



# MCR. Culture Awards 2023



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# Foreword




**Councillor Luthfur Rahman OBE**  
**Deputy leader,**  
**Manchester City Council**

Welcome to the 2023 Manchester Culture Awards. With nearly 400 nominations, competition for the awards was of a very high calibre again this year. Congratulations to all the finalists, and my thanks to our supporters and sponsors. This is our fifth awards event and, as ever, it is a joy to bring together such a diverse range of organisations and people from across the city – all delivering valuable work that enables culture and creativity to entertain and surprise, discover and develop talent, and connect with people.


While it continues to be a challenging time for cultural

organisations and groups, your staff, artists, volunteers, audiences and our communities, this year there is also a renewed sense of commitment to engage, collaborate and make an impact. We will see this in the new ten-year cultural strategy for the city, which I will be launching next year. I hope you've all been able to contribute to the consultation and you'll have a part to play in delivering it for the future.

You can still take part in the consultation by completing the survey online at [www.startwithaspark.co.uk](http://www.startwithaspark.co.uk)



We know from the conversations we've had that culture, creativity and art are important to people in Manchester. Important, because they bring them happiness, improve



their wellbeing, and are part of their social lives, their learning and their inspiration. People also want more, closer to where they live, at affordable prices and more often. I am sure that, together, we can make it happen.

Thank you to everyone for the contribution you make to arts, culture and heritage in the many

forms and ways it takes place in Manchester. I hope you all have a great night.

Don't forget to shout about all the achievements we'll hear of tonight.

**#McrCultureAwards**





# Your Host

## Annabel Tiffin



Annabel Tiffin is the Political Editor for the BBC in the North West, as well as a presenter of BBC North West Tonight and Politics North West.

She has worked for the BBC since 2003 and has reported on all the major events in the region since then, including the Manchester Arena bombing and the Hillsborough Independent Inquiry.

Annabel, and the programmes she presented, have been nominated for and won several Royal Television Society awards, and have also been awarded two Bafta nominations.

She is an ambassador for the Dianne Oxberry Trust – a charity set up in memory of her friend and colleague who died from ovarian cancer.

In 2022 Annabel was awarded an honorary doctorate for services to the arts by Bolton University.

## Co-hosts

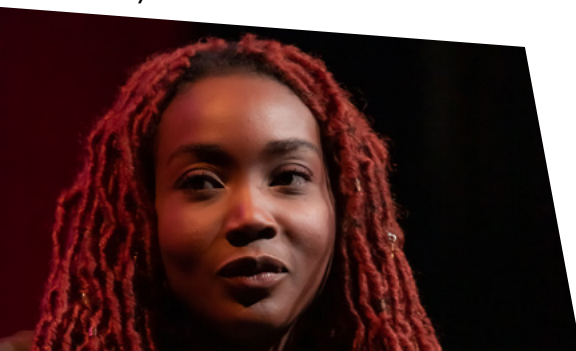
### Princess Arinola Adegbite

Princess Arinola Adegbite is a filmmaker and poet from Manchester. She is funded by, Factory International, Youth Music and the MOBO Help Musicians fund artist and filmmaker from Manchester. Princess, also known as Bitez is a member of Young Identity and The Writing Squad. She was a winner of Slambassadors and BBC Words First 2020. She was also a Slam-O-Vision Manchester Champion 2021, and Manchester Young Creative of The Year 2021. In 2023 Bitez was selected as an Apple and Snakes Future Voices artist and her in-progress poetry collection 'Algorithms of Meaning' won an Eric Gregory Award from the Society of Authors.



### Boshra Ghgam

Boshra is a talented freelance artist and host who is passionate about promoting underrepresented talent in Manchester. As the host of a spoken word poetry show, Boshra provides a platform for emerging poets to showcase their work and connect with audiences. She also works as a creative, theatre, public-speaking, and inclusion workshop facilitator who believes in the power of creativity to raise awareness about important subjects.



### Aimee Swann

Aimee is 19 years old and commutes to Manchester from Stoke-on-Trent four days a week to chase her dream of becoming an actress/director. Acting has always been her passion from a young age, when she fell in love with the stage and the camera. When she was 15, Aimee's passion grew stronger and she spent a year training at the LCA film school in Lichfield. Then at 17 she found The Manchester College, where she is currently training in acting for stage and screen and benefiting from amazing industry links and tutors.

Alongside Aimee's passion for acting is her love of music and theatre. She started very young in musicals, such as Little Shop of Horrors, Grease, and Annie at High School. Performing has been a lifelong passion and she loves nothing more than creativity.



# Judges



## Councillor Luthfur Rahman OBE

Councillor Luthfur Rahman OBE, Deputy Leader of Manchester City Council, is a strong advocate for the role of culture in the development of the city and believes that all members of the community should be able to participate in the broadest range of cultural activities.



## Jackie Kay

Jackie Kay was born and raised in Scotland. She is the author of several books, including *The Adoption Papers*, which won the Forward Prize; *Red Dust Road*, winner of the Scottish Book of the Year Award; *Trumpet*; and *Fiere*, which was short-listed for the Costa Book Awards. She was the third Makar, or National Poet for Scotland (2016–2021). Jackie is also a Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Salford.

