



DIY Theatre Community Interest Company

# Impact Summary

What we did in 2018

January to December





# Who we are and what we do

DIY is an established Learning Disability Theatre Company based in Salford. We are member-led and most of our Board members are disabled people. We have been creating accessible and thought-provoking theatre and creative projects since 1994.

DIY's vision is a world where performers, theatre-makers and arts leaders with learning disabilities, are valued as part of the rich diversity of our cultural sector and our society.

DIY is a Community Interest Company Reg. N° 07128047

## We aim to:

- ★ **Challenge** preconceptions and barriers through high quality performance, education projects and research
- ★ **Celebrate** diversity and creativity in all areas of our work
- ★ **Promote** the achievements of performers and theatre-makers with learning disabilities and share good practice

## We offer:

- ★ Original performances which tour schools, colleges and theatres.
- ★ Drama projects with schools, colleges and youth organisations, including accredited Arts Award projects at Discover, Explore, Bronze and Silver levels.
- ★ Regular creative workshops and courses for adults with learning disabilities.
- ★ Training for Arts Award advisers, universities and practitioners.
- ★ Bespoke consultancy and training.



# 2018 highlights



A Question of Leadership conference explored the themes of leadership, research and cultural education and inclusion.

See page 13



We ran 3 training events in sensory theatre techniques for practitioners and emerging artists.

See page 10



As part of Lowry Week 53 events, six actors from DIY's main company performed in central Manchester with Access All Areas.

See page 7



216 people saw our latest sensory performance 'Give Me Space!' when we toured across the region – with original music!

See page 4

# Our work with adults with learning disabilities



## What people said about our show:

This was a fantastic opportunity for some of our most vulnerable children and young people in the hospital. The performance was so inclusive and the actors are not fazed at all by how poorly some of our children are, they were all treated equally which is so important to us.

Teacher, Manchester Hospital School

DIY actors are great role models for our students

Teacher - Piper Hill School

**216 people** saw our show



## Core Company

DIY's core company creates original, high quality performances which tour to young audiences with learning disabilities across the North West.

During 2018 we toured 'Give Me Space!' our latest sensory performance across the region.

*The best adapted theatre that I have accessed with SEN pupils in my 10 years of teaching.*

Teacher - Delamere School

**16 performances**

**9 venues**

**216 people saw Give Me Space! during our tour**

We performed the show at The Angel Centre, Manchester Hospital School, Bury College, Delamere School, Piper Hill School, Firwood School, Salford University, Langworthy Cornerstone and Oakwood Academy.

## Friday Group

DIY's Friday Group designs, delivers and evaluates Arts Award projects at Discover, Explore, Bronze and Silver levels with young people with learning disabilities, as well as running regular courses for adults with learning disabilities throughout the year.

**10 adults with learning disabilities regularly attended DIY's Friday Group throughout the year.**

## DIY Buds

DIY's weekly drama sessions at Langworthy Cornerstone continued to be very popular. The group worked on the theme of 'Communication' and created a short performance piece which they performed at DIY's 'Fill the Space!' event at the Angel Centre in February and at a sharing event in Eccles in June.

**15 people regularly attended DIY BUDS sessions throughout the year**

**14 people came to see the BUDS perform at their sharing event.**

*When we go into schools we perform for the children and it makes a whole new experience for us and for the children. I ask them "would you like to share this experience with me?"*

DIY's Friday Group member



# Cue the Music!

**In 2018 DIY incorporated live music into our show for the first time.**

DIY members considered the effect of the music work we did with professional musicians Eve, Hannah and Sarah in relation to the NEF 5 Ways to Wellbeing. We came up with lots of suggestions for each:

## Connecting

**You won't get many people who don't like music – it connects everybody.** I held the child's hand to help him use the chimes. **One girl at the Hospital School liked the buzzers – she taught us**

**'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star' in Chinese.** When we sing to them they want to join in – they pick up on the rhythm and want to join in.

