

Commissioned by



Reflecting on change

Exploring an international disability arts programme



‘It’s essential to advocate for a sustainable future for disability arts and inclusive arts.’

Front cover Image : Shundaram performs *Fearless*, produced by the British Council in Bangladesh in association with Dhaka Theatre.

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Author: Tim Wheeler

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Foreword: British Council

About one in seven people in the world is disabled. That's around 15 per cent of the global population – about one billion individuals worldwide.

Some disabilities are visible, some are invisible, but too often disabled people face barriers to inclusion in society. These barriers might be physical, to do with other people's attitudes, or because of systemic discrimination.

As the UK's international organisation for cultural relations, the British Council's work builds enduring relationships across different cultures. We cannot do this without a strong commitment to equality.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are constant themes in everything we do around the world: arts, society, education, teaching English and offering exams. Our initiatives bring different people together, enriching their experience and leading to more inclusive societies.

That's why we have such a strong commitment to arts and disability. Disability arts have been an important part of the British Council's global programme for decades and a key focus since 2012.

Our recent work in arts and disability has taken place in more than 50 countries. We partner with disabled artists, disabled-led companies and inclusive arts organisations from all over the world, creating a legacy of transformation.

As we respond to the global Covid-19 pandemic, it is important to highlight the value of international connections in disability arts. And it's essential to advocate for a sustainable future for disability arts and inclusive arts.

This report gives an insight into our disability arts work since 2012 and the impact on individuals and societies. It illustrates how we've worked with different methods in different cultural contexts. At the same time, we've endeavoured to help disabled artists and cultural leaders claim their places at the centre of the international disability arts conversation.

From helping to establish the first integrated theatre company in Bangladesh to leading the world's largest transnational disability arts programme, we are proud to be part of the global arts and disability movement.

Why read this report?

As we all look to build a more equitable society, we hope this report will assist policymakers, funders, researchers, organisations and practitioners who are working with arts and disability, those who would like to do so, and those who identify as disabled themselves.

For instance, you might:

- Explore approaches to disability arts and international exchange, at a time when there's growing awareness of the importance of addressing historical imbalances.
- Reflect on the impact this work can have from artistic, economic, social and personal perspectives.
- Get a sense of the structures that support UK disability arts, and appreciate why activity and confidence have increased since 2012.
- Learn about the sectors in countries including Bangladesh, South Korea and Indonesia, and discover individual artists' stories.
- Locate resources that we have produced or used in our work.
- Find out what worked in our projects and where we hope to improve.
- Consider future challenges for the cultural sector to address.

What follows is a reflection on our journey of change by disability arts specialist Tim Wheeler. Along the way, we've been inspired by remarkable artists, partners and campaigners. By sharing our experience, we hope to encourage others on their own journeys.

'Forging connections across borders is essential.'



Kate Ewart-Biggs OBE
Deputy Chief
Executive Officer
British Council

Foreword: Jess Thom

Discovering the UK's vibrant disability arts scene rescued me from my own preconceptions about disability. Encountering high-quality work made by disabled artists challenged me to think about my own experience in new ways. Most importantly, it made me realise that I could be an artist, too. This simple realisation proved to be the catalyst for Touretteshero, the creative organisation I co-founded a decade ago.

Touretteshero works to create a more inclusive and socially just world through our cultural practice – we make art, host events, and support partner organisations to expose, challenge and remove disabling barriers. We are committed to being part of a world where disability culture is visible, valued and influential.

The British Council has supported us to take our work all over the world, and I feel incredibly fortunate to have had opportunities to connect with creatives, disabled and non-disabled alike, working in other countries and contexts.

‘If we tolerate systemic oppression, we are complicit in the harm that it causes.’

These experiences have shown me how important it is for conversations about disability culture to take place internationally. Forging connections across borders is essential if we intend to transcend the local contexts that limit our expectations, and to create a more inclusive, socially just future.

This report analyses the work undertaken by the British Council in relation to disability arts. I've experienced first-hand the positive change that's been created by the organisation's decision to put disabled perspectives at the centre of their work. For example, support from the British Council has been instrumental in taking 'relaxed performances' from a UK-based pilot project in 2012 to being embraced by organisations in the Americas, Europe, Russia and Japan.

Most significantly for me, the British Council's approach emphasises disabled leadership. Disability has long been understood only through medical or charitable lenses. By taking a 'social model' approach and providing opportunities for disabled artists, activists and academics to connect, create and develop new ways of thinking, the organisation is making space for real change for disabled communities around the world.

As the global community grapples with the impact of Covid-19 and the multiple inequalities it has highlighted, it's essential that we challenge the idea that excluding disabled people is somehow 'natural'. It isn't – it's an ideological decision based on prejudice and perceptions of productivity. If we tolerate systemic oppression, we are complicit in the harm that it causes.

Photographer: Ro Murphy



Jess Thom is Co-Artistic Director of Touretteshero and may or may not lead a secret double life as a superhero. Artist, writer, and activist, Jess co-founded Touretteshero in 2010. She's had tics since she was a child but wasn't diagnosed with Tourettes until her mid-twenties. With encouragement from her friends, Jess turned her tics into a source of imaginative creativity and Touretteshero was born.

Introduction: Tim Wheeler

The arts connect us. Through the arts, we can transcend borders and boundaries. We can learn what it means to be human, in the next street, the next town, another country. In surveying and spotlighting a substantial body of work by disabled artists worldwide, this study draws on a decade-long record of vibrant arts activity, all supported by the British Council.

