

# Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014

**CRESCENT  
ARTS**

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# Crescent Arts

## Annual Report 2013 – 2014



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**ARTS COUNCIL  
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# Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014

## Introduction

2013-2014 was a year of real achievement for Crescent Arts with Artists, Director and Management Committee working together to deliver an ambitious programme of exhibitions, workshops and events. The high spot of the year was undoubtedly The Art Party Conference 2013 with Bob and Roberta Smith.

Support from Arts Council England (ACE) to Crescent Arts continued with ACE National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding and Crescent Arts is delighted to be part of the portfolio for the period 2012 – 2015. Scarborough Borough Council (SBC) also maintained its essential funding to Crescent Arts, in the face of financial pressures, primarily as subsidy of our studio premises and facilities. We are immensely grateful to both our funding partners for their vital support, encouragement and advice and look forward to reinforcing and extending these partnerships over future years.

## Key developments for the organisation during 2013-2014

### **Crescent Arts Programme:**

Public programme continued to operate on/offsite with six exhibitions including solo projects by resident artists (Karen Thompson, Jade Montserrat, Steven Malorie Potter) group projects (At Sixes & Sevens, Open Studios), invited artists (Sarah Taylor) and The Art Party Conference with Bob and Roberta Smith which put Crescent Arts firmly on the arts map.

### **Crescent Arts Studios and Artists:**

There was no further recruitment of studio artists as we continued to support a range of 6 artists over 2013-2014.

### **Professional Development:**

The Art Party Conference provided the main focus for artists' professional development in 2013-2014 extending our existing work with Yorkshire Coast College (YCC) BA Fine Art Faculty and Leeds College of Art to include a far wider range of artists and educational institutions, focusing critical debate around artists'/students' practice and art education.

### **Open-access Facilities:**

We sustained a varied programme of well-attended workshops for artists, young people and adults (printmaking and ceramics) with new activities including screenprinting and banner making. All workshops were initiated by resident and associate artists.

### **Partnerships:**

We established a significant number of key new partnerships in the course of producing The Art Party Conference 2013, while regularly hosting SBC Community Pride and continuing to work with YCC, University of Hull, and Create (Scarborough) over the year.

### **Marketing and Audience Development:**

E-newsletter distribution increased by a further 20% during the year reaching over 1,300 contacts regionally and nationally. The Art Party Conference brought strong social media interest and national press/media coverage with attendances increasing overall by almost 35%. Membership remained steady at about the same level as 2012-2013.

### **Equal Opportunities and Diversity:**

We continued to review and update our Equal Opportunities Policy and Action Plan for 2013-2016 and this document is available on Crescent Arts website.

## Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014

### **Management and Business Planning:**

We continued to review our Business Plan to 2015, highlighting risk management. Financial Management is sound, and the organisation is solvent, meeting most income targets including fundraising within 2013-2014. Accountants Ashby, Berry, Coulsons, prepared quarterly management and year-end accounts and financial statements.

### **Environmental Sustainability Policy and Action Plan 2013:**

We monitored our new policy and action plan with a view to setting clearer targets for 2014-2015 onwards.

### **Governance:**

At AGM in October 2013 two new members were elected to Management Committee (Andy Black, Andy Edwards). The sad death of Crescent Arts' Chair, Shirlie Stone, in 2013 left a huge gap. We are immensely grateful to Shirlie for all her work on our behalf over several years, and to Kathryn Standing who agreed to take on the role of Acting Chair.

### **Funding Partnerships:**

Crescent Arts is proud to have been awarded Arts Council of England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status with funding for 2012-2015. We also very much appreciate, and depend upon, the continuing support from Scarborough Borough Council.

## **Management and Governance:**

Crescent Arts Management Committee members were elected at our AGM in October 2013. We were extremely sad to report the death of our Chair, Shirlie Stone, in 2013 and immensely grateful for all her hard work on our behalf over a period of several years. Kathryn Standing kindly agreed to take on the role of Acting Chair for the coming year. Andy Black and Andy Edwards were elected as new committee members. The Management Committee as elected comprised:

### **Kathryn Standing: Acting Chair and Treasurer**

Visual Arts Consultant and Curator based in London

### **Neill Warhurst: Secretary**

Performance Production tutor at University of Hull, Scarborough Campus.

### **Andy Black:**

Artist and Lecturer in Fine Art, Yorkshire Coast College, Scarborough.

### **Andy Edwards:**

Artist/Designer and Senior Lecturer at Leeds Metropolitan University.

### **Ian Parkinson:**

Artist and long-standing member of Crescent Arts.

### **Stephen Wood:**

Executive Director of Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough.

## Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014

### Programme 2013 - 2014

Crescent Arts delivered all that it promised, and much more, in 2013/14. We presented or co-promoted six exhibitions and continued to pursue a strategy of partnership-working to support artists and audience development. We believe there is currently no comparable platform in the Borough and this part of the region that encourages artists to produce and present ambitious and investigative new work for the enjoyment by our audiences.

The programme for 2013/14, shaped by the Director, promoted resident, associate and invited artists' work. All Crescent artists presented work through group and solo exhibitions, screenings and commission. Resident artists played a central role in generating the exhibition programme with Karen Thompson presenting ART KO! - her collection of local press headline posters. The ART KO! boxing match performance as part of Museums at Night in conjunction with Scarborough Art Gallery delighted some and provoked others.

Crescent Arts' artists collaborated on 'at sixes and sevens', a group exhibition to coincide with Open Studios, and accompanied by a limited edition publication of the same title. Jade Montserrat and Steven Malorie Potter both presented new work later in the year in the form of larger-scale installations – 'Market Prices' and '10A' respectively and both subsequently showing in Leeds (Hoard and Light Night).

Invited artist Sarah Taylor provided a further dimension to the programme, greatly expanding the critical context of our work with her politically and socially charged paintings, exhibited under the collective title of 'A Fakes Progress'.

The high spot of the year was undoubtedly The Art Party Conference in November 2013, which saw the culmination of eighteen months' of demanding and highly creative work with artist Bob and Roberta Smith RA and filmmaker Tim Newton. The event at Scarborough Spa attracted some 1,200 visitors including hundreds of artists, performers, musicians, writers and arts students from all over the UK, to celebrate creativity and debate current government policies towards the arts and arts education.

An impressive range of artists and arts/educational professionals supported and participated in The Art Party Conference. Visual artists including Jeremy Deller, Cornelia Parker, Haroon Mirza and Richard Wentworth along with Samuel West, Maureen Duffy, Stephen Deuchar, Sheila McGregor and Julia Farrington led panel discussion with an audience of over 500 attendees. Nineteen artists of note lent support by contributing images as free posters, including work from those above and David Shrigley, John Smith, Silvia Ziranek, Jeff McMillan, Pavel Buchler amongst others. DACS filmed interviews with four participating artists. All 6 artists at Crescent Arts contributed to The Art Party Conference with Karen Thompson's 'Goveshy' stealing the show. The opportunity to 'bust his bust' was hard to resist. Press and media picked up on 'Goveshy' with coverage in the Times, Telegraph and Yorkshire Post adding to extensive national coverage of the event by Guardian, Telegraph and BBC online.

Crescent Arts received generous financial aid and support 'in kind' for this event from a wide range of national/regional organisations including the Art Fund, DACS, The Cass, SIV Ltd, Scarborough Spa, Whitesprint (Sheffield), The University of Hull at Scarborough Campus, Yorkshire Coast College, Stephen Joseph Theatre, Index on Censorship, NSEAD, Cultural Learning Alliance, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Axisweb, AN, Artquest, Cape UK, Contemporary Visual Arts Network and many individuals.

## Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014

We are immensely grateful to all who participated in this highly successful and ambitious venture, especially all the artists and Bob and Roberta Smith who initiated and worked with us to develop and deliver the proposal. We'd also like to thank Jo Beddoe for vital project management, Neill Warhurst for invaluable technical support and advice, Jo Ager at The Spa for event management and Daniel Cutmore at Arts Council England for very sound advice and detailed feedback.

The impact of The Art Party Conference continues to be felt in 2014 as Bob and Roberta Smith and Tim Newton promote the subsequent film Art Party! distributed by Cornerhouse Artists' Films from Manchester with PR support by London based consultants Margaret.

Exhibition openings each attracted attendances of 60-90 with recorded overall attendances of almost 5,000. The Art Party Conference brought highest visitor figures (1,200+) of any single event, with wide popular national/regional interest. Printmaking, ceramics and other workshop activities continued to flourish, especially under the expertise and guidance of Dawn Brooks, Jade Montserrat and Karen Thompson (1,000+ attendances over the year).

### Crescent Artists and Professional Development

We continued to offer Professional Development support to artists through subsidised studio provision, open-access facilities, workshop space, project development, networking and research. The Director and artists regularly reviewed professional development aims and objectives to support goals for 2013/14 focusing on exhibitions, projects and associated research.

