

Artists, Facilitators, Performers and Speakers



David Ainsworth joined Ascendance after his Parkinson's diagnosis, seeking to support his health through movement. Formerly an accountant, he is now a choreographer, teacher and speaker. His first piece, Signature Moves, has been performed at The Place, Northern Stage, Northern Ballet and NSCD.

Facebook: @AscendanceLeeds

Instagram: @ascendance_danceco

Ascendance Website: [Dan Winder](#)

Vimeo: @ascendancefilm

YouTube: @ascendance_film

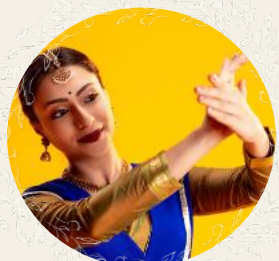


IMAGE CREDIT: The Shutter Elf

Akademi has been the beating heart of South Asian dance in the UK, since 1979. They make vibrant, and meaningful work using the compelling power of storytelling, rhythm and gestures. Akademi are known for their world-class dance performances and groundbreaking wellbeing programmes, bringing joy, inspiration and hope to people's lives.

With a vision that South Asian dance is for everyone, Akademi's work can be found in everyday places from theatres, shopping centres and festivals to hospitals, care homes and SEND and mainstream schools. Through its Dance Well programme, Akademi brings performances and workshops to wards, atriums and bedsides in hospitals across London, Oxford, Nottingham and Coventry. It reaches patients of all ages, along with their families, visitors and NHS staff. Akademi's experienced artists lead weekly movement sessions at six care homes and community centres in London.

Since 2019, Dance Well has engaged over 10,000 people where, evaluations have shown measurable benefits to physical and mental wellbeing for patients, residents and staff.

www.akademi.co.uk



Ink Asher-Hemp

My name is Ink and my pronouns are they/them.

I am an arts worker based in Edinburgh.

I collaborate with children and adults to build creative spaces and share stories through processes informed by climate justice, anti ableism, queerness, and mischief.



Laura Bailey is a freelance creative health consultant. Her current primary role is Manager of the Mayoral and Strategic Authorities Network for Creative Health, the UK's first strategic network dedicated to embedding creative health within devolved regional governance. The Network brings together Mayoral Strategic Authorities across England to strengthen regional capacity, share learning and develop practical approaches to integrating creative health into policy and practice. By working collaboratively across sectors and policy areas, the Network supports members to use creativity and culture to improve health, reduce inequalities and contribute to wider place-based priorities. Laura has worked across creative health, cultural placemaking and community development for more than 15 years. Her work connects strategic policy and partnership development with community-led practice. She also produces Creative Health Stories, a podcast exploring the relationship between creativity, health and wellbeing through stories and conversations.

LinkedIn: [@laurabaileycreativehealth](#)

Instagram: [@creativehealthstories](#)

Website: creative-health.co.uk



Rowan Bailey is Director of the National Creative Health Hub and is currently Principal Lead for the development of the West Yorkshire Creative Health System; a hub-and-spoke consortium model, funded by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, that brings together universities, cultural organisations, health partners, local authorities and community stakeholders to strengthen creative health across the region. As a place-based researcher, Rowan's work focuses on developing cultural and creative capabilities at hyperlocal levels, exploring how communities can thrive through collaborations between public health, culture, heritage, wellbeing and voluntary sectors.

National Creative Health Hub: <https://research.hud.ac.uk/institutes-centres/ceada/creative-health-hub/>

West Yorkshire Creative Health System: <https://research.hud.ac.uk/institutes-centres/ceada/creative-health-hub/creative-health-system/>

Job title: Professor of Culture, People and Place, University of Huddersfield

Social media handle: (4) [The National Creative Health Hub: Company Page Admin](#) | [LinkedIn](#) and [Rowan Bailey](#) | [LinkedIn](#)



Rosie Barker is Head of Curatorial and Participation at Birmingham Museums Trust, working across collections, exhibitions, volunteering and participation to develop more inclusive and democratic museum practice. She has worked as a curator and in participation, developing community-led and co-produced exhibitions, collections, and programmes focused on access, mental health and wellbeing. She is particularly interested in sharing power and bringing different voices into museums.



Sophie Beckett is a PhD researcher at the Centre for Understanding Behaviour at the University of Birmingham, exploring how cultural organisations can contribute to public health behaviour research and practice. Before beginning her doctorate, she worked as a Public Health Research Officer at Birmingham Museums Trust, in partnership with Birmingham City Council Public Health. In this role she developed interventions using oral histories exploring exhibition spaces, participatory mapping, ESOL learning, contemporary collecting and collaging as ways of understanding public experiences of food and wellbeing. These interventions made a historic archive useful in understanding contemporary health challenges in the city. Sophie has particular interest in the role of creative participatory research in capturing lived experience data, and how these methods can make policy design more culturally relevant, emotionally resonant and useful in practice.

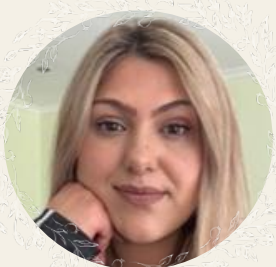
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sophie-beckett-a2b556185/>



Tahmina Begum lives and works in Leeds, Yorkshire. She is an Interdisciplinary Artist-Researcher, Poet, and Workshop Facilitator. Begum has exhibited internationally, nationally, and hyper locally. Begum is a qualified and registered Art Psychotherapist (HCPC, BATT). Her work explores cultures, identities, belonging and British /Bangladeshi/Muslim Diaspora. Begum's work explores stories, hidden narratives and storytelling through art and art making and is passionate about making Art accessible for all sections of society and the promotion of art to improve our health and wellbeing. She loves how Art can give voices to communities/people that have been silenced.