Disability arts and inclusive arts practice in the UK began long before, and British Council's support spans over four decades. With its support, UK disabled artists are recognised as leaders in the field of disability arts worldwide.

When the Olympics took place in London in 2012, the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) included a celebration of disability arts in the winning bid for the first time. The first Unlimited festival took place at the Southbank Centre from 30 August to 9 September 2012, alongside the Paralympics and Cultural Olympiad.

Since then, with the British Council's support, UK deaf and disabled artists have travelled to over 50 countries, creating more than 350 events at disability arts-focused and mainstream international platforms. Work has included study visits, tours, residencies, exhibitions. There have been workshops, training, leadership development programmes and seminars. Disability arts specialists have worked with governments on policy development.

All these initiatives are making a deep impression across the globe. This report will share that journey with you.

'UK disabled artists have increasingly become recognised as leaders in the field of disability arts.'



My Left Right Foot – The Musical by Birds of Paradise Theatre Company and National Theatre of Scotland. Photographer: Mihaela Bodlovic.

‘For many disabled people, isolation like that experienced in lockdown is something they have lived with for most of their lives.’

When disability is considered, it is often done so in extremes. Disabled athletes are seen as superheroes, while those who fail to make a conventional contribution are viewed as a burden on the state. Throughout history and in every country, disabled people have faced stigma, discrimination and enforced exclusion.

The 2008 financial crisis led to policies of austerity in the UK. Journalist Frances Ryan (2019) writes eloquently about the effects of austerity on deaf and disabled people in the UK. From 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic revealed significant economic and social disparities resulting in increased hardship, anxiety and fear for many.

Early on in the pandemic, a new movement was founded in the UK. #WeShallNotBeRemoved is a platform and meeting ground for disabled artists and allies to share experiences and ways to inform and challenge. For many disabled people, isolation like that experienced in lockdown is something they have lived with for most of their lives.

This report provides an overview of the British Council's work, examining what it has done and why it matters. It acknowledges there are many ways of working, all equally valid: what works in one country may not work in another.

It's divided into four sections with an executive summary at the beginning. Section one introduces approaches to disability arts. Section two gives an impression of the breadth of work. Section three provides a survey of activities, and section four contains case studies, finding stories and meeting artists.

There is a great deal to learn from those who have experienced what it means to be on society's margins, both as artists and disabled people. It is clear from the evidence gathered here that disabled artists are ready to play a critical role in reconnecting across cultures. Disabled artists have a tremendous contribution to make.



Tim Wheeler is an independent arts consultant and award-winning performance maker. He is a senior lecturer at the University of Worcester. His primary research interests are developing international dialogue through the arts, deaf and disability arts and cross-sectoral inclusive practice. He has an interest in creating work through personal experiences of trauma. He is the co-founder of and, between 1988 and 2014, was Artistic Director and joint CEO of Mind the Gap (UK), a theatre company that works with learning disabled and non-disabled artists. His version of John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* won the Stage/TMA award for Outstanding Achievement in Regional Theatre in 2002. In the 1990s, he collaborated with Augusto Boal to make Theatre of the Oppressed accessible to learning disabled artists in the UK. He developed Mind the Gap Studios, a £2.2m creation centre for disabled and non-disabled artists, which won a CABE Award in 2009. He has collaborated with artists in Brazil, China, Hong Kong, Europe, India, Taiwan and the USA.

‘What the British Council has done is not just any movement; it’s a revolutionary movement.’ Rabbi Mia, artist, Bangladesh on the British Council’s disability arts programme in Bangladesh

Executive summary

Aims of this report

Around the world, interest in disability arts is growing.

- Deaf, disabled and neurodiverse artists are gaining profile and presenting fresh artistic experiences that enable us to see the world in new ways. At the same time, Covid-19 has highlighted ongoing inequalities, motivating the cultural sector to explore different ways of working with disabled practitioners. Campaigns such as [#WeThe15](#) and [#WeShallNotBeRemoved](#) have galvanised those seeking change.
- In response to a continuing lack of disabled people represented in international arts and culture, the British Council has commissioned this report to:
 - support a greater understanding of the breadth and impact of its work in disability arts since 2012.
 - examine how arts and disability programmes can improve lives and create change.
- This research examines evidence from over 350 arts and disability projects in 54 countries and seeks to understand the changes they brought about.
- The report includes learnings and professional resources that may interest others working with arts and disability, such as policymakers, funders, researchers, organisations and practitioners.
- However, it stops short of making global recommendations to allow people in different countries and contexts to determine their own paths towards more equitable practice.

Key findings

The report recognises the positive impact of the British Council’s work in disability arts by:

Raising profiles

- **Supporting UK practitioners.** With the British Council’s support, UK arts and disability practitioners are recognised as leaders in the field and are consulted widely by international organisations.
- **Platforming international practitioners.** The British Council has supported international disabled professionals to collaborate with UK counterparts and present work at key UK festivals, including the Unlimited festivals and DaDaFest.
- **Backing disability arts events.** High profile festivals and conferences have taken place in countries including South Korea, Indonesia and Qatar, with the British Council as a lead partner.

Changing perceptions

- **Broadening experiences.** By encouraging audiences, arts professionals, and policymakers to engage with disability arts, the British Council has helped reframe perceptions of disabled people in the UK and worldwide.
- **Innovating artistically.** For instance, fashion and performing arts specialists from the UK and Rwanda explored how disabled perspectives on design, the body, and storytelling could spark new artistic and technical ideas.