#### **During 2013-2014 we accommodated six studio-holders:**

Dawn Brooks – printmaking  
Jade Montserrat – installation, printmaking, text and book works  
Susan Slann – painting and printmaking  
Karen Thompson – ceramics, performance and drawing  
Susan Timmins – installation, drawing and printmaking  
Steven Malorie Potter – works in paper and mixed media

Artists were encouraged to explore external opportunities for networking, exhibiting, funding, with some success (Jade Montserrat, Susan Timmins, Steven Potter, Karen Thompson exhibited in Leeds, Harrogate and London). We subsidised resident artists to visit studios, galleries and events across the UK and abroad including the Artquest Conference in London and Venice Biennale 2013.

Partnership with Yorkshire Coast College (YCC) and Leeds College of Art continued with 'crit' sessions and particularly with the artist Sarah Taylor, Lecturer at Leeds College of Art, through her exhibition 'A Fake's Progress' which spanned 12/13 and 13/14 programme. YCC made a central contribution with The Art Party March – a beach parade and banner protest to kick-start the event in November.

Artist Writes continued as a major strand of Professional Development as a means to increase the level of critical engagement with artists' work, through text and artists' writing. We commissioned a new text, by Alison Rowley, for a publication to accompany Sarah Taylor's exhibition in March/April 2013. This was followed by a publication 'at sixes and sevens' with statements and biographies for each of our artists.

## Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014

Jade Montserrat and Steven Malorie Potter both produced publications as part of their installations. We started to look at how to publish online and disseminate more widely for 2014.

All Professional Development was designed to support production, promotion and presentation of artists' work within Crescent Arts' public programme.

### Access to facilities

We continued to provide access to printmaking and ceramics facilities. Open-access to facilities and workshops was not in such great demand by members or the public during this year. Difficult access to our premises became a more significant issue, along with greater choice of workshop activity offered by organisations across the Borough. However, Dawn Brooks provided an excellent course of printmaking workshops over the year and we sought to promote access to ceramics facilities, especially kiln-firing services, enabled by ceramicist Karen Thompson, with occasional workshop sessions to encourage new users and those with less experience. Resident/associate artists also provided a regular programme of workshops and outreach activities in conjunction with peer organisations including YCC, Scalby School, Scarborough Museums Trust, WEA, Create.

### Marketing

We continued to review Marketing Strategy in line with our Business Plan and Activity Plan 2012-2015 to complement ACE NPO requirements and to fulfil our artistic and business goals for the period.

We offer congratulations to our part-time Communications Assistant, Daniel Whinney, who successfully applied for a full-time communications post at Leeds College of Art. This left a vacancy as The Art Party Conference (APC) approached which we covered by contracting temporary staff including Jeannie Swales from Touchstone Media who handled most press and media for APC reinforced by support for a London press launch hosted by the Art Fund.

Scarborough Spa (SIV Ltd) also assisted with marketing APC and with a minimal marketing budget we sold 1,200 tickets. 'Take a Stand' and a line up of high profile artists attracted attendances from across the UK. Social media played a huge part in raising awareness and promoting this event, as did advance national and regional press coverage.

Dan Whinney left Crescent Arts in a better position to gather audience intelligence through digital analytics, monitoring and evaluation. Crescent Arts e-newsletter continued to be our most effective marketing tool with distribution rising from 900 to over 1,300 during 2013/14. Digital distribution has largely replaced print through regular e-news, website, listings and social media updates. Dan created a new website for APC which provided necessary focus for ourselves, Bob and Roberta Smith and audiences in the promotion of this event. At the same time we continued to update our databases to better manage e-distribution effectively, targeting local, regional and national audiences. Membership sustained at 70 in 2013/14. We continued to monitor exhibition and workshop attendances through visitors' book, questionnaires, feedback, daily records and in the case of APC through box office.

## **Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014**

Exhibition attendances in 2013/14 increased by 15% to almost 3,500 with a similar number of 'exhibition days' (13/14: 103) (12/13: 104).

Participation in further events with regional/national reach (Museums at Night, Open Studios, Future Shorts, Light Night Leeds, Hoard) reinforced our profile and audience development beyond local engagement while maintaining key partnerships with University of Hull (School of Arts & New Media), Yorkshire Coast College (BA Fine Art) and Leeds College of Art (BA Fine Art).

### **Premises**

2013/14 saw little change in terms of our studio premises and we continued to explore alternative sites for presentation of programme. We maintained our Lease with Scarborough Borough Council (SBC) for the basement of Scarborough Art Gallery until 31.03.14. Proposed development of the building (Scarborough Art Gallery) appears unlikely in the immediate future. Licences for current resident artists are issued in line with terms and conditions of our Lease with SBC.