Begum's work ranges from printmaking, collage, embroidery, painting, drawing, poetry, and creative conversations. She loves working with Communities and groups to support and ease their ideas around art and what it means to them. She attended Leeds Arts University and is Creative Director of the 'Creative Roots,' a 2-year project funded through the People's Health Trust exploring heritage and culture of British Bangladeshi communities through creative arts and the celebration of the 50 years of Independence of Bangladesh.

Social media; @artbyfudgee



Zoya Bhatti is a socially engaged practitioner and producer working at the intersection of community, contemporary art, wellbeing and place. With a background in youth and community development and over a decade of experience across the public, private and third sectors, Zoya works collaboratively with artists, communities and young people to create more equitable and accessible cultural experiences. She uses art as a vehicle for connection, confidence, identity, conversation and change, creating spaces where people can come together, share experiences and explore new possibilities. For Zoya, people, conversations and relationships are often the material of the work, with the resulting artwork, film, exhibition, event or cultural programme becoming a container for relationships and stories. Zoya currently leads Engagement and Participation at In-Situ and is co-founder of Hillo Hub, a women-centred initiative exploring wellbeing, connection, nature, faith and mindfulness through collective experience.

<https://www.in-situ.org.uk/about/team/zoya-bhatti>

<https://www.in-situ.org.uk/hillo-hub>

www.linkedin.com/in/zoya-bhatti-673591335

https://www.instagram.com/zoyabhatti?igsh=ZmN6ZGJyMmIpcGVl&utm_source=qr



Pip Bryan is a musician, facilitator and educator specialising in participatory, inclusive and health-focused music practice. Her work spans dementia, early years, SEND, healthcare and community settings, with a particular interest in how music can support creativity, connection, communication and wellbeing. She leads and facilitates projects with organisations including Live Music Now, Turtle Key Arts and Rise Music Education CIC, and has extensive experience developing music-making with people living with dementia, children and families, and participants with additional needs. Pip is also involved in training and supporting musicians and students working in inclusive and community contexts. A flautist and vocalist, she trained at Chetham's School of Music and the Royal College of Music. Alongside her participatory practice, she has performed at venues including the Royal Albert Hall, Shakespeare's Globe and Ronnie Scott's, and at the BBC Proms.



Dr Mickey Bryan is a Liverpool-based composer, musician, researcher and participatory music practitioner specialising in collaborative composition, dementia and creative ageing. His work explores how songwriting and creative music-making can support agency, connection, self-expression and wellbeing, particularly for people living with dementia and those who care for them.

Mickey completed his PhD at the University of Liverpool, where his research, *Composing in Dementia Settings: Developing a Practitioner's Toolkit*, investigated approaches to collaborative composition in dementia settings. Alongside his research, he works extensively as a composer and facilitator in community and healthcare contexts, including with Live Music Now and Turtle Song. He is Co-Director of RISE Music CIC and continues to develop practice and research at the intersection of composition, participatory music, health and creative ageing.



David Cartwright is Creative Health Connector at darts. Dave works across Doncaster to connect people, organisations and opportunities through Creative Health, supporting collaboration between cultural, health, community and academic partners.

He helps to develop and strengthen Creative Health activity across the borough, contributing to the vision of everyone in Doncaster being able to access participatory creative activities, resulting in them feeling happier, healthier and more resilient.

Dave's background is as theatre maker and producer. He continues to deliver freelance projects to communities and schools in the UK and worldwide.



Helen Chatterjee is Professor of Human & Ecological Health at University College London; she is also currently the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Programme Director for Health Inequalities. Her research includes biodiversity conservation and evidencing the impact of natural and cultural participation on health. Helen ran museums at UCL for 15 years and is a Founding Trustee of the [National Centre for Creative Health](#). She has written 5 books, including: 'Touch in Museums' (2008), 'Museums, Health and Well-being' (2013), 'Material Connections: From Object-Based Learning to Object-Based Well-being' (2020), 'Gibbon Conservation in the Anthropocene' (2023) and over 100 publications. In 2021 Helen and UCL colleagues launched the world's first [Masters in Creative Health](#) and she currently leads a national research programme called '[Mobilising Community Assets to Tackle Health Inequalities](#)' in partnership with the NCCH. Helen received an MBE in 2015 for Services to Higher Education and Culture.

Socials: X: @MobCommAssets

Bluesky: @mobcommassets.bsky.social

LinkedIn: Mobilising Community Assets to Tackle Health Inequalities



Liz Clarke & Co.

Liz Clarke is an artist working across performance, participation and creative health strategy. For over twenty years she has created playful, provocative spaces where humour, care and collective imagination become tools for asking difficult questions and imagining different futures. Alongside her artistic practice, Liz has held senior leadership roles across the arts, health and cultural sectors, working with artists, policymakers, funding bodies, health services and community organisations to develop creative health programmes, partnerships and more inclusive ways of working. She has toured her solo performance work internationally, and her writing on queer maternal performance, risk and embedding genuinely socially engaged practice within systems has been widely published.