Brokering international connections

- **Linking organisations and networks.** The British Council has made a significant contribution to developing the international links of key cultural players such as the Unlimited commissions programme, Southbank Centre's Unlimited festival, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and IETM – International Network for Performing Arts.
- **Hosting the international industry.** The British Council's Unlimited Showcase, alongside the Southbank Centre's Unlimited festival, invites professionals from all over the world to experience UK disability arts. Most of the projects in this study grew out of the showcase.
- **Fostering cross-country collaborations.** For example, Graeae theatre company (UK) collaborated with organisations and artists in Bangladesh, Japan and the UK, adapting Shakespeare's *The Tempest* for the Tokyo 2021 Olympics.

Building legacies

- **Helping to establish new companies.** New inclusive performing arts companies – the first companies of their kind – were set up in Armenia, Bangladesh and Indonesia.
- **Making change through partnerships.** The Europe Beyond Access partners, including the British Council, produced a network that encouraged a €2.44 billion EU cultural fund to prioritise disabled artists and access to arts.
- **Continuing the Olympic legacy.** Thanks in part to the British Council, many countries have established a major disability arts platform alongside their Olympics and Paralympics Games. This follows the model set by London 2012.
- **Amplifying new voices.** Three-quarters of the UK and international artists interviewed for this report said that working with the British Council made them more likely to work internationally in the future.

Dancers from Oak Field School in *Hairspray*. Part of *11 Million Reasons to Dance*, a touring photographic exhibition by Sean Goldthorpe commissioned by People Dancing.



Future recommendations

However, there is still work to do, and the report recommends an increased focus on:

Extending reach. The British Council's work with disability arts could be expanded to more countries and the organisation should continue advising countries on disability arts platforms alongside the Paralympics.

Equal relationships. The British Council would build more trust amongst UK artists by focusing more on helping them to exchange skills and inspiration with their peers in other countries, and by placing less emphasis on the UK as a model of best practice.

Culture and development. There is a lot we could learn in the UK from deaf and disabled artists who have been able to marry their socially engaged work with their commercial practice.

Research and knowledge. The British Council could support more research-based work and knowledge exchange between academics and practitioners.

Evaluation. There should be more opportunities for artists, practitioners and evaluators to work together to develop new ways of evaluating the impact of cultural projects.

Hybrid connections. The British Council, and the cultural sector in general, could consider how to support more disabled artists to develop an international community that blends digital and in-person practice.

Leadership and governance. Building on its support for leadership training the British Council could help develop disabled people's engagement in governance, within disability arts and inclusive practice, and in the wider cultural sector.

Disabled artists in mainstream programmes. The British Council could support more disabled artists in its mainstream arts programmes in addition to disability centred programmes.

While there is still much more to do, the stories in this report will hopefully inspire others to explore how arts and disability projects can expand our horizons.

‘Throughout history in every country, disabled people have faced enforced exclusion.’

Notes for readers

Methodology

This study focuses on deaf and disability arts, and inclusive arts activity between 2012 and 2020. My team researched between February and November 2020. We gathered evidence from 54 countries where the British Council has supported disability arts and inclusive practice.

Specific research included:

- Three case studies on work in Bangladesh, South Korea and Indonesia
- Interviews with British Council staff in Rwanda and two artists who had developed work in the country: one Rwandan artist and one UK disabled artist
- Interviews with three disabled artists, two disabled leadership consultants and five inclusive arts company representatives in the UK
- A brief review of work in Europe through desk research and interviews with British Council staff
- A review of literature. See Selected bibliography (Appendix 4).

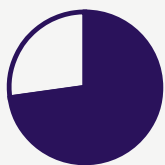
The pre-Covid plan had been to make a study visit to two countries – South Korea and Rwanda – to witness impact first-hand. Instead, all interviews took place online.

We received reports on more than 350 activities (projects and programmes) from British Council offices. These reports provided the material we used to analyse artform, location and activity, in Section two: Mapping the British Council's work. Types of activity were either designated within reports or interpreted by the researchers from report narratives. It was not always possible to assess the exact nature of each activity. We return to themes of evaluation, data gathering and analysis in conclusion.



44

artists and organisational representatives interviewed



73%

identified as deaf, disabled or neurodivergent people

We conducted in-depth interviews with 44 artists and organisational representatives, of which 32 (73%) identified as deaf, disabled or neurodivergent people. We also interviewed colleagues from British Council offices. All discussions used a standard set of interview questions (Appendix 3). Our questions focused on the interviewee's perceptions of cultural, social, and economic change due to their engagement with the British Council.

Later in 2021, a British Council staff member contacted colleagues in countries the report focuses on, fact-checking information, collecting updates, and creating a list of resources (Appendix 1).

All interviews were conducted in English. Some discussions involved translation, and some involved a series of translations, for instance, from English to Bengali, to Bangladeshi sign language, and back to English. A list of interviewees can be found in Appendix 2.

What? So what? Now what?

Evaluation of the material gathered was made using the What? So what? Now what? model devised by Rolfe et al. (2001).

- **What?** Description of what happened and what has changed
- **So what?** Why is this important? What made an impact? What questions are raised – in cultural, social and economic terms? What was surprising?
- **Now what?** What are the next steps? How can the findings guide future practice?

Language and terminology

The language surrounding disability can be confusing. When we talk about disability arts in the UK, we mean something specific. What does it mean in Bangladesh, Georgia or Indonesia?

Where possible, the report avoids jargon and uses different terms depending on the context of the work. For instance, the term 'differently-abled' is often used in Bangladesh.

It has been common in the UK to use the term 'D/deaf' to differentiate between experiences. However, some practitioners see the term as outdated and divisive. This report uses 'deaf'.