## Taking Notice

When we're working with the shakers, if the children don't like it I move away – I learn from the expression on their face. **Children are all different.** There was a boy who didn't like loud noises – when he went under the space cloud we had to sing to him softly.

## Learning

**We learnt new songs like the 'Spaceman' song.** We

learnt new instruments like the Theremin – I loved it, it reminded me of The Beach Boys. **We learnt about singing soft and loud.** We'd done some music before but we'd never worked with live musicians before. **We learnt an African song – that was learning about different countries.**

## Giving

The Hello Song makes everybody feel happy and welcome. **When we went to the hospital it was upsetting – I was upset inside but I didn't let it show on the outside.** One little girl had been in isolation for a long time – she held the shaker in her left hand – the play worker said she had never used her left hand all the time she'd been in hospital. He said we'd helped him to find a way to work with her. **We make a difference.**

## Being Active

**We were dancing with the shakers and the garland – music makes us move – it keeps the momentum going.** The music helped us move when we were doing the clouds and the sky.



# Access All Areas : Madhouse Re: Exit

During May 2018, a team of six actors from DIY's main company performed at Barton Arcade with Access All Areas as part of Lowry Week 53 event.



MADHOUSE re:exit was DIY's exciting collaboration with Access All Areas, a London-based company which creates award-winning, urban, disruptive performance by learning disabled and autistic artists.

DIY performers performed 11 shows as part of our large scale production which was performed as part of the Lowry's week 53 festival and were an important and dynamic addition to the radical performance.

Nick Llewellyn, Artistic Director, Access All Areas Theatre

'MADHOUSE re:exit' was built on the legacy of Mabel Cooper, a learning disabled activist and resident of a long-stay hospital. It was inspired by a refusal to be silent, and a history of being ignored.

A group of actors from DIY Theatre Company played Patient 36 – a resident of the imaginary 'Paradise Fields' institution – who guided audiences on a disturbing and provocative underground adventure to meet a goddess, a baby, a bird and a ghost waiting for improvements that are forever promised.

All credit to the actors from Salford-based companies DIY Theatre and Proud and Loud who were the glue in this production, enabling us to pause for much-needed reflection. We feel lost in the system.

Review, Entertainment Focus

DIY theatre are an important company creating vital work to support learning disabled people to have a voice and a space to advocate for learning disabled people's creativity in a time of increased social isolation. Nick Llewellyn, Artistic Director, Access All Areas Theatre.

**40 Performances across 11 performance days.**

**Over 500 people came to see the show.**

# Our work with young people with learning disabilities

In addition to our performing original accessible theatre to young audiences with PMLD, (see page 4), DIY has worked with young people with learning disabilities on 8 drama-based projects. Many thanks to the schools and voluntary youth organisations who worked in partnership with DIY to make this work possible.

**51 young people with learning disabilities have achieved their Discover Arts Award**

**7 young people with learning disabilities have achieved their Bronze Arts Award.**



## Our work with students

DIY delivered 5 Discover AA courses alongside our tour of 'Give Me Space!' These took place with Piper Hill School (4 groups of learners), Bury College (2 groups of learners), Firwood School and Delamere School.

All together, 49 young people with PMLD took part. They all extended their experience of sensory theatre, developed their creativity and communication.

**All achieved their Discover Arts Award.**

We also led workshops at Manchester Hospital School and Newbridge Learning Community.

# Our work with young people in transition to adulthood

During 2018 DIY delivered Arts Award courses as part of our work with young people with learning disabilities in transition to adulthood.

*Yes it is bridging the gap to adult services. We want our young people to access creative quality delivery with a potential to develop in that, if that is something that they want to do.*

Partner

We built on our partnership with Oakwood Academy to work with young people in Post 16 education. All 10 students increased their drama skills, communication and creativity and developed basic leadership skills and 7 achieved their Level 1 Bronze AA.