As a carer and access advocate, Liz embraces the messy, interdependent realities of creative practice — where work, life and care are not separate but entangled, illuminated and celebrated. Her latest programme of work, *Glitter Heart*, reimagines practice-led sector support, inviting artists into creative, supportive spaces to reconnect with and sustain their practice. Whether creating policy & programmes, writing and devising work or supporting other artists, her work creates playful, carefully held spaces where artists, practitioners and institutions can think differently together.

Working alongside Liz at the CAIR salon is Megan Clark-Bagnall - a social artist who takes silliness very seriously and puts the PLAY into PLAYce. Meg has been creating sincerely feel-good contemporary art that celebrates human connection since 2008.

lizclarke.org

www.linkedin.com/in/lizclarke.19

<https://www.instagram.com/lizclarkecompany/>



Emma Clayton is Creative Director of Ascendance and drives the company's new mentoring programme with Fuse Dance Collective and leads vibrant Dance for Parkinson's sessions and performances across the region. She is an accomplished dance artist, choreographer, dance & yoga teacher with over 28 years of professional experience, having graduated from Northern School of Contemporary Dance. Passionate about the transformative power of movement, she specialises in creating bold, inclusive work that weaves together dance, music, and workshops within Higher Education, professional dance companies and community settings - exploring themes of heritage, culture and disability.

Becca Collins

My experience in the Arts and Wellbeing Third Sector, in Higher Education Visual Arts and as an artist myself rolls nicely into one. I know that everyone has something to gain from creativity, be it expression, meditation or togetherness. I'm excited to bring my knowledge and passion for inclusivity into the world of Arts and Health in Wales, and I'm excited to learn and share even more!



Tamsin Cook is Co-Artistic Director of Mafwa, a Leeds-based arts organisation using creativity and nature to bring refugee, asylum seeker and settled communities together. As a theatre-maker, facilitator and creative leader, she is passionate about creating welcoming, inclusive spaces where people can connect, share stories and develop their creative voice. Since co-founding Mafwa Theatre, Tamsin has helped shape its artistic vision and community-led approach, developing participatory projects across theatre, performance, arts and nature. Her work centres the experiences, ideas and strengths of communities, with a particular focus on collaboration, belonging and social change. Alongside her creative practice, Tamsin plays a key role in Mafwa's organisational development, partnerships and strategic direction. She is committed to building sustainable, ambitious models for community arts and to creating opportunities for people to influence and shape the cultural life of their city.

<https://www.instagram.com/mafwatheatre/>

<https://www.facebook.com/mafwatheatre>



Alexandra Coulter is Director of the [National Centre for Creative Health \(NCCH\)](#) which was established in response to Recommendation 1 in the [Creative Health](#) report, published in 2017 by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing. The NCCH published the [Creative Health Review](#) in 2023 which makes recommendations to Government for a national Creative Health Strategy. NCCH is a partner in the UKRI 6-year research programme '[Mobilising Community Assets to Tackle Health Inequalities](#)'. The NCCH is delivering the four year [Creative Health Leads in Systems](#) programme, which is funded by Arts Council England and The Baring Foundation. Alex was Director of Arts & Health South West from 2010-2024 and the Arts Coordinator at Dorset County Hospital from 1998-2013.

Linkedin: [National Centre for Creative Health \(NCCH\)](#)

Bluesky: [ncch.bsky.social](#)



Chris Dayson is the Centre Director of the Centre for Charity Effectiveness. Prior to joining CCE, Chris spent 17 years at Sheffield Hallam University as Professor of Voluntary Action, Health and Wellbeing. Chris' academic work explores the role and contribution of small locally based charities and voluntary organisations in relation to public policy and public services.

His work is interdisciplinary and sits at the intersection of sociology, economics, public administration and management, and health. It has an applied focus on policy and practice and is proven to have had an impact on local, national and international policy and practice.



Nicola Doyle is Community Engagement Manager at Cast, Doncaster, where she leads and develops community participation and engagement work. Nicola's work centres on creating opportunities for communities to participate in theatre and the arts, with a particular focus on people and communities who may face barriers to cultural participation. At Cast, she has been involved in developing community-led and intergenerational projects, including work with Doncaster People's Theatre, Citizens of the World and communities across Doncaster.

She is currently working with Citizens of the World alongside Changing Lives, supporting the development of creative opportunities for people seeking sanctuary and exploring how music, theatre and participation can create connection and belonging. Nicola is also Community Engagement Manager for Cast's 250-year heritage project, Doncaster on Stage. She has supported community participation in uncovering and sharing local heritage, particularly through the intergenerational work of Doncaster People's Theatre.



Maren Ellermann - Disruptor / Dreamer, Arts, Displacement and Mental Health Producer at Counterpoints Arts

I am a dancer turned cultural producer. I love creating and facilitating experiences that welcome people in and invite them to imagine more boldly. I'm drawn to the spaces where creativity, care, and social change meet and I work to honour and amplify stories that are often silenced, overlooked or edited out.

Art can shift how we understand ourselves and each other. It can soften what feels rigid, spark unexpected joy, and open cracks in systems that urgently need to change. Leading with empathy and curiosity, my practice centres communities not as participants but as leaders, dreamers, and co-creators.

At the heart of everything I do is a belief in the radical power of community, and a desire to create spaces where new worlds don't just feel possible, they begin to take shape.