## John Rooney

Originally from Belfast, John has lived and worked in Greater Manchester since 1990. He has vast experience of working in local government with partners and communities to transform services and neighbourhoods. As Director of Neighbourhood Delivery at Manchester City Council, John is responsible for a number of operational and people-focused services, including overseeing Libraries, Galleries, Culture, Events, Leisure, Parks and Youth.

He is also a Board member of Manchester Concert Hall Limited and Central Library Development Trust. John has always been a strong advocate for the role that culture plays in communities, improving wellbeing and supporting the visitor economy. John says: "It was an absolute privilege to be invited onto the judging panel and to review such high-quality submissions across all the categories."



# Judges

## Yandass

Yandass is the Artistic Director of I M Pact Collective and winner of the Young Creative of the Year at the 2022 Manchester Culture Awards. She received a first class honours degree in Dance and Performance at Arden School of Theatre and spent three years with the Royal Exchange Young Company. I M Pact was established in December 2020 as a Manchester collective of dance artists. Its first project brought together 40 dancers during lockdown to take over eight theatres, including The Lowry, Manchester Opera House and HOME, for a short film with a feature on BBC north west news. Yandass has wide-ranging experience across many cultural organisations as movement director, choreographer, actor and dancer.

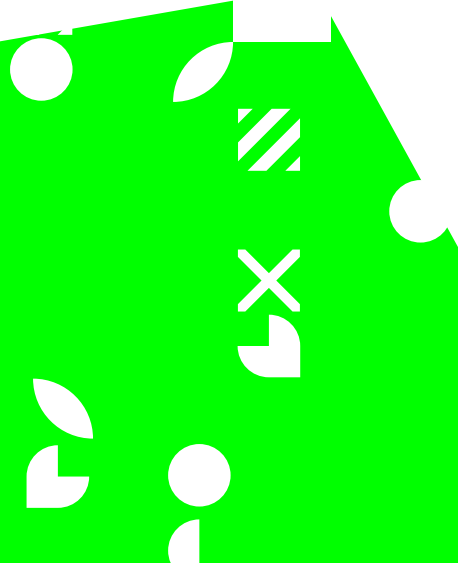
Her work has been seen at the Royal Exchange, HOME, Hope Mill Theatre, Contact, and MIF, as well as more broadly at The Old Vic, World Health Organization, the Lyric Hammersmith, and Festival Number 6. TV credits include random acts for Channel 4 and The X Factor.



## Judges

### Pete Courtie

Pete joined Arts Council England in March 2019. In his role as Senior Relationship Manager, he co-ordinates the organisation's relationships with councils across Greater Manchester and is the lead SRM for Theatre across the North. Before joining ACE, he worked in senior leadership roles in a number of councils and cultural organisations. These include Islington Council, where he was Head of Partnerships, Place and Culture; Insomniac Productions; and Bernie Grant Arts Centre in Tottenham, North London.





# Best Business Partnership

## The Modernist Society and BDP Architects

BDP hosted six talks on post-war architecture, attracting over 450 people. The talks were organised by The Modernist Society, and by offering a large, fully equipped and accessible venue, BDP enabled The Modernist Society to reach larger audiences, and helped encourage the participation of nationally recognised speakers.



## The Bruntwood Prize for Playwriting

The result of the longstanding, visionary partnership between property company Bruntwood and the Royal Exchange Theatre. The partnership's first principle is that anyone can be creative and should have access to the power of storytelling. Since 2005, the Prize has received over 15,000 plays and supported 27 productions of new work.



# Best Business Partnership

## The Whitworth and Pentagon Play

Every summer holidays The Whitworth's PLAYTIME programme invites the surrounding community to explore the art of play with a range of free activities designed for all ages. Since 2019, Pentagon Play have supported this programme by donating play equipment. This four-year partnership has supported engagement with 45,583 families.



## Levenshulme Neighbourhood Team and Heart Murals with Rosgal Ltd

The Levenshulme Art Trail was a community vision brought to life by Levenshulme Neighbourhood Team and Heart Murals. The trail uses street art to improve community cohesion, promote biodiversity and add vibrancy across the neighbourhood. Rosgal Ltd have provided essential equipment and support to ensure the project's success. The project has brought and continues to bring the community, statutory services and private businesses together to achieve amazing outcomes.

## Best Business Partnership

### The Siemens Hallé International Conductors Competition

In March 2023, the finals of the second SHICC took place at The Bridgewater Hall. Now a well-respected international event, SHICC attracted 205 worldwide applications. A shortlist of eight conductors competed in the three-day final, and Euan Shields was the eventual winner.



# Promotion of Culture and Education



## Small Voices

### Art with Heart

A special episode of Art with Heart's podcast, Box Tickers, centred on children's equality. It involved creative-writing workshops and discussions about equality, as well as teacher training, an education pack with further lesson plans, and a citywide campaign broadcasting the students' words on 100 billboards.



## Pushing Boundaries

### Community Arts North West and Curious Minds

A training programme for migrant artists, including refugees, to deliver creative projects in primary and secondary schools. The project included mentoring from an established artist, and a school placement. It increased employment skills for the artists and promoted intercultural learning in the classroom. Through new networks, employment opportunities are being created.

# Promotion of Culture and Education

## Youth Pride MCR

Manchester Pride run monthly workshops, where LGBTQ+ young people and their allies aged 14–18 get together. These sessions help participants develop skills, make friends, and explore diverse identities in a safe space. Regular participants that contributed to the Manchester Pride Festival programme included Youth Pride MCR, who performed on stage.



