a **Children's Festival** funded by Canterbury Arts Council providing 150 free exhibition-inspired workshop places.

We organised groups where volunteers made memorial cushions and carried out historical research. We supported or ran sessions to create cushions elsewhere including: Little Homework Stars Group in Grimshill Rd, a local Dementia Group, Age Concern groups, the IO Arts, History and Disability Group, uniformed organisations and local primary age schools. In addition, over 100 individuals made cushions from kits. We were overwhelmed by a huge community response, which meant more people wanting to be involved than we could support.



The emotive exhibition, including 291 floating sweetheart cushions, was very popular with many local schools visiting and we received over 5000 Facebook views of the opening event which included a live performance of the Last Post.



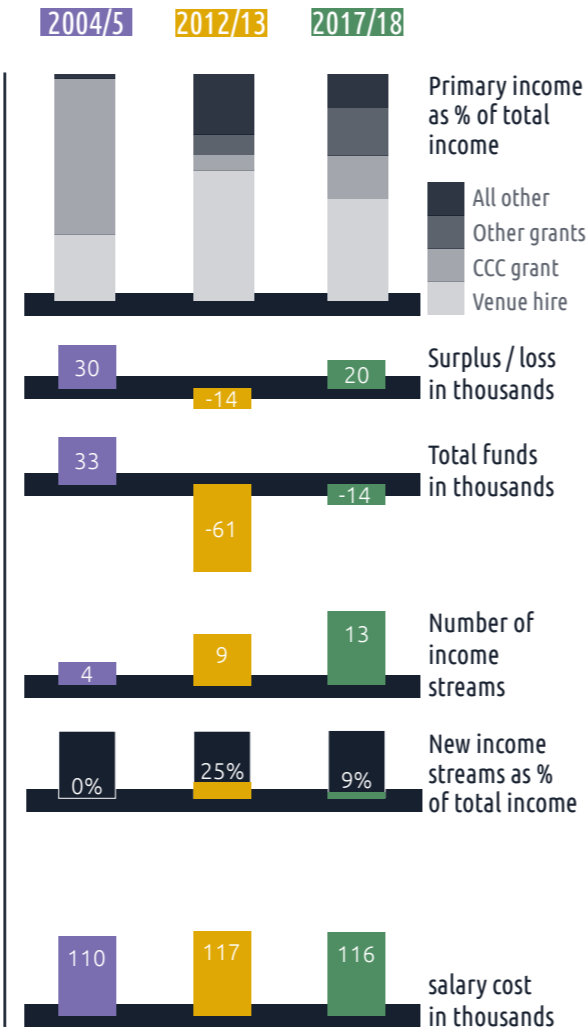
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

2019 will see us enter our 15th year of operation. It is a good time to reflect on how far we have come since 2004 and more specifically in the last 5 years. In March 2013 we were operating with a £61k negative position on our balance sheet with the seven years following 2004/5 averaging an £11.5k annual loss. The ability to change this situation was not due to a lack of skill within the team, but an inability to take even the smallest of risks due to a constant cashflow battle caused by zero operating reserves.

Changing this was vital if we were to see another five years and rebuilding our relationship with our primary funder, Canterbury City Council (CCC), was a key part of this. Through CCC's Improvement Grant scheme we have been able to take the risks necessary to grow our restricted grant funding and deliver projects like Think of Me, diversify income streams including the expansion our retail offer and look for opportunities to challenge our expenditure.

We now have 13 different income streams and apply the same principle to our grant funding too, where we aim for less than 20% of our total income from a single funder. Diversity is important not only for our survival as it reduces reliance on a single source of income, but enables us to keep the cost of venue hire for local artists and businesses low as we've reduced our reliance on income generated simply from venue hire.

Whilst our staff costs have significantly reduced in real terms over the past 15 years, this is an identified area of development over the next five years. We are committed to delivering a quality arts offer that presents value for money for the district based on a sustainable business model and that will require us to retain and grow our team to meet demands.



THANK YOU

Thank you for supporting the arts centre and taking part.
 You help us keep arts at the heart of our town,
 both now and for future generations.

We are incredibly thankful for all the support, every coffee drunk, every print purchased, every exhibition visited, every workshop attended and every donation we receive, every thing really does matter. We would also like to say an extra **special thanks** to the following organisations and individuals, without them we could not have delivered the glorious range of work this year for our district:

Funders: Canterbury City Council, The National Lottery Community Fund, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arts Council England, Canterbury Arts Council, Tesco Bags for Help

Sponsors: me:now

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Donors: Spacemaker Architects, Josephine Harvatt, Philippa Langton

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