Unlimited(s)

There are many mentions of 'Unlimited' in this report. It is important to clarify its use as the term has been used to refer to work created by different organisations.

'Unlimited' was first used by the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) to designate disability arts work created for the Cultural Olympiad, which accompanied London 2012.

In 2012, the Southbank Centre, London used 'Unlimited' as the name of what became its biennial festival of disability arts.

Arts Council England then commissioned Artsadmin, Shape Arts and Jo Verrent to run the Unlimited commissions programme. This programme has been delivered by Shape Arts and Artsadmin, and has been funded by Arts Council England, Arts Council of Wales, British Council, Creative Scotland, Spirit of 2012 and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

Tramway in Glasgow ran its own festivals with the name 'Unlimited' in 2016 and 2018. Like the Southbank Centre, it featured work created through the Unlimited commissions programme alongside other disability arts events.

The British Council was involved in all the above initiatives. It also used the title 'Unlimited' for some of its international disability arts programmes, such as Unlimited: Making the Right Moves.

The Unlimited commissions programme will become an independent organisation in 2022.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Ben Evans, Camelia Harahap, Rebecca Hinton, Rosanna Lewis, Hyppolite Ntigurirwa, Yoonjoe Park, James Tyson, Neil Webb, Susan Winter and Levenia Wirawan from the British Council, and the interviewees and British Council staff worldwide who facilitated the conversations. Thanks also to my co-researchers Maria Thelwell, Mike Ball and Professor Claire Cochrane. Design by Andy Stoneman from inspiredby*. I am indebted to Cathy Gomez for her thorough editing. Additional editing by Eleanor Turney. All efforts have been made to check facts. Any lingering errors are mine.

A complete list of acknowledgements can be found in Appendix 2.



Claire Cunningham in a poster for Unlimited festival. Image: Southbank Centre.

Section one: Approaches to disability arts

The medical model and the social model

Two models for discussing disability have dominated the UK's conversation for the past 40 years. UK charity Scope (2021) defines them like this:

- 'The **medical model** of disability says [a person's] impairments or differences disable people. The medical model looks at what is "wrong" with the person, not what the person needs. We believe it creates low expectations and leads to people losing independence, choice and control in their lives.'
- 'The **social model** says that people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment or difference. Barriers can be physical, like buildings not having accessible toilets. Or they can be caused by people's attitudes to difference, like assuming disabled people can't do certain things.'

In addition, two terms have been used increasingly in the UK. Both identify discrimination, though each has a different focus.

- **Disablism** focuses on discrimination or prejudice against disabled people.
- **Ableism** focuses on discrimination which favours non-disabled people.

They are often used interchangeably, though some have a preference over one or the other.

The British Council supports a social model approach to disability arts and inclusive arts practice.

Disability arts and inclusive arts

- **Disability arts** is work that disabled people lead. It may or may not be about disability issues, and it may or may not involve non-disabled practitioners. Significantly, power and control rest with the disabled practitioner.
- **Inclusive arts** involves both disabled and non-disabled people and is often led by non-disabled practitioners.

The British Council does not impose either of these positions as there are many ways disabled people engage with the arts worldwide.

Neither of these definitions is explicitly designed to help us understand disability arts and culture. There is a need for a more in-depth discussion about the purpose of art-making by disabled people.

This study does not look at the arts as a therapy or for purely recreational purposes.

Artistic approaches

Disabled academics such as Petra Kuppers (2014), Tobin Seibers (2010), and Tom Shakespeare (2006) have begun to articulate a more nuanced definition of disability art and culture. They offer ways to critically reflect on the artistic processes and products of disabled people using the language of disability culture and aesthetics rather than social or medical terms.

The following is a brief overview of some different approaches to disability arts. It's intended to be a starting point for discussion, not a final list. The aim is to help us think about the aesthetic and political impact of disability arts initiatives.

- **Arts therapy:** Aligned with the medical model of disability, practitioners aim to use the arts for therapeutic effect, cure a condition or alleviate suffering.
- **Outsider Art:** Work that exists outside the influences of the dominant culture, for instance, in psychiatric institutions.
- **Aesthetics of difference:** Sees diversity of experience in artists as a strength, an expression of the beauty of human variation and a way to share new perspectives.
- **Arts activism:** Uses arts practice to confront social barriers, sometimes as part of direct action, and challenges socially defined issues such as discrimination.
- **Disability Pride:** Events that are about being 'out and proud'. They often foreground outrageous humour, extravagance, cabaret and procession to show joy within the disability community.
- **Aesthetics of access:** Art that integrates access tools (such as sign language or audio description) into the creative process as work is made, so that it's a core part of the art rather than an 'add-on'.

'Disability arts is the last remaining avant-garde movement.'

Yinka Shonibare, artist

In brief

The British Council supports a social model approach to disability arts, which says that social barriers rather than individual impairments disable people.

The organisation works with both disability arts (led by disabled people) and inclusive arts (often led by non-disabled practitioners).

The sector can consider the artistic impact of disability arts by exploring approaches such as aesthetics of difference, arts activism and aesthetics of access.

There is a need for deeper critical reflection on disability arts practices.



A *Different Romeo and Juliet*, produced by the British Council and Dhaka Theatre. Photograph: Tanvir Murad Topu.

Section two: Mapping the British Council's disability arts work

Around the world



What has the British Council done?

The British Council supported disability arts work in 54 countries, including the UK, from 2012 to 2020. Projects include one-off events: performances, collaborations, conferences, workshops, residencies and training. They are usually part of a longer-term programme.