## Touching Perspectives

### Manchester Museum and The Grange School

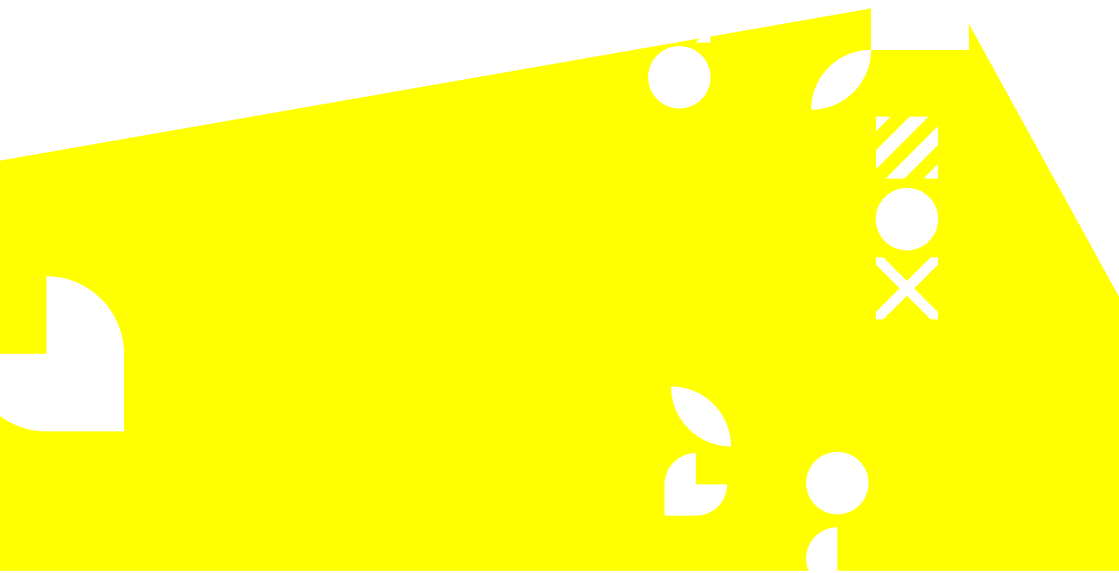
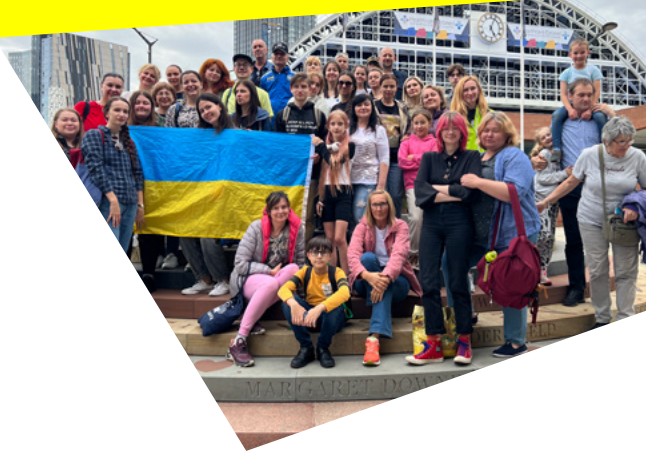
A collaboration between Manchester Museum staff and neurodivergent students from The Grange School to co-curate content for three tactile interactives of Ancient Egyptian objects displayed in the galleries. Students worked with staff for over 12 months to learn about the museum and its objects to create their interpretation.



# Promotion of Culture and Education

## All4Ukraine

All4Ukraine collaborates with Free Manchester Walking Tours to offer Ukrainian refugees free walking tours of Manchester with guidance in their mother tongue. The tours help Ukrainians to learn the history of their new home, meet other Ukrainians, and educate and reduce social isolation.



# Best Performance

## St John Passion Manchester Baroque and Manchester Cathedral

In April 2022, Manchester Baroque and Manchester Cathedral Choir gave a performance of Bach's St John Passion in support of UK-Med's efforts in Ukraine. The concert, which raised £15,000, was attended by many recent refugees and included the Ukrainian national anthem and performances by Manchester's Ukrainian Svitoch Choir.



## Cinderella

### Hope Mill Theatre

The UK premiere of Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella the musical received a string of 5-star reviews, the MEN describing it as 'the hottest ticket in town'. The cast featured West End stars alongside newly graduated talent, and Hope Mill Theatre gave away 1,000 free tickets to children across Greater Manchester.





## Grandad Anansi

### Z-arts

Grandad Anansi is a humorous and heartfelt intergenerational adventure, developed in collaboration with elders and children from the Hulme community. It's a play for children aged 4–9 that addresses some of the issues the Windrush generation and its descendants are facing, written by a first-time playwright, Elayne Ogbeta. The play toured locally across the Big Imaginations network and nationally, and a further tour in 2024/25 is being planned.



## Leonard Bernstein's Mass

### RNCM and Chetham's School of Music

A performance of Bernstein's rarely performed Mass. Blurring lines between classical and popular music, it involves a jazz and pop band, a street choir, 250 student musicians from the RNCM, and young singers from Chetham's School of Music to form 'a stunning, emotional performance – something truly special and completely memorable'.

# Best Performance

## 12 Last Songs

### Quarantine

Part-performance, part-exhibition of people, 12 Last Songs ran from midday to midnight at HOME.