IG: [@marenellermann](#)

Li: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/maren-ellermann/>



Professor Kevin Fenton is one of the United Kingdom's most influential public health leaders, whose career has been defined by a singular commitment to improving health, advancing equity, and strengthening systems that serve the most vulnerable in society. An internationally recognised epidemiologist and senior public health physician, he has shaped policy and practice at local, national and global levels, combining scientific rigour with moral clarity and decisive leadership.

As Regional Director of Public Health for London, Professor Fenton has led health improvement for one of the world's most complex and diverse cities. In this role, he serves as the statutory public health advisor to the Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority, guiding strategies that affect the lives of over nine million people. His leadership has been instrumental in tackling some of the most pressing challenges of our time, including cardiovascular disease, mental health, infectious diseases, air quality and the wider determinants of health. His work has positioned London as a global exemplar for urban public health innovation, partnership and delivery.



Darren Henley CBE is chief executive of Arts Council England. His boardroom experience spans the arts, media, education, charity and government. Previously managing director of Classic FM, he authored two independent government reviews into music and cultural education. After studying politics, management and art history, he trained as a positive psychologist and as a coach, completing a doctorate exploring how outsiders drive change. His book 'The Arts Dividend: How Investment in Culture Creates Happier Lives' champions happiness as a public policy goal and highlights the positive impact of public investment in artists, arts organisations, museums and libraries across England.

IMAGE CREDIT: Max Rose-Fyne



Jayne Howard is Head of Programmes at the National Centre for Creative Health and Founding Director of Arts Well CIC. With senior leadership experience spanning the NHS, public health, education and the VCFSE sector, including as Director of Public Health for Central Cornwall, she brings expertise in the national creative health landscape and its contribution to health and care system priorities. Over more than 20 years, she has led, advised on and championed creative health programmes, fostering collaboration across sectors to address health inequalities, improve wellbeing and strengthen prevention. Jayne is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, an Associate Member of the Royal Society of Public Health, a qualified workplace coach and mentor, Action Learning Facilitator, and collector of post-graduate qualifications with an MA in 20th Century Art and Design Theory and two Postgraduate Diplomas in English Literature and Professional Writing.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jayne-howard-4523993a3>



Khursheed Hussain is Collections Engagement Lead at the Prince Philip Maritime Collections Centre, part of Royal Museums Greenwich, where the museum's stores and conservation studios are based. She leads the engagement programme and develops partnerships that connect communities with the collections, creating opportunities for people to explore and engage with objects in meaningful ways. Her work focuses on object-based learning and the role that connection with museum collections can play in enriching people's experiences. A key part of her practice is making stored collections more accessible by bringing a variety of objects out of storage for people to encounter, question and interpret in their own way. Khursheed is particularly interested in how museum objects can contribute to people's wellbeing, and how collections can be used to support creativity, connection and a sense of belonging. Her work explores how museum stores can become more open, inclusive and relevant spaces for the communities they serve.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/khursheed-hussain-92b085168/>

IMAGE CREDIT: National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

COMMON GROUND

CHWA CONFERENCE 2026

7 - 9 OCTOBER BARNSELEY



Jasmine Kahlia is a unique trailblazer within the UK Arts Industry that has accomplished incredible things throughout her career within interdisciplinary arts. She's been platformed at: Wellcome Collection, National Maritime Museum, Southbank Centre, Rich Mix, INIVA, London Metropolitan Archives and many more across the UK. She has contributed significantly to the UK Arts Industry since 2016 through her stunning visual exhibitions and installations and has made critically acclaimed and daring work. Her practise spans 19 Art Disciplines and she is well-known for her exquisite live-looping and her best-selling literature pieces - namely "Evrythin is Temporary", which has been preserved and archived in many top UK institutions including Goldsmiths, Baltic Gateshead and UAL

www.jasminekahlia.com



Joachim Keke is a Nigerian-born multidisciplinary artist, choreographer, facilitator and creative researcher based in Bradford. Through dance, theatre and participatory practice, his work explores what people carry through their bodies—memory, care, identity, culture and belonging. Rooted in Afro-contemporary movement and lived experience, Joachim creates performances, workshops and participatory projects that bring people together through movement, storytelling and shared experience. He is interested in what we inherit from those who came before us, and how movement can help us remember, question and better understand ourselves and one another.

His practice spans performance, community engagement and interdisciplinary research, and has led to collaborations with Common Wealth Theatre, Yorkshire Dance, Theatre in the Mill, Bradford 2025 and the University of Leeds through Leeds Creative Labs. Whether performing, facilitating or collaborating with communities and researchers, Joachim sees movement as more than performance. For him, it is a way of listening, learning and discovering what we carry together.

www.joachimkeke.com

Instagram: @jojomanii

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/joachimkeke>



K.O.G. (Kweku of Ghana)

Kweku Sackey, aka K.O.G. (Kweku of Ghana), is a Ghanaian-born, Sheffield-based musician, singer, rapper, percussionist, songwriter and bandleader. His work brings together traditional Ghanaian rhythms with funk, reggae, hip-hop and electronic influences, creating a distinctive Afro-fusion sound. K.O.G. has performed internationally, including at major festivals such as Glastonbury, Reading and Leeds, and has performed in more than 15 countries. He is the frontman of K.O.G. and has previously led K.O.G. & the Zongo Brigade and the Afrofuturist project ONIPA. He is also a co-founder of Zongo Music, a collective working between Sheffield and Ghana.

