

# UK Creative Community Fellows

## Meet the Fellows



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**Social Impact Strategy**

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# Meet the Cohort

[Click on a cohort member to learn more](#)



**Sandy AbdelRahman**  
London



**Shirley Bailey**  
Preston



**Laura Beattie**  
Edinburgh



**Georgina Bednar**  
London



**Rachel Crossley**  
Twickenham



**Sona Datta**  
London



**Celine Elliott**  
Wadebridge



**Rachel Gillies**  
Birmingham



**Phillip Hargreaves**  
Wakefield



**Becky Harrison**  
London



**Erica Hesketh**  
London



**Ruth Hopkins**  
Birmingham



**Lewis Hou**  
Edinburgh



**Kristoffer Huball**  
Hereford



**Lucy Jefferies**  
Brighton



**Xi-mali Kadeena-Guscoth**  
London



**Murad Khan**  
Oldbury



**Tara Munroe**  
Leicester



**Tara Okeke**  
London



**Christelle Pellecuer**  
Bristol

# Meet the Cohort

Click on a cohort member to learn more



**Alex Pemberton**  
Altrincham



**Jessica Prendergrast**  
Watchet



**Alison Solomon**  
Derby



**Jenny Staff**  
Brighton



**Naomi Wilds**  
Derby



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## Sandy AbdelRahman

London

I'm an activist, creative social entrepreneur, and the co-founder of Skaped a platform that encourages young people to engage with human rights through creative arts. I was born in Egypt and grew up in East London. Experiencing inequality, discrimination, and racism made me passionate about empowering young people to share their voice. I use art as a method to facilitate and document this and to talk about violations young people experience.

I have a background in filmmaking and producing. I've worked with companies such as Eelyn Lee Productions and was a Young Producer at Battersea Arts Centre and Young Vic Theatre in 2018. I was featured among 50 most empowering Nu-Gen activists you need to know about right now at Glamour Magazine UK.

I have a track record that includes representing the United Kingdom at the United Nations Youth Summit 2017 in New York. I have worked with Reprieve and Amnesty International as well as other values-driven organisations. Currently studying a Master in Art & Politics.



## Shirley Bailey

Preston

Shirley Bailey (sometimes Furlong) has worked in hotels, bars, restaurants, sales and marketing, HE, for theatre festivals and small arts orgs. She has a degree in Education and Race & Ethnicity and a Masters in Creative Writing. She thoroughly enjoys her (f/t, admin) job at Curious Minds (except for those off-days we all chunter our way through).

Outside of work she is a founding member of Brewtime, a Creative Collective in Preston, she runs Preston Playwrights and hosts FB page Preston Plays. She's a writer, reader, theatre lover, museum goer. She likes conversation but would chose silence over music, can never remember a name, or what she had for dinner yesterday (luckily she's good at taking notes and following stuff up). She values friendships and integrity, and generosity of spirit. She likes being silly and giddy, and gardening, and walking, great quotes, and things of beauty. She firmly believes in the idea of paying it forward; she thinks everyone could do with a bit of a leg-up sometimes and that all young people should have someone looking out for them.





## Laura Beattie

Edinburgh

Since January 2019, I have worked as the Community Outreach Officer for University of Edinburgh's Museums. My remit is to work across our museum sites and collections to make them more accessible to audiences who are currently underserved and to develop a range of projects to engage them with our services. Our sites include St Cecilia's Hall, a musical instrument museum which also features the oldest concert room in Scotland, an Anatomical Museum and an Exhibition Gallery. I work with a wide range of groups and charities. Some of the projects I am currently working on include: creating and delivering a Families Programme; creating outreach and engagement projects based on our current exhibitions; 'Prescribe Culture', a social prescribing initiative to improve students mental wellbeing through arts and culture; developing Community Outreach Sessions to be held in community centres and care homes across Edinburgh; 'Capturing Lives in Scotland's Communities', an Arts Award Explore project that aims to engage with young people from widening access backgrounds across Scotland. I feel very lucky to have the job that I do and to be able to help people improve their lives through engaging them with arts and culture.

Before my current job, I completed a PhD in English Literature at the University of Edinburgh while also tutoring undergraduates in the department. I also worked in several part time roles for the University, including as the Student Engagement Officer for Library and University Collections. I also hold a MA (Hons) in English and Latin from the University of St Andrews and an MA in English Studies from Freie Universitaet Berlin. During my undergraduate degree, I spent one year studying abroad at the University of California, Berkeley.