Responding to a text of 600 questions, 31 local workers talked about and demonstrated their work, describing how they see the world.

Quarantine's unique work over 25 years created a mass portrait of people and places.





# Promotion of Equality and Social Justice

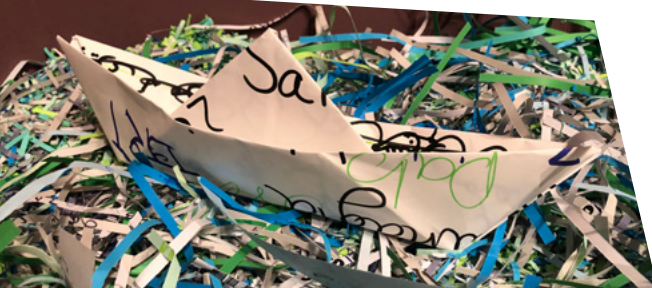
## Stanley Grove Primary Academy

A multistage project, Happy, Safe and Free involved over 10,000 young people creating paper artwork to express what these words meant to them. The artworks were then shredded to symbolise loss. Refugees also made paper boats that sailed on a shredded paper 'sea'. Finally, the shredded artworks were turned into papier mâché bowls that were hand-painted by refugees. The bowls were later exhibited before being sold.



## Amber Stother

As an outstanding advocate for autism, Amber's goal is to elevate the understanding of organisations across Manchester. She champions the inclusion and employment of neurodiverse individuals, and is determined to create conversation and opportunities for more autistic people to share their voice and skills.



# Promotion of Equality and Social Justice

## Voices of Hope Olympias Music Foundation

Voices of Hope is a choir for female refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, which improves mental health and builds self-esteem among diverse women. Voices of Hope performed at the reopening event at Manchester Museum, singing Farsi, English and Portuguese songs learnt from the group's native speakers, as well as the self-penned song, Freedom.



## GFF Damian Dance Studio

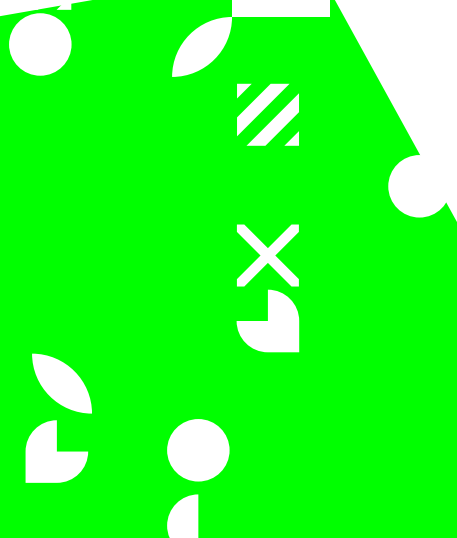
GFF Damian Dance Studio embody equality and diversity, as well as inclusion. Their dance classes encourage people of any age, race, sexuality, and body type to feel welcome and get involved. Each year they host two events where performers are able to express their art in a comfortable space. They also work with a wide range of local charities to help raise funds and awareness.

# Promotion of Equality and Social Justice

## In Our Words

### Odd Arts, Hideaway and 84YOUTH

In Our Words provides creative opportunities and platforms for residents in Moss Side and Hulme so they can speak on the things that matter to them. It is run by Odd Arts (theatre charity), Hideaway (Moss Side youth project that's over 50 years old) and 84YOUTH (focused on serious youth violence and state violence).



# Young Creative of the Year

## Fehintola Charis Obisesan

Fehintola is a key member of the Royal Northern College of Music's Young Artists programme. As well as being a talented and dedicated musician herself, Fehintola also regularly attends workshops to mentor and support younger peers in years 7–9, encouraging them to be more confident in their musical skills.



## Sally Hirst

Sally is a Venture Arts studio artist, mentor and advocate who has exhibited widely across the city. She is currently developing her socially engaged practice at the Whitworth, running workshops and creating work in their School of Creativity. She is a change-maker and is instrumental in helping the cultural sector understand the importance of working with learning-disabled artists.

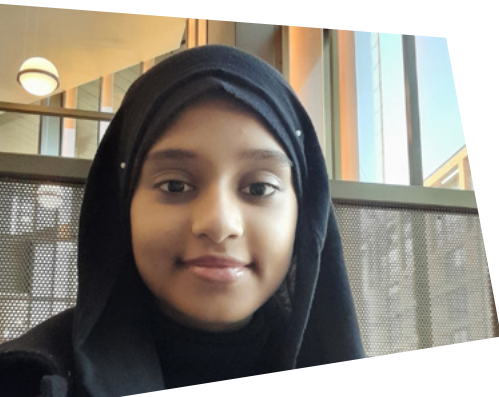


## Young Creative of the Year



### Binish Syed Qureshi

Binish is a committed member of the MADE Creative Influencer youth voice group. A confident, hardworking artist with unique ideas, she makes the case for young people to be heard and not ignored! With maturity beyond her years, she has the curiosity and artistry that makes her an inspirational young Manchester creative.