*When they see Anna support Jen they think I could do that, I could support a drama tutor or even I could deliver drama workshops!*

Partner

*Definitely confidence has really built up. It has been a very enjoyable time for them and has taught them a lot of skills.*

Partner



## Developing young leaders

During 2018 two young adults who had recently joined DIY were supported to take the lead devising and delivering their own Arts Award Project. Charlotte Little and Amy Carter led a follow-up project at You Can Community Club. They worked with 6 young people, 2 of whom achieved a Discover Arts Award. This was made possible by our positive partnership with You Can Community Club.

*It feels different to what we normally do. When you come out of your comfort zone - you learn new skills and things you can use.*

Charlotte

*It feels fantastic cos in the future the people you're working with - they're looking up to you. And they might take what you do and use it somewhere else.*

Amy

# Our work with practitioners and emerging artists



Training session at Sharing the Space! day

We ran 3 training events for practitioners & emerging artists in sensory theatre techniques. **52 established & emerging practitioners engaged in training:**

**13 Undergraduate students** following an Applied Theatre module at the University of Salford.

**28 A' level drama students** preparing for a Theatre in Education project at Pendleton College.

**11 practitioners** from across England, attended our Sharing the Space! day to develop their sensory theatre skills.



**Sharing the Space!** was a training day run by DIY Theatre Company to share our experiences of creating multi-sensory, interactive and accessible theatre for young people with a range of learning disabilities. Participants worked closely with company members to understand the techniques and principles we use at DIY and to explore how they could use them within their own practice. Participants experienced DIY's current show, Give Me Space! and used this to inform the creation of their own multi-sensory props and share their ideas with a mini performance.

You created such an open environment which allowed us the freedom to experiment and ask questions. I loved having the opportunity to work with DIY cast members.

Sharing the Space! delegate.

It has given me confidence that a programme could be developed in which learning disabled adults could deliver for the benefit of learning disabled young people.

Sharing the Space! delegate



Training session at Pendleton College

I think the work you do is AMAZING! I Love it. It is very linked to the kind of work I would like to do. I love how you have used a mixture of media form and that your work is interactive & has a real impact.

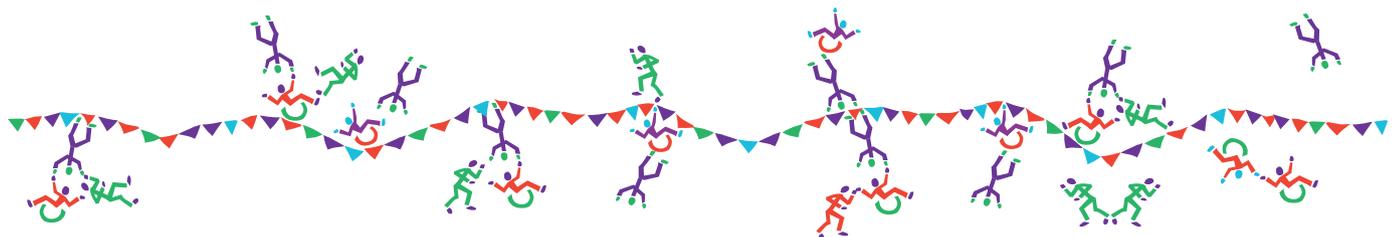
Pendleton College Student

## Supporting adults with a learning disability to develop their practice.

During 2018 DIY ran courses which supported adults with a learning disability and an interest in creative activities to realise their ambitions. We ran five 10-week courses & one 6-week course.

### 6 courses delivered, exploring different creative areas.

- ★ 7 people attended DIY's Soundtracks (next steps) course (Jan – March)
- ★ 7 people attended DIY's Drama Facilitation course (Jan – March)
- ★ 9 people attended DIY's Making for Theatre (First Steps) course (Jan – March)
- ★ 9 people attended DIY's Musical Theatre course (April - June)
- ★ 8 people attended DIY's Making for Theatre 2 course (April - June)
- ★ 10 people attended DIY's Making Puppets for Theatre 2 course (Sept – Nov)



# Events in 2018

## Fill the Space! At Home Event



Early in the year DIY held an event to celebrate the fact that we were half way through our exciting initiative funded through the Arts Council England's Elevate Programme.