## Georgina Bednar

London

I am a community artist, artist coach and participation producer with a practice in co-creation. I set up No Ordinary Experience to combine my work in consulting, creating & facilitating across contemporary, digital and participation projects under one roof. Ultimately I am interested in holding conversations & creative spaces which imagine how we can live together, better.

Across my work, I facilitate in community and arts setting, co-design participation processes with young people and consult on creating large-scale programmes and festivals, often in outdoor spaces. In 2007, joined playmakers Coney as an Associate Artist creating unique, playful and interactive experiences in non-professional spaces and online. In 2019, I led The Market Project as lead artist – a 6 month co-creation take over of a Caledonian Road estates. I led a 10-strong professional artist

team and worked with eight, local young people to create an experience for 100 local residents. I was co-artistic director of MUJU, the UK's leading Muslim Jewish Theatre Company from 2008-13, where I led new commissions in performance, festivals and comedy and worked towards community cohesion. As a producer, I have led programmes for The Barbican, Roundhouse & Raindance Film Festival, creating festivals, large scale interventions & artist development schemes. I regularly work with the Culture Team (GLA) to create large-scale outdoor work, including LDN WMN, a 20 piece project created with Tate Collective and the families of extraordinary women.

As a trained facilitator and coach I design and deliver artist development programmes, 1:1 sessions and work with senior leadership teams across the Arts & Charity sector to help unlock new ideas, deliver change programmes and wellbeing for staff. I have two new programmes – Resilience in Passion Sectors and Un-Coaching Club – live at the moment.



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## Rachel Crossley

Twickenham

With 13 years' experience in the arts and museums sector, Rachel has worked at the V&A, Museum of London, Historic Royal Palaces, and Arts Council England, chiefly in programming, learning, and fundraising roles. Currently she is Director (p/t) of a small museum dedicated to sharing women's stories, the East End Women's Museum. In the rest of her time, she freelances, supporting other cultural organisations with their audience development ambitions.

Rachel is particularly passionate about reaching new audiences, drawing out contemporary resonance, and diversifying the sector - believing cultural equity to be critical to a fairer society.





## Sona Datta

London

I am an art historian, cultural collaborator and provocateur for social change who until recently was Head of South Asian art at the Peabody Essex Museum in Massachusetts where I developed PEM's 200 year old history with India to engage with dynamic cultural production from across all of South Asia.

Having previously worked at the British Museum for 8 years, my exhibitions included the flagship 2006 'Voices of Bengal' season, which attracted more people of South Asian extraction than any project in the Museum's history. I redefined the British Museum's engagement with modern collecting through the acquisition of contemporary art from Pakistan that linked to existing collections of historic Mughal painting. In 2015 I was commissioned to write and present 'Treasures of the Indus' for the BBC, described as 'lifting the veil on the region's past and

proving you must know where you have been to know where you are going'.

Since returning to the UK, I have moved away from high profile international projects in favour of cultural collaboration at a more local level.

The unifying goal of my last major project at the 58th Venice Biennale in 2019 sought to subvert the continued erasure of women's achievements in an art world still heavily weighted in favour of men. Internationalist in reach (i.e. not only artists from Europe and N America) and universal in content, 'She Persists' thus foregrounded the commonality of the female experience across the globe – much to be welcomed in these divisive times, including a powerful performance piece by Rose McGowan and ground-breaking works by Judy Chicago, The Guerrilla Girls, Shirin Neshat and Mithu Sen and was thrice listed among the top ten must-see shows of the Biennale.

I graduated from Cambridge University winning the prestigious Rylands Prize for Excellence in the History of Art in 1994. My latest writing, "Paradoxical Modernisms" forms part of the multi-author work, The Art of History (Mapin, 2019). My own book, due out in 2020, will reset the lens on the so-called 'East'. I am currently a 2019/20 fellow on the Clore Leadership program. I live in London with my husband, two boys (and no dog).