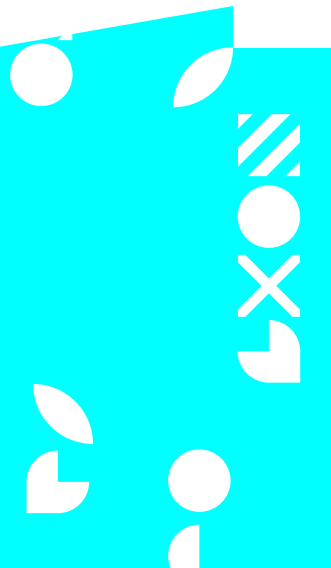
### Tashan Biggs

Having had no previous engagement with arts venues, Tashan joined a DIY film-making course at HOME and made a film that was shown at Showroom in Sheffield. After gaining a place on HOME's BFI Film Academy, he made a short film with other young people. Tashan tried directing, assistant-directing, camera-operating and writing throughout the course. He then gained a place on HOME's Young Film Collective and the BFI Residential course at the National Film and Television School. Tashan is passionate about exploring black stories in the horror genre, being inspired by his own lived experience.

# Young Creative of the Year

## Yelena Lashimba

Project Manager for HERchester, Reform Radio's all-female and non-binary rap project, Yelena is a role model and facilitator at the station. She presents the breakfast show The Get Up, is a member of rock-rap band Third Kulture, and is a successful DJ, performing at We Out Here, Parklife and SFTOC.





# Made in Manchester

## Cold Chips and Pick N Mix by Sonia Jalay

### Royal Exchange Theatre

Cold Chips and Pick N Mix was a play co-designed through workshops with residents sharing stories of Cheetham Hill and Crumpsall. Manchester playwright Sonia Jalay led these workshops to create the script that was performed three times at the Den Festival by local residents.



### SEEN

A Manchester-based music magazine and platform, created by global majority and marginalised people archiving sonics, stories and scenes. Within 12 months of being launched, SEEN have worked with Bound Art Book Fair at The Whitworth, Longsight Art Space, Manchester Museum, The South Asia Gallery, Factory International, Dialled In, and Platt Hall.





## TiPP

TiPP provided creative sessions for Manchester Youth Justice Service, allowing some of Manchester's most underserved young people to make music, gain confidence and elevate their voice. New tracks were created and performed live at Andy Burnham's launch of the Bee Connected app for care leavers.



Art Assembly 2022  
Castlefield  
Gallery with  
the Art Fund,  
HOME, Manchester  
Art Gallery,  
The Manchester  
College and  
The Whitworth.

Reimagining the city as an art school, Art Assembly showcased ambitious commissions throughout the city, co-designed by artists and 148 learners. The one-day festival demonstrated that anywhere can become a site for creative learning. Its authentic 'made in Manchester' appeal inspired 80% of visitors to state their experience made them want 'to participate in more arts and cultural activities'.



Made in Manchester

## The Manchester Multilingual City Poets

The three Multilingual City Poets create poems celebrating Manchester events in Urdu, Arabic, Spanish and English. Each poem is deeply rooted in the city and brought to local communities and international audiences. The City Poets have created work spotlighting World Poetry Day, Festival of Libraries and Manchester Literature Festival.



# Promotion of Environmental Sustainability

## The History of Climate Change Manchester Histories Festival 2022

Manchester Histories Festival events widened access to cultural and heritage activities and encouraged people to take climate-based action. The 2022 festival attracted over 22,000 people.

One attendee remarked: “What a great festival. The creative pieces of work opened my eyes to see things about the history of climate change more clearly. A brilliant way to get a message across!”





## Castlefield Viaduct

### The National Trust

The National Trust opened Castlefield Viaduct in July 2022, reimagined as an iconic urban 'park in the sky' – a free-to-access, high-quality green space for city residents and workers. A pilot scheme, testing ideas, gathering data and convening multiple partners, the ultimate goal is to secure the Viaduct's permanent green future.



### Brigitte Jurack *Fieldnotes* at HOME

Fieldnotes, by artist, maker, educator and climate activist Brigitte Jurack, brought together new sculpture, performance photography, drawings and writing, as well as an invitation to gallery visitors to participate. It expressed a reverence for the natural world, while exploring disparate issues around climate change, geological time, and political and economic conflict. This powerful, sensitive and poetic exhibition urged us to consider our individual relationship with the environment, our wellbeing and one another.

The exhibition was produced by HOME with Manchester Metropolitan University.

# Promotion of Environmental Sustainability



## The Young Carers Fashion Extravaganza

### The Moss Side Powerhouse

A fantastic sustainable upcycled fashion show dedicated to and created by the city's young carers and community groups, hosted by the Moss Side Powerhouse.

## Reform Radio

Reform Radio continue to champion environmentally sustainable practice across the cultural sector in Manchester and beyond. This year, along with many other carbon-saving actions, they have become an accredited Carbon Literacy trainer and have delivered a programme of funded training supporting other creative organisations and freelancers to make positive changes.



# Promotion of Health and Wellbeing

## CDM UK

A social enterprise based in a textile mill in Ardwick, CDM UK is a treasure trove of materials and equipment offering inspiring fashion and textile activities. Promoting self-employment, it provides holistic support for vulnerable women working together creatively, delivering textile manufacturing skills, training and advice on health and wellbeing.



## Art of Resilience Manchester Art Gallery

Manchester Art Gallery and Manchester Population Health have teamed up with artist Sam Owen Hull to share expertise and develop a new model of activity that uses creativity and compassion to support the long-term wellbeing of Manchester's children. Artists work with small groups of pupils, who are encouraged to be playful and find a sense of self in the world.