**47 delegates**  
attended the event

*Energy, fun, depth.*

*Disability doesn't stop people achieving anything they want to do.*

*A wonderful inclusive session. The music works incredibly well.*

*Delegates feedback*

The afternoon was cram packed:

- ★ Musicians Hannah McCabe and Eve Harrison introduced some of the live music approaches the company have been exploring.
- ★ DIY BUDS shared some of the drama and music work they have been doing on the theme of 'communication'.
- ★ A performance of our current show 'Give Me Space!' with an explanation of how it has been designed especially to appeal to audiences of young people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities.
- ★ Celebration of the launch of our new website and a look at some of our exciting future plans.

# A Question of Leadership Conference

Co-hosted by Curious Minds and DIY Theatre Company at Liverpool Hope University.



*DIY Theatre Co bring with them a range of perspectives that ensure inclusivity of approach to the delivery of any event.*

Jude Bird, Curious Minds NW

Representatives from cultural organisations, artists, performers, teachers and academics attended to explore the themes of leadership, research and cultural education and inclusion through workshops, presentations and participatory arts activities. Provocations from DIY's patron Jenny Sealey MBE and Karen Flood of First Step opened the conference brilliantly, illustrating why re-thinking leadership is important at both a personal and political level.

## **Presentations and workshops included:**

- ★ **Open Theatre** introduced their approach to 'Creative Enabling' a methodology based on the collaboration of disabled and non-disabled artists.
- ★ **Mind the Gap** shared their experiences of collaborating with an academic researcher – looking at parenthood and people with learning disabilities.

- ★ **Creative Minds** presented their learning about leadership through their experiences of running a national series of Learning Disability Arts conferences.
- ★ **SLICE** (Specialist Leaders in Cultural Education) fellows gave presentations on perspectives around inclusive education in school settings.
- ★ **DIY** presented the research 'Defining Moments: Leadership and Learning Disability Theatres' undertaken as part of Sue's Professional Doctorate in Applied Theatre at University of Manchester.
- ★ **DIY's Friday Group** ran a workshop where delegates reflected on what they thought was most important about leadership.

**120 delegates attended.**

*A great celebration of inclusion through the arts.*

Delegate

# Our work with Arts Award

DIY is a national leader in Arts Award training and support.

We deliver Arts Award training and support and are one of only three organisations nationally delivering specific Discover/ Explore and Bronze/ Silver training to people working in SEN settings.



# Arts Award Adviser Training

During 2018 DIY ran

**11 Public** Arts Award training sessions – 101 people

**7 In House** Arts Award training sessions – 70 people

We trained 171 people to become Arts Award advisers. Of these 103 were trained at Discover & Explore levels (19 for working in SEN settings), 68 were trained at Bronze and Silver levels (17 for working in SEN settings).

**97% of attendees** at our public training sessions rated the training as excellent or very good

Very engaging & highly practical. Useful to have mix of settings / practice to help locate your own work, values & process / practice.

Every question has been acknowledged and advice has been given. I feel confident with the Bronze & Silver training. Great!!. Thank you.

I thought the training was really well adjusted to the SEN setting. There were plenty of opportunities to make the information relevant to individual settings and lots of creative ways of evidencing the award.

Attendees at Arts Award advisor training

**171 people** trained to become Arts Award advisers

# Arts Award Support

DIY carried out 26 support visits during 2018 (13 on behalf of Trinity London and 13 on behalf of Curious Minds).

We supported 10 cultural / educational organisations with their Arts Award delivery through one-to-one support visits, including:

- ★ Brighter Sound
- ★ Royal Exchange
- ★ West Kirby Residential School
- ★ Pendle Productions
- ★ Redbridge School
- ★ Stonyhurst College
- ★ Newbridge Group
- ★ Delamere School
- ★ Williamson Art Gallery and Museum

**26 support visits** to organisations





Find out more & keep up to date with DIY – **visit our website:**

★ [www.diytheatre.org.uk](http://www.diytheatre.org.uk)  
or scan this QR code to visit our website



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During 2018 the work of DIY was supported by:



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