His approach to music is particularly relevant to this Creative Health session. He describes music as something that can connect, revive, educate and entertain, with a focus on spiritual, physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. His performances combine rhythm, movement, storytelling and participation, making music a shared experience rather than simply something to watch. Born in Accra, Ghana, he has been based in Sheffield for more than a decade, with his music drawing on both Ghanaian traditions and a wide range of global influences.

Official website: www.iamkog.com



IMAGE CREDIT: EllyWel Photography

Helen Linsell is Artistic Director of Bradford-based charity Dance United Yorkshire and has over 20 years' experience using dance and creativity to improve physical and mental health, wellbeing and life opportunities for people facing significant social disadvantage. Since completing her Postgraduate Diploma in Community Dance at Laban in 2001, Helen has worked extensively with children, young people and adults experiencing multiple and complex challenges, including involvement in the criminal justice system, addiction and recovery, poor mental health, trauma, homelessness, domestic abuse, social isolation and poverty. She has led projects across the UK and internationally, including in South Africa, Namibia and Jamaica, and has developed a national reputation for creating ambitious, trauma-informed dance programmes that build confidence, resilience, connection and hope. Helen joined Dance United in 2007, becoming Artistic Director of Dance United Yorkshire in 2011. Her work champions the role of creativity as an essential part of improving health, supporting recovery and tackling inequality.

Instagram: @dance_united_yorkshire

Facebook: DUyorkshire

LinkedIn: helen Linsell



Douglas Noble is Strategic Director of MusicInHealth at Live Music Now UK. He leads the organisation's national programme of live music in health, community and care settings, cited in the 2023 Creative Health Review as a model of good practice. He regularly presents at events and conferences and gave expert evidence to the APPG on Arts Health and Wellbeing and contributes as a Strategic Alliance member with the Culture Health and Wellbeing Alliance. He was part of the **Live Music In Care Study** team with the University of Winchester and care providers. He also has a freelance consultancy practice with a range of organisations, including Drake Music, Hope on Prescription and Hear Me Out. He is a DJ and radio show host, with regular shows on Soul Roots Radio & Soundart Radio.



S. K. Marley (they/them) is a trans* non-binary creative facilitator, researcher and writer who explores hidden British prehistories in relation to trans rights. As an artist-in-residence for the **Queer Natures project** at the University of Exeter they have created Our Transcapes - a guided walk with storytelling about prehistory, followed by a creative workshop - aimed at improving transgender wellbeing. They'll be delivering a shorter version of this guided walk, and all participants are welcome! Come on a journey told through wood, bone and stone to understand how prehistoric Britain shows just how natural it is to live outside our current-day ideas of 'the norm', and how all of us belong here.

Instagram: @sk____Marley (that's four crazy underscores)

Website: skmarley.org.uk



Nzinga Mascall

I am a community wellbeing specialist and facilitator whose work is rooted in lived experience and the belief that community is our most transformative force. Raised in a Rastafarian household, I learned early that the village is everything care, resilience and healing are collective acts. This foundation shapes my commitment to creating circuits of care that honour heritage, nurture connection and strengthen wellbeing.

My practice centres on building environments where people feel held, heard and able to show up as their full selves. I bring a grounded, culturally rooted approach to community wellbeing, challenging systems that harm while nurturing practices that heal. I have a deep commitment to communal care, cultural continuity and radical hope. I truly believe we thrive when we take care of each other.

@Hopefulmessuk & LinkedIn - Nzinga Mascall



Rachel Massey is the South Yorkshire Creative Health Lead at the Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance. Rachel has over 20 years' experience of working in Creative Health as an artist, project coordinator and consultant. She previously led Yorkshire Sculpture Park's Art and Wellbeing programme and coordinated a county-wide creative health programme for Arts Derbyshire. She also worked in the health sector as a manager at Live Well Wakefield, a large-scale social prescribing programme. She joined Culture Health and Wellbeing Alliance in 2023 as their North Regional Lead. She also leads Other Ways to Walk, which she founded in 2016 to help people connect with nature using creative & mindful approaches.



Josie Moon is a community development worker based in Grimsby. In this role she is People and Place Lead for East Marsh United www.eastmarshunited.org. She shares a commitment with her wonderful team to work long term for social justice, challenging poverty and inequality through community led positive action, working alongside partners and organisations who are determined to make lasting, systemic change. She is also a writer and is interested in producing work that explores myth, place and the human condition. Over the past decade she has produced a range of work including plays for community theatre productions, three volumes of poetry, and a short film for a multimedia project working with artists, poets and filmmakers. She is currently working on a book about all things EMU and the possible future abandoned communities could have if there was greater vision, moral courage and a commitment to the principle of a decent life for all.

IMAGE CREDIT: Thom Bartley



Emmanuella Morsi (she/they) is an award-winning multi-disciplinary artist-producer, creative researcher and production manager delivering high-impact projects across the world. Founder of Studio Morsi and former Non-Exec Director of Rising Arts Agency, they predominantly work across various mediums. Whether it's developing the inclusive design framework Access As A Creative Tool or managing high-impact film productions with 6-figure budgets, Emmanuella is known for challenging approaches to inclusion and innovation in ways that amplifies marginalised voices – and most recently awarded 2025 Emerging Innovator at BEYOND (UKRI, British Council, Arts Council England)

IMAGE CREDIT: Tay Aziz-Malik



Dr Zoe Moula is a Lecturer in Mental Health at King's College London and the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Art Therapy. Her research advances interdisciplinary agendas across the fields of nature-based arts therapies, school and community health, and human and planetary health. Zoe is the Deputy Chair of the Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) - Arts, Health and Wellbeing Steering Committee and a co-founder of the Association for Outdoor Therapy in the UK. She is the Lead Editor of the UKRI/AHRC-funded and Routledge-commissioned open-access book titled Arts in Nature with Children and Young People: A Guide Towards Health Equality, Wellbeing, and Sustainability and a special issue on Nature-based Art Therapy. Zoe has also co-led the WHO policy brief on the Role of the arts and culture in addressing the health impacts of climate change.