## Promotion of Health and Wellbeing

### The Great Northern Contemporary Craft Fair and The Oasis Centre

Oasis wanted to celebrate their diverse and inclusive community by partnering with the Great Northern Contemporary Craft Fair to create a craft installation to display in their new building in Gorton. Taking place in June 2022, the process had to be simple enough for everyone to participate, and the finished piece had to be beautiful and something the Oasis community could take great pride in. Each of the 142 participants made a ceramic tile of their own design, to contribute to a large mosaic in the shape of a honeycomb – a metaphor for the supportive, loving community that is Oasis.



### String of Hearts

String of Hearts connect isolated older adults through music. In partnership with Wythenshawe Good Neighbours, their Jubilee Journeys songwriting and oral histories project saw 85 older Wythenshawe residents get together to explore their creativity, memories, and journeys to Manchester. Ninety per cent of them reported increased social connections as a result.



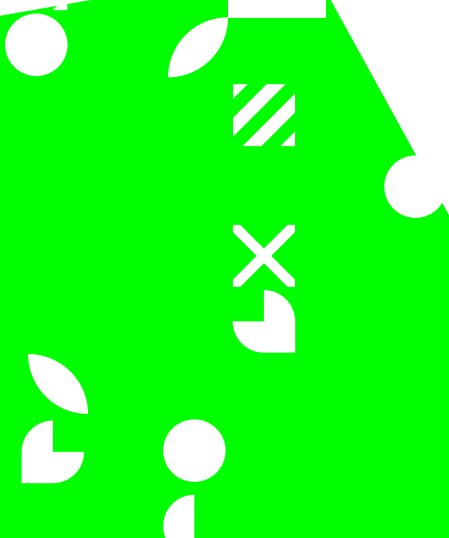


# Promotion of Health and Wellbeing

## Create+

## Lime Arts

Create+ is the first health staff arts referral programme of its kind in the UK. Delivered from the hospital-based, purpose-built Lime Arts Studio, NHS front-line staff from Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust who were off sick, on phased return, or at risk of going off sick with stress, burnout or anxiety could attend a six-week workshop programme with professional artists. Its purpose was to use creativity as a therapeutic intervention to support staff back into work or prevent them taking time off because of illness.



# Manchester People's Culture Award

## Qaisra Shahraz MBE

Qaisra Shahraz MBE JP FRSA, is a critically acclaimed novelist, culture champion, educationalist, and award-winning peace/gender activist. Her initiative MACFEST is a groundbreaking festival that connects communities, tackles Islamophobia, and breaks down barriers. Qaisra's lifelong passion is championing women, community cohesion and building intercultural bridges via literature. Her work is recognised as making a huge difference to society.



## Rod Kippen

Rod Kippen serves as the Creative Producer at The Horsfall Gallery and Creative Space, a part of the mental health charity 42nd Street. Throughout his 25-year-long career he has been dedicated to advocating for young people's rights. Rod has held various roles within local authority services and charities, including youth justice, children's rights and advocacy, and promoting youth voice and participation. Complemented by his artistic background, creativity has been a central theme throughout Rod's career.



## Fly on the Wall Press

### Isabelle Kenyon

Run by Isabelle Kenyon, Fly on the Wall Press is a socially conscious publisher of political fiction and poetry. It publishes 12–18 books each year, Isabelle doing everything from editing to cover design and marketing. She also runs the Northern Publishers' Fair, which redresses the London-centric narrative of publishing.



### Dympna Gould

Dympna's love for the city is infectious. As well as leading programming at the new urban green space, Castlefield Viaduct, she has developed cultural activity in the north of the city, engaging visitors at Manchester Cathedral and Elizabeth Gaskell's House. Dympna also helped to develop Bee in the City and the Bloomtown trail, which encouraged people to discover the joy of blossom in the city.





## Young Identity

Young Identity empower marginalised communities to be included in the cultural arts. They advocate for inclusion, from publication to performance in poetry and literature. Their creative workshops with industry professionals allow young people to see themselves as creatives and professionals. Young Identity deliver workshops in schools and contribute to the poetry curriculum.

## MM Jazz

MM Jazz bring the joy of dance into the heart of Manchester. They have nurtured a beautiful community of dancers and artists within the city, from those still training, to working professionals and everyone in between. Their passion for building confidence, self-acceptance and love through dance in the community is unmatched. It's a true example of what initiative, hard work and determination can achieve.



## Alex Reuben

### Contemporary Six

Alex is an inspiring art gallery owner with an ambitious approach to running Contemporary Six. The Gallery raises the profile of emerging artists through open calls, exhibiting and supporting local artists and bringing modern masters such as Lowry and Henry Moore to a Manchester audience.



## Keisha Thompson

### Contact

Keisha Thompson is the youngest CEO to run Contact in Manchester. She brings her energy, integrity and inspirational leadership to Contact at this immensely challenging time for the cultural sector. As well as being a multidisciplinary artist, she has a wealth of expertise as an advocate for change in the arts sector. Keisha is also proud to be the first woman, first Mancunian and first person from the Afro-Caribbean community to take up this post.