Alongside the UK and international partners, British Council staff have devised and supported skills, leadership and professional development opportunities and worked with government departments to influence policy development.

The organisation was a founding partner of the first Unlimited initiatives, and in 2012, it ran its first Unlimited Showcase. This is an event alongside the festival for international disability arts professionals with talks, networking and ticket services. The showcase grew, attracting 50 delegates in 2012 and 150 delegates in 2018.

Most of the projects in this report used the Unlimited Showcase as a platform to start conversations, introduce artists or inspire partners. For instance, the idea for Unlimited Access, an EU programme, came about at the first showcase in 2012.

The Unlimited commissions programme has included two rounds of international collaborations, supporting collaborations between the UK and Brazil, China, Croatia, Germany, India, Japan, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Singapore and South Africa. The British Council has also partnered a placement programme helping international disabled arts professionals gain experience with the Unlimited commissions team – with placements coming from Australia, Cambodia, Germany, Israel, South Africa, Taiwan and Uganda.

The British Council provides training and advice for UK disabled artists about international working. As well as the Unlimited Showcase, it organises international research trips. These include visits by UK disability consultants to different countries and bursaries for practitioners to attend networking events, for instance IETM. It also invites overseas delegates to travel to the UK for events such as DaDaFest in Liverpool and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

It is not possible to report on all the activity within these pages. Instead, we aim to give a sense of the work's breadth. This section includes a broad overview.

For more detail, see Section four: International stories of change, which presents in-depth case studies from Bangladesh, South Korea, and Indonesia and an overview of work in Europe and East Africa.

British Council aims

The British Council's strategic priorities for its arts work, revised in 2021, are:

- **Artistic and cultural exchange.** Connect more UK artists and arts organisations to new global audiences, peers and opportunities, showcasing the full breadth and diversity of the arts and creative industries across the UK.
- **Creative economy.** Develop the capacity of creative entrepreneurs and policymakers to support sustainable creative economies and enterprises in their countries.
- **Arts responding to global challenges.** Position the UK as an active participant and partner in creating dialogue about and finding solutions to global issues, including the protection of heritage at risk, inclusion and equality and post-Covid recovery.

What is Official Development Assistance (ODA)?

Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) is also known as overseas aid.

The UK government uses its ODA budget to build stronger, safer societies and contribute to economic development in countries and territories that qualify for ODA. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) determines which countries are eligible.

54 countries and territories participated in over 350 disability arts activities with the British Council in 2012–20

Albania	Mexico
Algeria	Myanmar
Armenia	Netherlands
Australia	Nigeria
Azerbaijan	Occupied Palestinian Territories
Bahrain	Pakistan
Bangladesh	Poland
Brazil	Portugal
Canada	Qatar
China	Russia
Croatia	Rwanda
Egypt	Singapore
Estonia	South Korea
France	South Africa
Georgia	Spain
Germany	Sri Lanka
Greece	Taiwan
Hong Kong	Taiwan
India	Thailand
Indonesia	Turkey
Ireland	Tunisia
Israel	UAE
Italy	Uganda
Jamaica	Ukraine
Japan	UK
Jordan	USA
Kazakhstan	Vietnam
Kenya	

In 2020, the UK government reorganised its work overseas, merging the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to create the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).

The government also reduced ODA from 0.7 per cent of gross national income to 0.5 per cent. This will likely have a major impact on international development work.

The government has stated it will return ODA to a spending target of 0.7 per cent in the future.

How does ODA relate to the British Council?

The British Council receives income through earned income, partnerships and contracts, and UK government funding. A high proportion of the British Council's government funding is classed as ODA and intended for ODA-eligible countries. This is part of the government's ODA spending target.

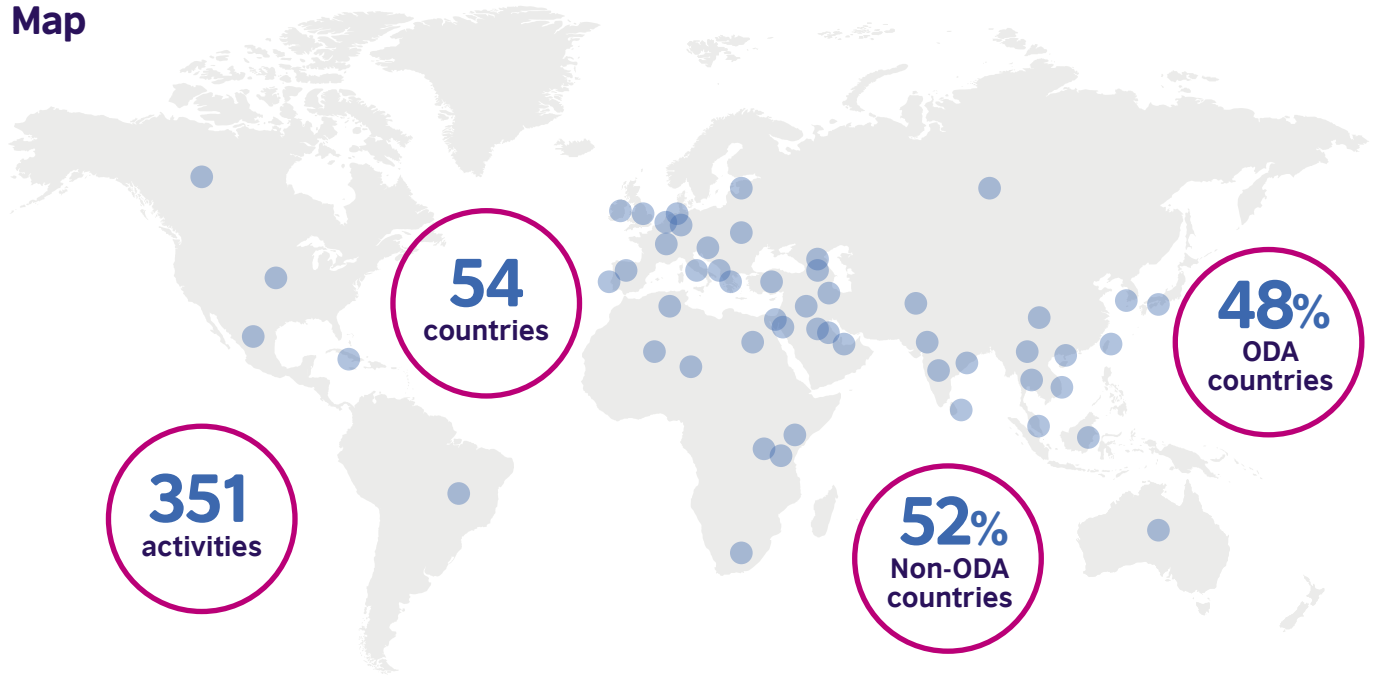
Therefore a significant part of the British Council's grant-in-aid is dedicated to low- and middle-income countries and comes from government funding that has been reduced since 2019–20. The OECD website gives a full definition of terms and a list of countries.