## Celine Elliott

Wadebridge

Undergraduate study at Manchester Art School (Interactive Arts), and a decade working in Youth & Community work, led to a co-ordinating role for Tate's Artist Rooms which combined my interest in art with my experience engaging so-called hard-to-reach communities. I combined Community Engagement work for the Bowes Museum in rural County Durham, with study for a Museums, Galleries & Heritage MA (Newcastle University). A placement at MIMA (Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art) fostered my interest in Arte Util; I have since applied the principles of this movement to my work in both the North East and, more recently, the South West. Working in a rural environment, previously for Royal Cornwall Museum, currently as Engagement Lead for Cornwall Museums Partnership, I have focused on health, wellbeing and isolation: exploring the civic potential of museums and galleries, decolonising museum practice, redressing the power-imbalance within institutions and improving access to collections. I am privileged to be a member of the board of Pool School Gallery, an ambitious, experimental and ground-breaking community-focused art gallery.



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## Rachel Gillies

Birmingham

I aim to create media which tells important and personal stories, that can shape our ideas about the world and lead to positive social and political action. This starts with giving more people a voice through participatory work – either through giving participants the tools to voice their ideas and make films themselves, or working on commissions which are developed collaboratively.



## Phillip Hargreaves

Wakefield

I am a Creative Producer with a passion for creating high quality performance experiences with and for communities, and believe everyone should have the opportunity to experience, participate and engage in great art. My work as a Creative Producer involves a variety of roles including strategic planning, financial management, fundraising, audience development, stakeholder management and curating. I am currently working with Déda as a Creative Producer (including leading on the curation of the outdoor festival Festé) and with a variety of artists under my freelance alias producingphil.

My work spans across all art forms with a vast amount of experience and knowledge of the UK Arts sector and with a specialist knowledge of the UK and International outdoor/street theatre, dance and circus sector. Over the last 3-years I have supported the creation of 15 new performance works, reached over 150,000 audiences and raised over £1,000,000 for cultural projects.



## Becky Harrison

London

Becky Harrison has been dedicated to promoting intercultural dialogue through the arts since graduating from her MA in Comparative Cultural Analysis in 2015.

Currently the Events and Communications Officer at the Arab British Centre - a charity that works to promote understanding of the Arab world in the UK - since joining in 2018 she has managed exhibitions and events including London's Theatre of The East, an exhibition exploring the historic connections between the Middle East, North Africa and London, featuring new work by four Arab British artists.

Prior to her role at the Centre, she worked at the Bradford Literature Festival and at Comma Press, an independent publisher in Manchester specialising in short fiction and translations from the Middle East. She is the co-editor of a collection of short stories and essays, 'Conradology: A Celebration of the Work of Joseph Conrad', and in 2018 she was shortlisted for the London Book Fair Trailblazer Award.





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## Erica Hesketh

London

I am the CEO of the Poetry Translation Centre, with previous roles at English PEN, Southbank Centre and Bloomsbury Publishing among others - 15 years' experience in literature including editorial, events, grant-management, marketing, fundraising, outreach. I am also a singer and composer. I have a degree in mathematics and philosophy from Oxford University.



## Ruth Hopkins

Birmingham

Founded in 2012 by Ruth Hopkins, K'antu Ensemble explore the less-trodden territories of early music, combining elements of folk and world music with historically-informed techniques. The music of Spain and South America seemed like the obvious starting place - hence the name K'antu, referring to an ancient style of Peruvian and Bolivian music and dance.

In England, K'antu perform extensively at festivals and venues including the Bridgewater Hall, Cheltenham Festival, Leamington Music, Newbury Spring Festival, King's Place and St Martin-in-the-Fields, where they reached the semi-finals of the Chamber Music Competitions in 2014 and 2015. They have also broadcast on Radio 3's In Tune from Broadcasting House and as house band during their residency at the Southbank Centre.

On the international stage, they were invited to present a concert for the Göttingen International Handel Festival in Germany and have toured to Hungary, Romania and Egypt in association with the British Council.

They are currently promoting their second album, *Dancing & the Divine*, following the success of *Gusto*, which has been featured on BBC Radio 3's Early Music Show, Late Junction, BBC Introducing, Resonance FM's LSO Soundhub and in Early Music Today Magazine.

Dedicated to bringing the music they love to a wider audience, K'antu's musicians provide workshops and dances for schools and heritage sites. Their music has also been featured on BBC One's *The Greatest Dancer*.

They were selected artists for Live Music Now, and director Ruth now works as a mentor for graduates embarking on the scheme. They provide CPD for heritage organisations and have led residential music course for music students at the South West Music School.

Their work has been generously supported by an Emerging Excellence Award from Help Musicians UK, JM Instruments and the Society of Recorder Players.