# Promotion of Talent and Leadership

## Factory Sounds

### Factory International

Factory International's talent-development Factory Sounds programme targets those in Manchester's music scene to help them create new work and develop their creative practice. Successful applicants are offered £1,000 of financial support towards the creation of a new project. They also benefit from peer-to-peer support, access to further Factory International talent development programmes and networking opportunities.



## Flux

### Manchester Literature Festival's Young Producers

A talent-development project that culminated in Flux – a lively night of storytelling, music, spoken word and live projection at Contact. This was curated and produced by Camila Florencia Rusailah, Rohit Ghosh, Joe Hair, Ben Kendrick, Ruth O'Sullivan, Ruby Opalka, Dorcas Seb, Alice Skelly and Eddie Toomer-McAlpine, and supported by Kate Bradnam and Miriam Wild.



# Promotion of Talent and Leadership



## Soundcamp

### Reform Radio

Delivered in partnership with TPG and funded by Youth Music, Soundcamp is a free alternative music provision for 16 to 25-year-olds from underrepresented groups. Providing a vital space for nurturing talent and leadership skills within the music industry, it brings industry experts, artists, and labels together to share learning.

## Chair Development Programme

### Z-arts

An innovative chair-development programme involving five trustees from diverse backgrounds underrepresented in arts leadership. It includes online learning, conferences, mentoring, and meeting chairs from other arts centres.

Z-arts has recruited two participants as co-chairs, successfully diversifying the leadership. This has been shared in the wider industry.



# Promotion of Talent and Leadership

## Developing Diverse Young Leaders

### Afrocats

Afrocats worked with diverse artists and leaders to build talent, confidence, and leadership skills in young people. The workshops helped the young people find their voice and develop their creative talents, while learning about culture, representation and heritage.





# Independent Creative

Leslie Thompson

Venture Arts

Leslie Thompson is a ground-breaking artist based at Venture Arts studio.

For his show at PAPER Gallery, My New Favourite Shop, Leslie made detailed depictions of people who are important to him, including his brother who died tragically in the 80s, Donna Summer, and Elvis – both poignant and personal.

For the coronation of King Charles, the Government Art Collection commissioned Leslie to create new work, making him one of the UK's leading artists working today.



A Bouffon Play  
About Hong Kong

Isabella Leung

Isabella Leung, an important emerging playwright, involved Manchester-based Hong Kongers in the production of her bouffon-style play at HOME. The play explores the nuances of Hong Kong's cultural identity, history, and current sociopolitical climate. It received high praise for its ability to tackle complex issues with creativity and thoughtfulness.





## Jackie Bailey

### Community Champion for Manchester UNESCO City of Literature

For over twenty years, Jackie Bailey has delivered pioneering community-led work that supports participants to benefit from improved health and wellbeing. She started Sistas G.A.L! (Get Active with Literature) in 2007, is a Manchester City of Literature Community Champion, and the lead for NHS Windrush Stories (MMU). For this, Jackie worked with 25 participants with little or no prior creative experience to tell their Windrush stories in writing and through photography and film.



## Abel Selaocoe

Abel Selaocoe is a South African-born cellist and composer based in Withington. He has collaborated widely with Manchester-based artists, including Keisha Thompson, Alan Keary, Kabantu and Manchester Collective. Abel is passionate about widening opportunities for young people and provides free tickets to his concerts for children from Olympias Music Foundation.



# Independent Creative

## Mary Burke

Mary Burke, a community artist from Crumpsall and an ambassador with the Royal Exchange, was instrumental in the creation of the M8 Den Festival at the Ukrainian Centre. She organised workshops, hosted events, and encouraged the community to be involved. She also sketches and documents the area, giving voice and platform to an often unseen and heard area of Manchester.



Mary has her own remarkable story: a stroke in 2017 meant she had to leave her career as a mental health nurse, and as part of her recovery she utilised her skills to become an illustrator, urban sketcher and community artist.



# Best Event

## SICK! Festival

The month-long SICK! Festival is an arts and health event that gets people talking about what makes us feel good, and what makes us feel not so good. In 2022, SICK! made a ten-year+ commitment to work with the communities of Moston, Harpurhey and Charlestown, presenting local and international artists, poets, theatre-makers, musicians and multimedia designers across Greater Manchester.



## Black Gold Arts x Whitworth Takeover

In August 2022, Black Gold Arts x Whitworth Takeover was a free outdoor music and arts festival. It was organised by LGBTIQA+ Global Majority artists and allies serving the best live music, catwalk extravaganzas, DJs, strollers, dance, fashion and street food! Think of your favourite outdoor festival, and then make it more fabulous.



## Best Event

### Manchester Pride Festival

An annual landmark event celebrating queer people, culture and expression. It's full of free and ticketed events, such as the Parade, the Gay Village Party, Superbia Weekend, Youth Pride MCR, Family Pride MCR and the Candlelit Vigil.

The ultimate LGBTQ+ celebration, the festival provides space for queer people and allies to find joy, experience queer arts and culture, protest, and reflect on those lost to HIV/AIDS and the other plights that affect LGBTQ+ communities.



### THE DEN IN M8

#### Royal Exchange Theatre

THE DEN IN M8 was a two-week arts festival held in summer 2022 programmed by local residents and the Royal Exchange Theatre. The programme included exhibitions, nine workshops, a family day, and 11 performances with 113 professional and community performers. Over 1,400 people came as participants or members of the audience, and 632 free meals were provided.