We extended use of premises at 14-15 Queen Street in Scarborough beyond the initial period of 18 months for arts regeneration projects. Queen Street is free of rent and rates. The minimal costs and overheads are met from our core budget. We continue to investigate alternatives for a longer-term studio base as a matter of greater priority, as it is increasingly clear that poor physical access is a real deterrent to participants and audiences.

### **Recruitment**

The post of part-time Communications Assistant, enabled by the increased support of ACE NPO funding for the period 2012-2015, fell vacant as Daniel Whinney moved to Leeds. We did not recruit to replace Dan within the 13/14 period owing to the immediate demands of APC and the fact that we had contracted with Touchstone Media to provide PR for this period. However, an assistant was contracted for a temporary period and two of the artists maintained social media activity.

Freelance and contractual staffing, including exhibiting and resident artists, continued to play a critical role in the effective delivery of our exhibitions, workshops and professional development programmes (mentoring, curation, gallery installation, workshop coordination).

### **Finance and Fundraising**

With ACE NPO (2012-15) Funding Agreement in place we continued to monitor and review financial projections within our Business Plan 2012-2015, reflecting levels of income generation and public funding commitment to Crescent Arts for the period; ACE NPO funding and SBC Community Revenue Grants (CRG).

The uplift in funding from ACE as an NPO (£70K+) for 2012-2015 was tempered by a reduction by SBC of some 40% of its CRG funding overall and to Crescent Arts for 2013/14 (£5K). SBC CRG included 100% rent subsidy (£4.5K) of our current studio premises below Scarborough Art Gallery. SBC has committed to sustaining funding to Crescent Arts at this current level up to 2016/17.

## **Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014**

It should be noted that Crescent Arts, having achieved ACE NPO status, is no longer eligible to apply to ACE GftA for project funding. We are still eligible to apply to a range of alternative ACE strategic funding streams.

**We continue to review our Business Plan for 2012-15, with projections reflecting fluctuations in current levels of public funding (ACE, SBC) and to address:**

- (1) sustainability and development of the organisation, its mission and core activities, including clear risk management procedures
- (2) achievable targets for income generation and fundraising
- (3) audience development, engagement and reach by effective and affordable means

**Within the Business Plan (2012-2015) we proposed fundraising at both regional and national levels to support:**

- (1) professional development for artists
- (2) programme and projects
- (3) development of resources and capital projects

Almost all income from fundraising activity in the year related to The Art Party Conference which generated £12K in contributed income from trusts and similar sources with earned income increasing to £13.7K in 13/14. Earned income included ticket sales from APC.

Crescent Arts, as a registered charity, continues to benefit from 100% business rates exemption. Financial management was sound in 2013/14, undesignated reserves increasing by 30% to some £22K as of March 31<sup>st</sup> 2014. For detailed information please see the accompanying Financial Statements for 2013/14.



# Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014

## Priorities for 2014-2015

### Key issues for 2014/15 are:

1. Maintain the capacity to develop innovative programme, delivering ambitious artistic goals as set out in our Activity Plan 2012-2015
2. Governance and management: sustaining appropriate skills, level of expertise and staffing, to guide the organisation through to 2015.
3. Business Planning: maintaining focus on forward planning to 2018 whilst meeting short/mid-term aims and objectives for the organisation, with appropriate risk management in place
4. Funding: managing opportunities and constraints in public/private sector funding to the arts in this and future years
5. Fundraising: delivering sponsorship/fundraising strategy - meeting targets for 14/15 and working towards targets for 2015-2018 and beyond
6. Marketing: developing strategy to target audiences and build membership and professional engagement through awareness via digital media, press/media coverage, print, networking in order to meet annual targets
7. Diversity: continue to build diversity of artists, management committee and audiences through recruitment and programme
8. Premises: pursue options for a permanent base for Crescent Arts.

## Outline plans and objectives for 2014/15:

Crescent Arts proposed programme of work for 2014-2015 will contribute to two of the five goals contained within Arts Council England's 'Great Art for Everyone'.