## Lewis Hou

Edinburgh

Lewis is passionate about interdisciplinary cultural participation of, with and by everyone. He founded and directs the award-winning Science Ceilidh social enterprise with projects supporting creativity, science, equity and wellbeing across Scotland. He is also one of the Scottish Ambassadors with Fun Palaces, undertaking a five year action research programme on cultural democracy - supporting the making rather than consumption of culture to support community connectedness. He is a fiddle player and was recipient of JCI Scotland's Top Young Person of the Year 2019 for contribution to culture and Royal Society of Edinburgh's Public Engagement Innovator Award.



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## Kristoffer Huball

Hereford

I am a graduate of both the two-year professional training at L'Ecole Jacques Lecoq in Paris and Le LEM (Le Laboratoire d'Etude du Mouvement.) With ten years' experience concepting, producing and delivering large scale, community-led outdoor arts projects with an educational focus and a demonstrated history of working across community groups, programming and producing live events for festivals, outdoor events and pop-ups, with a particular focus on cultural diversity.

I'm specialised in project management, artistic direction and facilitation, with a portfolio spanning work as an associate of both the recently closed Atrix Arts Centre in Bromsgrove and ongoing with the Corn Exchange and 101 Outdoor Arts in Newbury. I also co-founded the award-winning Rhum and Clay Theatre Company, have held tenures as a visiting lecturer in outreach and facilitation practice and devised theatre practises at Winchester and Northampton Universities, and have collaborated in content development for the Shakespeare Schools Festival as a facilitator and stage director over the last seven years.



## Lucy Jefferies

Brighton

I was born and grew up in Bristol in the Southwest of England. I studied Hispanic & European Studies at Queen Mary College in London. Whilst studying I travelled a lot and lived in South America, America and Spain. My first job was Administrator for Encounters Film Festivals based at the Watershed Media Centre in Bristol. From here I went to the Arts & Creative Industries Team at Brighton & Hove City Council for 10 years starting as the Admin Officer working my way up to Arts & Cultural Projects Manager. In 2010 I took a 10 month secondment to be a Visual Arts Learning & Participation Producer at Southbank Centre. I left in 2012 to have my first son and then moved to London where I worked as Arts Development Officer for Camden Council for two years. After another maternity leave I got an Arts Council grant to set up Quiet Down There in 2016 in Brighton Open Market and I have been working on building QDT ever since. I was an Arts Council Independent Artistic and Quality assessor from 2015-2020. I love films, podcasts, Indian food and hanging out with my friends and family.





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## Xi-mali Kadeena-Guscoth

London

Xi-mali Kadeena-Guscoth (BA Hons, MMus) has been promoting performing arts in the community since his early teenage years at Haringey Shed, a local inclusive theatre company. More recently, he has worked with the Royal Court Theatre and LIFT to create performances local and inclusive to Tottenham, as well as returning to volunteer at Haringey Shed. Xi-mali specialises in Samba Fusion and holds a distinction in Music Performance from SOAS, University of London. There he combined - London's Samba with Ceilidh, West African Drumming, and more - and has since brought this unique take on Samba to Hackney Carnival, the Hayward Gallery, the Royal Academy of Art, and workshops with young migrants and refugees.



## Murad Khan

Oldbury

Murad Khan is a diaspora theatre activist in UK and a well-known play writer in Bangladesh. A prominent theatre group Prachyanat still performing one of Murad Khan's play 'Koinna' which is well known and appreciated in Bangladesh. <http://prachyanat.wordpress.com/category/koinnya/>

Major plays

2018 Brick lane '78

2017 Jahaji

2016 Bangla Brummies:

<http://www.the-drum.org.uk/single-event/?id=BB>

2015 Salty Water and Us:

<http://www.the-drum.org.uk/single-event/?id=SWU>

2001 Koinnya:

<http://prachyanat.wordpress.com/category/koinnya/>

After working as a theatre activists (writer, director, drama teacher and performer) with different theatre groups and schools for 13 years in Bangladesh, Murad moved to the UK in 2001.

With a group of diaspora artists in May 2014, Murad established a theatre company called Purbanat CIC to take theatre to the next level as a professional theatre group and artists.