## Best Event

### Baby Week Manchester Art Gallery

Manchester Art Gallery successfully launched the city's Baby Week and Start Well Strategy in partnership with Manchester City Council's Children's Services. The event showcased the extensive offer across the city to help babies and families in their vital first 1,000 days.

Other cultural organisations, including the National Football Museum, Aviva Studios, and Afrocats, were also present and



promoted their early years programmes. As a partnership event, it showed how the city's cultural organisations can connect and combine to deliver better services for local residents.



# Best Exhibition

## Heroes of Manchester

### Band on the Wall

The installation at the back of Band on the Wall, created by Malcolm Garrett and his team at Images and Co, takes a refreshing and broad-based view of Manchester's music history, including the contribution made by many of the city's migrant communities. Given the challenge of telling the story without the use of sound, the exhibition brings to life a 200-year narrative in a remarkable and engaging way.



## Nothing About Us Without Us

### People's History Museum

This exhibition explored the history of disabled people's rights and activism, and was co-curated by four community curators who identify as disabled people and guided by a steering group.

One of the most accessible exhibitions at People's History Museum, it showcased an extensive collection of protest material brought together for the first time.





## Best Exhibition

### PROUD

#### Manchester City Centre Business Improvement District and Heard Storytelling

This groundbreaking audiovisual exhibition, in support of Manchester Pride, shared the personal and candid true spoken stories of 20 people from the city's LGBTQIA+ community. PROUD, which formed a series of 'living portraits' across the city centre, aimed to make Manchester the city to truly hear the LGBTQIA+ community.



#### Moss Side to Marseille: The Art of Michael Browne and Eric Cantona

#### National Football Museum

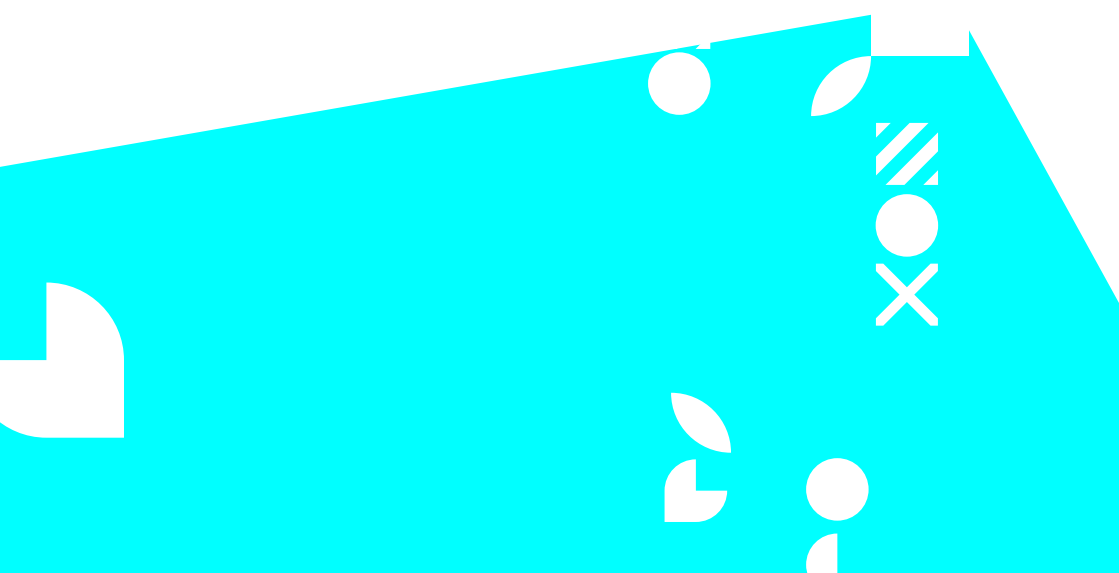
Co-curated with Michael Browne and Eric Cantona, this exhibition showcased ten oversized, mostly previously unseen, artworks commissioned by Cantona and executed by Browne. The artworks were influenced by sporting heroes who used their positions to advocate for social change despite great personal cost. Themes boldly addressed human rights, equality, and the impact of power.



# Best Exhibition

## South Asia Gallery Manchester Museum

The UK's first permanent gallery dedicated to the experiences and contributions of Manchester's South Asian diaspora. In partnership with the British Museum, it was co-curated over five years with 30 community members, opening in February 2023. It is a compelling and contemporary take on South Asian and British Asian history and culture.



## Proud to sponsor the Manchester Culture Award for the Promotion of Equality and Social Justice

Trustmarque is honoured to sponsor this award category to celebrate those making change and creating opportunities for equality and diversity to thrive across the vibrant city. Today we recognise our part in the future of the UK's society more than ever before.

We are committed to forging inclusive, sustainable and meaningful connections in the communities we serve. We can all do more, and we are working towards targets to make change happen.

Trustmarque is Manchester City Council's preferred Microsoft partner, and we support the council's mission of ensuring communities thrive, making them great places to live and work. Working closely with the council, we strive to deliver the value of technology and identify savings, to bring real-life impact to residents.



### Introducing our Promotion of Equality and Social Justice finalists

Good luck to all the finalists.

- Amber Stother - HOME
- GFF Damian Dance Studio
- In Our Words - Odd Arts, Hideaway and 84YOUTH
- Stanley Grove Primary Academy
- Voices of Hope - Olympias Music Foundation

## Trustmarque

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