LinkedIn: [Dr Zoe Moula](#)



William Nicholson - Northern Ireland Creative Health Network Convenor

An experienced Independent Arts, Health and Wellbeing Consultant deeply passionate about the role that arts, culture and creativity can play in improving people's health and wellbeing. Will initiated the Creative Health Network for Northern Ireland having established and experienced the benefits of similar initiatives in London and the other devolved nations in the UK. Will has been involved in a wide range of arts and health work from local to national level in the UK including; supporting the development of a Creative Health Toolkit for Integrated Care Systems for the UK National Centre for Creative Health, co-founding the Southwark Culture Health and Wellbeing Partnership, developing arts and health strategies for the Greater London Authority, Southwark Council and King's College London and facilitating a culture and social prescribing conference in partnership with King's College London and The Science Gallery and a Museum's and Mental Health event for the Baring's Foundation.

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/william-alexander-nicholson



Guy Noble, CMgr FCMI, has worked in the field of Arts and Health for over 25 years. In 1998 he set up Addenbrooke's Arts, the arts and health programme at Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Since 2005 he has worked as Arts Curator at UCLH NHS Foundation Trust and developed the arts programme into one of the country's flagship arts and health projects. In this role he has overseen the commissioning of art in six major capital hospital projects. He is currently in the process of establishing a NCCH creative health system lead post for North Central London.

Guy holds a Postgrad certificate in Arts Health and Wellbeing, a Postgraduate Diploma in Management Studies (Arts and Culture Senior Business Leader) and Level 7 Senior Leader Apprenticeship CMI and is currently completing an MBA in Senior Leadership.

He has won numerous awards for his work including the Building Better Health Care Award for Best Collaborative Art Project in 2016 and 2017. In 2024, with colleagues from NAHN won the RSPH Arts and health award for "Our National Health Stories." In 2011 he received the RSPH Arts and Health Award, Heritage in Hospitals, Special Commendation for an innovative and outstanding contribution to the field of arts and health research. Guy has provided his expertise to a number of other organisations, including as Art Advisor to Nuffield Health Cambridge, The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital Stanmore and the Yorkshire Eye Hospital, delivering their respective arts strategies.



Frances Northrop is Head of Community Economic Power at the New Economics Foundation, a director of Wards Corner CBS and a trustee of Annetta's Trust. She also co-founded Platform Places and Abundance. Frances specialises in how change is created through different means - culture, policy, practice and campaigning - and is experienced in all four areas.



Clive Parkinson, 1963-2026

Working across the NHS, higher education and the voluntary sector, Clive was one of the UK's leading voices in arts and health. After leaving school at 16, he attended Lancaster & Morecambe College before establishing an art studio for the residents of the Royal Albert, a large Victorian hospital for adults with learning disabilities. While there, he completed a part-time degree at Lancaster University, where his research focused on the relationship between creativity, culture, the arts and health. Clive led on mental health promotion for Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust and managed day services for people affected by addiction and schizophrenia in Morecambe and Lancaster. He later became director of the newly established Arts for Health Cornwall & Isles of Scilly, before a 20-year tenure at Manchester Metropolitan, where he convened the Manchester Institute for Arts, Health & Social Change and wrote several influential publications including the Manifesto for Arts & Health, the Recoverist Manifesto, The Manchester Declaration, and A Social Glue - his vision influencing the health agenda in Manchester and beyond. He worked with the All-party Parliamentary Group for Arts, Health and Wellbeing, and became closely involved in arts and health developments across the UK, Europe, Australia and Japan, including as a key partner in the foundation of the Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance. In 2018, he gained a doctorate by published work titled Social Justice, Inequalities, the Arts and Public Health: Weapons of Mass Happiness? In 2022, his vision and leadership was celebrated with an honorary chair in creative health and social change at the University of Manchester.

<https://cliveparkinson.org/>



Nancy Riach leads Arts Culture Health and Wellbeing Scotland (ACHWS), a national network that connects, advocates for, and supports those working at the intersection of arts, culture, health and wellbeing across Scotland. A specialist in marketing, communications and stakeholder management, Nancy brings over 30 years of experience spanning the full breadth of the arts and culture sector - from grassroots community practice to national companies and international festivals, including Scottish Ballet and the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo. She also sits on the National Centre for Creative Health Advisory Group, the Healing Arts Scotland Legacy Leadership Group, and the UK & Ireland Arts and Health Networks Forum.



Odeth Richardson is Head of Occupational Therapy at The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Chair of the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) Board. An experienced healthcare leader originally from Jamaica, she is passionate about enabling people and communities to live meaningful, connected, and fulfilling lives. Odeth champions the role of occupational therapy in creating healthier, more inclusive communities and has led equality, diversity, and inclusion initiatives at organisational, regional, and national levels. She works across health, social care, academia, and the voluntary sector, promoting collaboration and co-production to address health inequalities and improve wellbeing. Alongside her leadership roles, she supports a range of community and voluntary organisations, including The Angelou Centre and Northumbria Police. Her work is informed by a strong commitment to social justice, lived experience, and the belief that creativity, connection, and community are essential to helping people and places flourish.