Data on the British Council's ODA spending is published on the FCDO website.



Candoco (UK) performs *Good Morning Everybody*, a collaboration with Eun-Me Ahn (South Korea). Photograph: Jinwon Lee.

Map



ODA

Official Development Assistance is also known as overseas aid.

Non-ODA countries

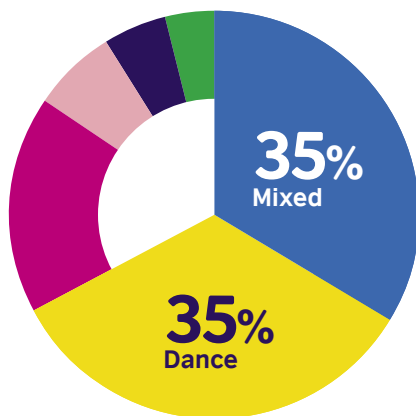
Countries/territories that don't qualify for ODA (higher income)

ODA countries

Countries/territories that receive ODA (lower and middle income)

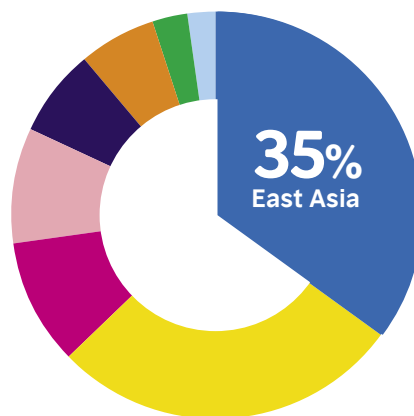
Analysis of projects

Artform



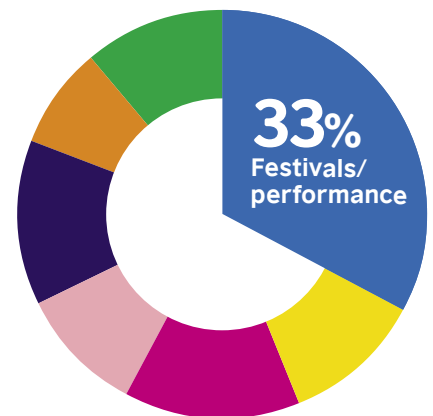
● Mixed	35%
● Dance	35%
● Theatre	18%
● Visual arts	7%
● Music	5%
● Film	4%

Location



● East Asia	35%
● Wider Europe	28%
● UK	10%
● Americas	9%
● Middle East and North Africa	7%
● South Asia	6%
● European Union	3%
● Sub-Saharan Africa	2%

Activity



● Festivals/performance	33%
● Workshops/residencies	14%
● Capacity building/artform training	13%
● Leadership development	11%
● Study tours/go-and-see visits	11%
● Networking	10%
● Talks/lectures	8%

Timeline

Key programmes

Paralympics events

2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southbank Centre's Unlimited commissions programme (UK, set up in 2008) Southbank Centre's Unlimited festival (UK) Unlimited International presents its first round of collaborations (UK) 	London, UK
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts and Disability Festival forms part of Qatar UK Year of Culture Unlimited Access begins (Europe, 2013–14) Unlimited commissions programme awards (UK) 	
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Arts International website launches (UK) Southbank Centre's Unlimited festival 	Sochi, Russia
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlimited commissions programme awards Unlimited: Making the Right Moves begins (Wider Europe, 2015–19) 	
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A Different Romeo and Juliet</i> premieres (Bangladesh) British Council Transform public programme (Brazil, set up in 2012) British Council UK/ID season begins (Indonesia, 2016–18) Southbank Centre's Unlimited festival Tramway's Unlimited festival Unlimited International second round launches (2016–18) 	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British Council UK-Korea season begins (2017–18) Unlimited commissions programme awards 	
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Europe Beyond Access begins (Europe, 2018–) Festival Arts and Disability: Beautiful Differences (South Korea) Festival Bebas Batas (Indonesia) Southbank Centre's Unlimited festival Sync Leadership programme (South Korea) Tramway's Unlimited festival 	Pyeongchang, South Korea
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British Council UK/Georgia 2019 season DARE – Disability Arts: Redefining Empowerment programme begins (South Asia, 2019–) 	
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Festival Bebas Batas (Indonesia) Unlimited commissions programme awards No Limits in Seoul digital festival (Korea) Sync Leadership programme online (Canada) 	
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British Council Unlimited Micro Awards Southbank Centre's Unlimited festival (postponed from 2020) <i>The Tempest: Swimming for Beginners</i>, Japan-UK-Bangladesh collaboration (Japan) Unlimited commissions programme (which will become independent in 2022) 	Tokyo, Japan (delayed from 2020)