Purbanat is based in West Midlands where Asian people have not got any professional Asian theatre company in West-Midlands area yet. Our ambition is to develop ourselves as a professional theatre group and be able to offer quality arts works where our targeted audience group can relate themselves and feel good and proud of it. We have started to get support from Arts Council England, Birmingham City Council's arts Team, Black Country Touring (BCT), Culture Central and other voluntary organisations to achieve our ambitions.



## Tara Munroe

Leicester

Opal22 is a heritage and arts organisation working to produce stimulating and inspiring projects that merge arts, history, and culture. We are born out of response to the needs of the community, particularly the BAME community, to become more active and substantive participants in our modern cultural, artistic, and educational framework. Our programmes strive to promote community cohesion, reduce social isolation, and preserve heritage throughout the U.K.

Opal22 exists to bridge the gap between traditional arts and heritage institutions and the wider public, so we specially format our projects to be as accessible, inclusive, and interactive as possible. Our programmes are created with the community, for the community.



## Tara Okeke

London

Tara is a writer, artist and aspiring anthropologist from London. Following her appointment as the Horniman Museum and Gardens' Museum Futures Trainee in January 2020 – a role that has built upon the foundations laid by a life-long love of cultural spaces and sustained engagement with cultural production – Tara has strived to connect the dots between artefacts, infrastructures and agents of positive change.

Guided by an interest in the intersection between culture and care, Tara has co-facilitated dementia-friendly reminiscence workshops for seniors and others afflicted by degenerative conditions; contributed to foundational research concerning BAME heritage spaces and conservation praxes for the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust's 'Connecting People and Places' report; and conducted fieldwork centred on spatial equity, refuge and ecologies of respite in Athens with UCL's Development Planning Unit (DPU).

With a practice that melds social-spatial endeavour (in 2017, she was selected as the youngest member of the h100 award-nominated programme, New Architecture Writers) with socio-political analysis (in 2014, she was shortlisted in the top ten of the country for Amnesty International's Young Reporter Competition), Tara now hopes to extend her reach as a cultural practitioner through 'ekko' – a co-produced online aggregator that leverages the voices of those who pledge to care, create and recalibrate their relationship to their local community as well as to civic-led change.



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## Christelle Pellecuer

Bristol

I am the Creative Director at Razana Afrika and the Cultural Heritage Manager at Black South West Network (BSWN). My work focus on culture, heritage and visual art (film, photography and theatre) and I have a special interest in African history, culture and heritage. I passionately believe in the power of arts and culture to transform communities and drive economic development.

As a result of my work in the city, I was shortlisted in the 2018 Bristol BME power list, which showcased the city's 100 most inspiring, successful and influential black and minority ethnic people. I was shortlisted in the top 100 West Women of the year 2019 and nominated by UWE Bristol to feature on their Black Hall of Fame in 2020.





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## Alex Pemberton

Altrincham

My name is Alex, I'm 23 and I'm from south Manchester. I think as a person I'm quite a jolly one, curious in how the world works and interested in new challenges. At school I was the one always asking questions whether that was art or English. As I grew older I developed a real interest in the environment so upon leaving school, decided to study geography at Bristol University. Here I got involved in a myriad of hobbies; from a gardening society to a radio show however what I most gained, was a passion for volunteering and helping others. After three years, I graduated and stayed in Bristol, working in order to go travelling around Europe and Canada, which after 5 months away, I returned to the UK in early January 2020. In the future I would like to pursue a career in the creative sector, and are currently working towards that.