My social media handles are **Odeth Richardson** on, **Facebook** and **Instagram**



Lucy Robertshaw is Director (Creative Health) at darts. darts is a participatory arts charity who create art with people in Doncaster to improve life, learning and health - www.wearedarts.org.uk. Lucy has over 25 years' experience of designing, delivering and evaluating Creative Health programmes. Lucy leads Doncaster's Creative Health Board and collaborates with cultural and health partners to work towards the vision of everyone in Doncaster being able to access participatory creative activities, resulting them in feeling happier, healthier and more resilient.

Lucy collaborates with academic research partners to evidence the impact of the work and to share learning regionally and nationally. She is the non-academic lead for the UKRI Creative Health Boards research programme - www.creativehealthboards.org.uk

Our socials are:

Facebook - @wearedarts

Instagram - @wearedarts

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John Rwothomack is an award-winning Ugandan-born, London-trained writer, director, and actor whose work has made a significant impact on both UK and international stages. As a playwright, he has been commissioned by Sheffield Theatres and English Touring Theatre and has received multiple accolades, including shortlistings for the Alfred Fagon Award for Play of the Year and The Sit Up Award, as well as being a recipient of the Peggy Ramsay Award and The African Impact Award for creativity. His plays, including *Lines*, *Never Look Back*, and *Far Gone*, have been performed in prestigious venues across the UK and toured the world. John wears the honour of being both the Artistic Director of Roots Mbili Theatre and the Director of Migration Matters Festival.



Elaine Ryan-McNeill

I am an arts-based health researcher with over 20 years of experience in co-production and creative health. I currently work on UCL's Mobilising Community Assets programme, leading co-produced research in Blackpool exploring creative health responses to the ketamine crisis and building the economic business case for creative health. Previously, I was a Research Fellow at Liverpool John Moores University on the NIHR-funded MARI (Maternal Alcohol Resources and Information) project, embedding lived experience and creative approaches into co-production. I also was delighted to take on the role of Creative Health Associate for the Northwest in 2022-2025. I am passionate about using creativity to reduce health inequalities and amplify community voices. Outside of work, you'll find me swimming lengths, dancing at local gigs, or laughing along to my favourite stand-up comedians.



Gurminder Sehint has dedicated over 40 years to the voluntary and community sector, supporting enterprise, employment, and community development. Beginning her career as a fashion designer more than 45 years ago, she forged a professional path at a time when educational and career opportunities for Asian women were often limited. She has led a Women's Enterprise Agency and helped many people move into self-employment. In 2010, while working at Birmingham City Council, she established Local Arts Forums in each Birmingham parliamentary constituency. Since 2016, she has served as a Director and Coordinator of No11 Arts, helping to guide its growth as the umbrella organisation for the Local Arts Forums.



IMAGE CREDIT: Felicity Cheshire

Hollie Smith-Charles began her arts career at Cheltenham Festivals, and has since had fundraising, producing and leadership roles with Birmingham Museums, Create Gloucestershire, Cause4's Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy, and Gloucester Culture Trust. This work fostered a particular interest in the potential of creativity and culture to tackle social inequalities and enable individuals and communities to thrive. Hollie joined Arts Council England in November 2022 as Director, Creative Health and Change. She leads the delivery of the Arts Council's Creative Health Plan, working with national and local colleagues to advocate for the role of the arts, museums and libraries in supporting health and wellbeing, building partnerships across health and social care, and supporting the skills, wellbeing and diversity of the artists and practitioners at the heart of this work. Hollie is a trustee of Villiers Park, a national social mobility charity and the Carducci Music Trust, a chamber music charity.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/hollie-smith-charles-b5870b6a/>



Emilie Taylor is a Researcher in Creative Health, an Art Psychotherapist (HCPC, BAAT), and an Artist with a socially engaged practice. Emilie is currently working with Sheffield Hallam University as part of the UKRI Mobilising Community Assets project 'Creative Health Boards', and as a Project Advisor as part of 'Digital Vernacular' with University of Sheffield and Reading University. Her previous research interests (and practice) include heritage crafts and their potential role in the contemporary urban landscape as part of individual and community recovery. Emilie's work forms part of public collections including Gallery Oldham, The Ruskin Collection (Museums Sheffield), The Williamson Birkenhead, Cartwright Hall Bradford and the V&A, London.

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Helen Todd

Helen loves creating spaces where people can think, plan and connect, and is increasingly convinced that working with nature helps fresh thinking unfurl. She's a certified International Forest Therapy Guide and founder of Unfurling, a practice offering nature-based facilitation, workshops and forest bathing. She works with organisations and teams on facilitation, strategy and change, with a particular interest in nature as inspiration for reflection, creativity and team development. Helen has over 20 years' experience in the charity and social enterprise sectors. She spent seven years as Executive Director of Art and Global Health Center Africa (ArtGlo) in Malawi, a charity using participatory arts to ignite social change. She's also worked with indigenous communities in the Amazon, on refugee community development programmes in the UK, and on humanitarian innovation at Start Network. Alongside Unfurling, she works part-time as Engagement and Impact Lead for sustainability charity Pure Leapfrog.