Disability Arts International is a website, and digital newsletter developed and coordinated by the British Council in partnership with Disability Arts Online as part of Europe Beyond Access.

www.disabilityartsinternational.org

Europe Beyond Access supports disabled artists in Europe to break the glass ceilings of the contemporary theatre and dance sectors.

www.disabilityartsinternational.org/europe-beyond-access

Southbank Centre's Unlimited festival came out of the 2012 Cultural Olympiad. A biennial festival, it provides a platform for new commissions and existing work, shared with audiences worldwide.

www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/festivals-series/unlimited

Sync Leadership is a disabled-led programme exploring disabled arts leadership, founded by Sarah Pickthall and Jo Verrent, two disabled leaders based in the UK.

www.syncleadership.com

Tramway's Unlimited festival ran for two editions. Like the Southbank Centre, it featured work created through the Unlimited commissions programme alongside other disability arts events.

Unlimited Access was a European programme to support best practice in the commissioning, creation, dissemination and programming of performing arts by Deaf and disabled artists.

www.disabilityartsinternational.org/collaborations/unlimited-access-evaluation-report

Unlimited commissions programme is an arts commissioning programme that supports the creation of work by disabled artists within the UK and international cultural sectors. It includes UK-international commissions, partnered by the British Council.

www.weareunlimited.org.uk

Unlimited: Making the Right Moves was a British Council arts and disability programme with partners in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ukraine.

www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/current-projects/wider-europe



Liz Carr in a poster for Unlimited festival. Image: Southbank Centre.

In brief

The British Council's arts and disability programme encompasses over 350 events in 54 countries from 2012–20. This includes tours, exhibitions, collaborations, new commissions, visits, residencies, exchanges and policy development.

The organisation is a founding partner of the first Unlimited initiatives in 2012 and continues to partner the Unlimited commissions programme.

It established the Unlimited Showcase as an opportunity for the international industry to convene and experience UK disability arts.

The British Council's arts programme aims to connect UK artists and organisations internationally, support sustainable creative economies, and respond to global challenges through the arts.

A high proportion of the British Council's government grant is for ODA (overseas aid), targeted to specific countries and territories.

Section three: Surveying the British Council's disability arts work

What?

Key findings

- **UK's contribution to global disability arts**

With the British Council's support UK deaf and disability arts, and inclusive arts practice and practitioners have become recognised worldwide as leaders in the field.

International interviewees demonstrated knowledge of the UK's specific context and how its history and structures had fostered this development.

- **Sensitive international exchange**

All UK interviewees were keen to learn from the experience of engaging internationally, building trust and dialogue, and on the strengths of practice developed around the world.

They desire not to replicate the UK experience but to use it as an example and a spur to create distinctive practice. UK practitioners were aware of the privileges they benefit from but were also clear about systemic barriers which hamper equality of opportunity in the UK.

- **Large-scale events**

The British Council's activity increased from 2007 in the lead up to London 2012 and around subsequent Olympiads. The organisation and its partners saw the 2012 Olympics as an opportunity to amplify work by creating a platform for disability arts that would harness worldwide attention.

The British Council shared this model with other countries to great effect. Long lead times meant that additional preparations needed to support disability-related work could take place.

- **In-depth strategic work**

These additional preparations included infrastructural development, cultivation of disability leadership skills development. This ensured high-quality programmes and a meaningful legacy could be established.

As well as practical change, this brought creative benefits. For instance, Graeae's work with Dhaka Theatre explored the aesthetics of access: access was built-in rather than a bolt-on.

- **Relationships with key partners**

The British Council has been a significant partner in developing the UK-international connections of the Unlimited commissions programme, Southbank Centre's Unlimited festival, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and networks such as IETM – International network for contemporary performing arts.

These relationships have provided regular opportunities to showcase work, develop dialogue and broker relationships between UK artists, organisations, venues and funders.

- **Overall**

The British Council aims to amplify key messages of disability arts and inclusive practice. It uses its extensive worldwide connections to broker relationships between deaf and disabled UK artists and their counterparts in other countries.

The organisation facilitates dialogue between artists, organisations, venues, festivals, governments and policymakers to promote innovative practice. Its work has focused on disabled-led activity and an inclusive approach, rather than promoting recreational or therapeutic activity.

‘UK interviewees were keen to learn from the experience of engaging internationally.’



Stoppgap Dance Company in *Artificial Things*.
Photographer: Chris Parkes.

Cultural impact

The British Council has mainstreamed disability arts activity and promoted high quality, disability-led and inclusive initiatives, as exemplified in the case studies found in section three. Good quality work carries a message; it is valued for its artistic merit and its ability to challenge social and economic disadvantage.

This has opened up a new narrative within the arts in the UK and, increasingly, worldwide in the conversation surrounding disability culture and aesthetics. These discussions have been advanced through transnational engagement with the EU-funded Europe Beyond Access initiative.