### 1. Talent and artistic excellence are thriving and celebrated through:

- studio, residency and production facilities for emerging artists
- professional development for resident, associate and invited artists
- a programme of exhibitions, visual arts projects and related activities as a platform for local, regional, and inter/national artists

### 2. More people experience and are inspired by the arts through:

- access to a programme of exhibitions, visual arts projects and related activities for public appreciation and participation
- open access, participation and training in use of our facilities for artists, members and the wider public
- creative partnership and collaboration with peer organisations, education sector, community interest groups, funding partners
- marketing to promote access to programme, professional development, facilities and resources

## Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014

### Objectives for 2014 - 2015 are as follows:

#### Support to artists:

- sustain subsidised studio provision for 6-7 artists, investing in production facilities, professional development and exhibition
- maintain changeover of artists, operating rigorous selection process to ensure quality, with average 85% annual occupancy
- develop regional/inter/national residency and exchange potential for 2015 onwards

#### Professional Development:

- extend partnerships with eg University of Hull, Yorkshire Coast College, Leeds College of Art to promote facilities and exchange.
- extend national/regional professional partnerships building on the achievements of Art Party Conference 2013
- sustain Artist Writes as a primary programme of critical activity
- continue support through mentoring, R&D, travel and skills-sharing in project management, production and promotion.
- extend professional development 'offer' to a wider pool of artists and members in the region.

#### Public Programme:

- present 4- 6 exhibitions and/or visual arts projects in 14/15 with collaborative activities providing a strong platform for artists
- deliver supporting activities eg workshops, screenings to encourage engagement and participation by members and a wider public.
- support resident artists to generate programme in 2014/15 with invited artists eg. Andy Black providing wider perspective.
- participate in regional/national initiatives (Museums at Night, North Yorkshire Open Studios) attracting new audiences and enriching programme (eg. Future Shorts)
- exploit contexts to present work off-site eg Queen Street and to engage with local communities

#### Marketing and Audience Development:

- sustain communications assistant post to extend digital capacity, audience development and engagement, meeting annual targets
- improve methods for audience intelligence, data collection, monitoring, interpretation and communication
- maintain budget to marketing (£4K 13/14)
- review strategy and embed audience development in fundraising initiatives

#### Digital Resources:

- promote awareness of and access to Crescent Arts' work and resources, maintaining digital communications eg e-newsletter
- the part-time assistant to extend digital capacity through e-newsletter, website interactivity, social media, blogs, digital artwork
- training to enable resident artists to develop greater online technical and creative skills eg publication

## Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014

### **Diversity and Equal Opportunities:**

- increase the diversity of management committee membership
- build upon the work of 13/14 to attract an appropriate diversity of artists and audiences through recruitment and programme
- focus partnership working on eg. student population reflecting diversity of emergent practitioners, participants, audiences
- implement and monitor Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2013-16 and continue to review Equal Opportunities Policy

### **Fundraising:**

- Within the Business Plan (2012-2015) a fundraising strategy is outlined to support:
  - (1) professional development for artists
  - (2) programme and projects
  - (3) development of resources and capital projects
- The appointment of part-time Communications Assistant supports access, income generation, audience development and fundraising
- The Director will lead fundraising initiatives supported by Management Committee, artists and members

### **Income Generation:**

- Fundraising and income generation targets are identified within the Business Plan 2012-2015
- Potential for income generation is identified as:
  1. hire and use of facilities (eg. space, printmaking, ceramics)
  2. studio rents
  3. membership subscriptions, donations and sponsorship
  4. workshops, professional development and ticketed events
  5. sales of publications and art works

### **Funding Partnerships:**

- sustain productive dialogue within current funding partnerships and agreements (ACE / SBC), transparency and appropriate reporting
- respond to opportunities and manage constraints in public/private sector funding to the arts in this and future years
- prepare application to ACE for continued NPO funding for 2015-2018 within guidelines and timescale as determined by ACE in 2013/14
- maintain relationship with SBC for funding for 2014/15 within guidelines and timescale as determined by SBC in 2013/14

### **Premises:**

- extend our lease with SBC for studio premises beyond March 2014, with Business Rates relief dependent on charitable status
- investigate longer-term alternatives (eg Queen St.)

### **Governance and Management:**

- sustain appropriate skills, levels of expertise within Management Committee and staffing, to guide the organisation through to 2015.
- recruit 1-2 further members to Management Committee in 14/15 with expertise to support fundraising and/or business plan development
- recruit to Management Committee with a view to increasing diversity of membership

## **Crescent Arts Annual Report 2013 - 2014**

On behalf of Crescent Arts Management Committee I would like to express our thanks to our regular funding partners, Arts Council of England and Scarborough Borough Council, for their continuing support and encouragement to Crescent Arts. I would like to thank members of the Management Committee for their hard work during 2013-2014 and resident artists for their creativity and commitment. Stuart Cameron has provided strong leadership and vision throughout the year as Director of Crescent Arts and our thanks go to him for his considerable achievements. We are particularly grateful for the continuing support of all our members, and hope you will enjoy our programme in 2014-2015. We look forward to seeing you at exhibitions, workshops and events throughout the year.

**Kathryn Standing, Acting Chair of Crescent Arts**  
**October 2014**