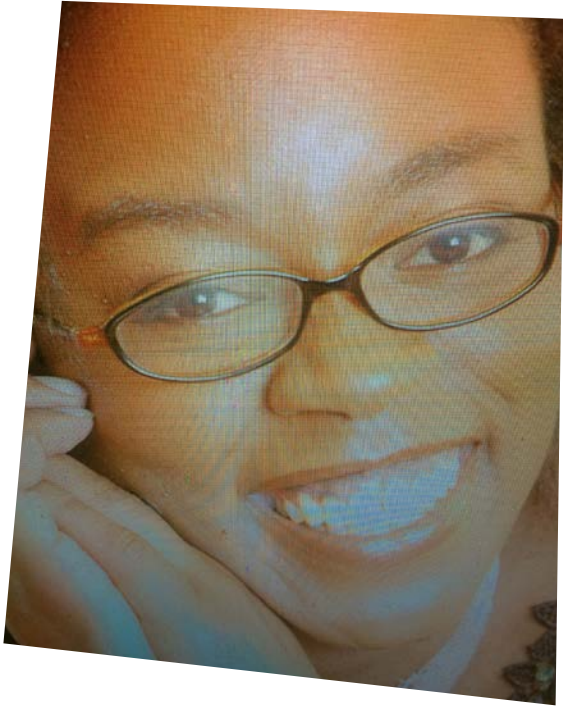
## Jessica Prendergrast

Watchet

Jessica studied PPE at Oxford University, and then completed a Masters at SSEES (UCL). She became a social researcher working in academia, for the Government and then at an independent think tank in Westminster. With a strong economics background, Jess also previously worked for Oxford Economics, a leading economic consultancy.

Jess was one of the team behind the £3m Minehead Eye youth project, for which she remains Director and was instrumental in the establishment of Contains Art, artist studios and exhibition space in shipping containers in Watchet, which she continues to lead as it grows.

She is one of the founding Directors of Onion Collective CIC, a social enterprise operating at the vanguard of the community business movement, tackling social, cultural and environmental injustice through place-based systems change. In 2021, the organisation will open East Quay, a £6m arts and enterprise development that is currently in construction. It will house Contains Art's new galleries, 15 workshops/studios, a print studio, restaurant, education and project spaces, a geology lab and a paper mill, as well as 5 creative places to stay.



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## Alison Solomon

Derby

Alison Solomon is a multi-commissioned Storyteller, poet, performance poet, folklorist. She is also a multi-commissioned creative artist and educator working in the heritage and learning sectors. She is well known for her work in professional theatre and film, casting top professional actors and artists so that they can tell the stories of others too. Alison has always worked in fast paced industries that demand high standards at all times, so she is able to work on demanding projects and to demanding professionals to complete projects on time, above standard and often with enduring recognition and plaudits.



## Jenny Staff

Brighton

Jenny Staff was born in Lancaster in 1973 and grew up with a love of walking and drawing, she studied painting at Newcastle Polytechnic and then moved to London in 1995. She continued her studies at London Met undertaking an MA in Fine Art (by project). Following this she started to work in a socially engaged model using the notion of Play as Process, creating safe spaces where participants could explore their creativity in accessible and positive ways. Nine years ago she moved to Brighton, where she was able to renew her passion for walking, and as her children are older she has developed her drawing/walking practice to a sophisticated level. Over the past 20 years she has worked with numerous communities and many institutions, including the National Gallery, National Maritime Museum, Pantry Project, Open Sesame, Discover, Towner and Phoenix Brighton. She is passionate about people, creativity, curiosity and finding your voice.

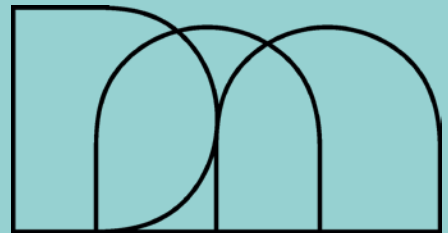


## Naomi Wilds

Derby

I am a full time producer and arts practitioner, working primarily with oral storytelling – an artform with roots deep across all human cultures, which is experiencing an exciting contemporary resurgence. I studied English Literature at the University of Leeds (BA Hons First Class, MA by Research), worked in numerous independent arts organisations, including repertory theatre and orchestral music before specialising in literature development supporting writers, poets, readers, organisations working with literature from 1999-2008 through jointly funded local authority/arts council posts, based in local authority and regional arts organisation settings. In 2006, I founded a new production company Adverse Camber to develop, commission and tour high quality storytelling and music productions for adults. I continue to produce work and lead this company, which is based in the UNESCO World Heritage Derwent Valley in Derbyshire. We tour across the UK, build partnerships with regional venues, universities, organisations and collaborate with international artists. We have received over £450K in public funding over the past five years to produce and tour work, as well as develop projects developing confidence and self expression with young people in care and care leavers, through storytelling and astronomy. In 2018, I was appointed to a second, part-time role, as Artistic Director of Beyond the Border, Wales International Storytelling Festival. This biennial festival takes place at a National Trust property in South West Wales, developing partnerships with Wales Wildlife Trust and Cadw (Welsh Heritage). I am also an audio describer, making live theatre accessible to people with visual impairments and am a passionate advocate for artistic engagement in all forms.





**DERBY MUSEUMS**



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