Website: www.unfurling.uk

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/helenannatodd/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/helenannatodd/>



Beth Vecchione is the Founder and CEO of Care to Dance, a national charity supporting care-experienced young people through trauma-informed dance communities. A qualified social worker, Beth combines social work and dance to create spaces where young people can build confidence, develop meaningful relationships and experience a genuine sense of belonging. Beth is undertaking a PhD at Newcastle University, researching the impact and meaning of trauma-informed dance for care-experienced young people. She regularly speaks at national conferences across the arts, health and social care sectors, advocating for relational, trauma-informed practice and the role of the arts in supporting children and young people. Beth is passionate about ensuring every care-experienced young person has access to creative communities where they can thrive.

<https://www.caretodance.co.uk>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/beth-vecchione>

https://www.instagram.com/care_to_dance/



CJ Lloyd Webley CJ Lloyd Webley BCaE is an award winning writer, founder and strategist working at the intersection of arts, culture, enterprise and community. As founder of Black Pounds Project, he has helped support over 1,500 businesses, while his wider work has created opportunities and pathways for young people to develop their skills, access creative industries and pursue their ambitions. He is also the founder of Indespoke and has established two retail and enterprise hubs across Birmingham and Solihull, creating thriving spaces for independent businesses and communities.

An accomplished playwright and theatre maker, CJ has worked with organisations including the Royal Shakespeare Company, Birmingham Repertory Theatre and Midlands Arts Centre. His contributions have earned national recognition, including the British Citizen Award and a Points of Light Award from 10 Downing Street. Across his work, CJ is interested in how culture, creativity and community can move beyond inspiration to create lasting opportunities, spaces and pathways for people to thrive.



Cedric Whilby works across Creative Health, health inequalities, neighbourhood development and community-led systems change in Southwark and across South East London (Creative Health & Community Partnerships Lead). He has worked extensively at the intersection of the NHS, local government, voluntary and community organisations, cultural partners and local communities, with a particular interest in how trusted community relationships and creative practice can contribute to prevention, health equity and stronger neighbourhoods. Cedric has contributed to London and national Creative Health programmes, including the development of the Creative Health Commissioning Toolkit and London Creative Health City: Building It Together. His work in Southwark has focused on strengthening the role of the VCSE sector and communities within health and care partnerships, while championing greater equity, representation and shared power. He is particularly interested in moving Creative Health from the margins into the everyday infrastructure of healthier places.

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Jane Willis (Coach and Reflective Leadership Facilitator) has worked across arts, culture, health and academia for over 30 years. Through coaching, reflective writing and leadership programmes, she helps thoughtful people navigate complexity and change with clarity, courage and integrity. She began her career in creative health as Director of Arts at Barts Health NHS Trust, before founding the arts and health consultancy Willis Newson. She has worked with more than 30 NHS trusts nationwide, alongside developing national research, tools and frameworks. These include the Creative Health Quality Framework, the Creative Health Impact Framework, and the National Arts in Hospitals Guidance. Today, Jane supports leaders and practitioners to reflect, learn and grow – and become who they need to be to create lasting change.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jane-willis/>

Instagram – Jane_willis_bristol



Sharon Wilson is a Senior BAME Support Worker with Changing Lives in Doncaster, working through the organisation's Women's Centre and Community Hub. She has spoken publicly about her work supporting women and families in Doncaster, particularly around building trusting relationships, solidarity and connection. Her work developed significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic, when she supported women and children experiencing isolation and difficulties accessing essential support. She continued this work by building relationships with women attending the centre and helping people overcome barriers to accessing support.

Sharon's work involves supporting men seeking sanctuary in the City and providing support, care, opportunities and chances for people to thrive. Her role in Citizens of the World brings an important community and pastoral perspective to the creative work, helping to connect the artistic activity with the lived experiences of people seeking sanctuary in Doncaster. Sharon has also supported Cast's wider work around migration and community connection, including the Rethinking Migration project, alongside Nicola Doyle and other local partners.

www.changing-lives.org.uk



Anna Woolf FRSA is CEO of London Arts and Health. Drawing on her own experience of birth trauma, she has led creative projects with UCH maternity services and other partners exploring maternal health through poetry and storytelling. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, a member of the Royal Society of Public Health, and a trustee for the National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society and Clod Ensemble's Performing Medicine programme. Previously a freelance lecturer at RCSSD for over fourteen years, Anna has driven LAH's work on cultural social prescribing and sector diversification, leading initiatives including the Artists' Represent Recovery Network, ARCH, and Creativity and Wellbeing Week.

<https://londonartsandhealth.org.uk>

Insta/LinkedIn @londonartsandhealth



Elnaz Yazdani is an embroidery artist, gardener and educator based in Yorkshire. Elnaz is dedicated to sharing her textile skills and promoting the importance of embroidery as an art form for the future and for community wellbeing. She has taught embroidery throughout her community, within primary, secondary and higher education as well as community groups and organisations. In 2020 Elnaz was commended for the teaching excellence award in embroidery via the Embroiderers Guild and became an Embroiderers Guild Scholar after the successful launch of her virtual embroidery school 'Embroider Your Future'. In 2025 she was awarded a Master of Arts by Research in recognition of a programme of work entitled 'Rethinking Embroidery: Connecting, Embellishing and Transforming Communities Through Embroidery'.

Instagram: @Elnazyazdani