The achievements of projects, many of which are explored in this report, include:

- **New inclusive performing arts companies** – the first of their kind – being set up in Bangladesh, Indonesia and Armenia.
- **High profile disability arts festivals and conferences** in countries including Indonesia, Qatar and South Korea have shared ideas, platformed artists and increased access for audiences.
- **Change through partnerships.** The Europe Beyond Access initiative has seven lead partners from eight countries, including the British Council. It has produced a network that encouraged a €2.44 billion EU cultural fund to identify disabled artists and access to arts as key priorities.
- **International industry gathering.** The British Council's Unlimited Showcase, alongside the Unlimited festival at the Southbank Centre, invites disability arts professionals from all over the world to experience UK disability arts. Most of the projects in this report grew out of the showcase.
- **Building the profile of UK and international artists.** For instance, the UK's Stopgap Dance Company performed at the Sochi 2014 Cultural Olympiad and Hana Madness (Indonesia) has presented at important UK disability arts festivals.
- **Cross-country artistic collaborations.** For example, Graeae worked on a transnational collaboration with partners and artists in Bangladesh, Japan and the UK, adapting Shakespeare's *The Tempest* for the Tokyo 2021 Olympics.
- **Developing emerging leaders.** The Sync leadership programme has supported exceptional individuals in Korea and Canada.

- **Innovation of form.** For instance, specialists in fashion and performing arts from the UK and Rwanda explored how design, the body and storytelling from a disabled perspective could spark new artistic and technical ideas.

Social impact

Globally, despite a few rare occurrences, disability is viewed negatively, often inspiring pity or fear. This has led to significant and persistent oppression of disabled people and their families. Today, disabled people and their allies are challenging these stereotypical views.

Disabled people face significant structural inequalities. The disabling effects of the built environment and discriminatory practices and procedures continue to negatively impact disabled people's lives.

All interviewees cited times when they had experienced this type of inequality. Their work has been affected by inadequate transportation systems and inflexible schedules. They have had to negotiate unrealistic touring plans and inaccessible buildings. They need considerable resilience to face this kind of experience, and even more to challenge it.

Arts and disability initiatives like the British Council's programme can't solve all these problems, but they can make a social contribution. People working with disabled artists can gain new awareness of barriers to access and make changes. Disabled artists can be seen as role models, and their work can offer alternative perspectives and visions of the future.

Economic impact

Disability led organisation Purple (2017) estimated that the spending power of disabled people and their families in the UK amounted to £249 billion a year in the UK. It is estimated that, globally, disabled people have around £1 trillion in annual disposable income. However, it should be noted that many disabled people live in extreme poverty.

Many interviewees felt that making a living would be ideal, though unlikely. For some, work is a route out of poverty. What was evident from the people I spoke to was the ingenuity of international disabled individuals, and their desire to actively contribute to their families and to broader society.

This report is not an economic impact study. However, the British Council's conversations with policymakers worldwide have included the economic benefits of developing access, skills, employment opportunities and leisure pursuits for disabled people. Disability arts programmes can highlight the benefits of developing these areas in the cultural sector.

Covid-19

The global pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities. According to the UK Office of National Statistics, disabled people account for more than 60% of those who have died due to the pandemic. As richer countries source vaccines more quickly than poorer countries, disabled people are disproportionately affected.

Many disabled practitioners live in lockdowns for large parts of their lives and have insightful experience to share. However, a large proportion have operated under additional economic hardship and psychological trauma since the beginning of the pandemic.

There have been gains, with some practitioners finding new opportunities to practice or experience art online. For instance, Unlimited festival presented most of its events digitally in 2021, reaching an online audience with over 7,000 views of its events.

At the same time, digital work has access issues for many. And there is a broader danger that, as culture and businesses worldwide continue a cycle of opening up and locking down, accessibility falls by the wayside.

In these circumstances, arts and disability programmes can address increased inequality and contribute fresh insights and perspectives to an enormous global challenge.

The British Council Unlimited Micro Awards are part of the British Council's response to Covid-19, supporting disabled artists in the UK and overseas to connect without travelling.

The consequences of these impacts are followed up in the next part: So what?

In brief

The British Council aims to amplify key messages of arts and disability practice. It uses its extensive worldwide connections to broker relationships between artists, organisations and policymakers and promote innovative practice.

The impact of this programme and disability arts work more widely can be considered in terms of cultural, social, and economic impact.

As the world responds to Covid-19, arts and disability programmes can address increased inequality and bring fresh insights.

What worked?

This British Council has supported the UK's distinct contribution to global disability arts.

Its work has featured sensitive international exchange, major large-scale events and in-depth strategic work, and it has helped key partner organisations to develop global connections.

Its programmes have nurtured new inclusive arts companies and high profile disability arts events.

The organisation has advocated for major changes in funding policy and created a regular gathering for the international arts and disability industry.

There have been cross-country artistic collaborations and support for emerging disabled leaders.

Public programmes have helped to build the profile of UK and international artists. New collaborations and new perspectives have brought artistic innovation.

Problems and learning

Although the British Council collected some hard data about its projects during this period, there was not enough in-depth and long-term data to accurately record the impact of its work with disabled artists. Some of the data collected was also interpreted in different ways by staff in different countries, making it difficult to analyse on a large scale.

The organisation has now set up a new data collection system. Its evaluation uses OECD markers. This ensures that it meets international standards and makes it simpler to compare British Council projects with other cultural initiatives from across the sector.

The British Council has also implemented a Theory of Change framework for planning and evaluating its global cultural projects, including a specific framework for disability arts projects.

See Resources for information on Theory of Change.

So what?

The Olympics legacy

The impact of London 2012 has been a game-changer for disability arts in the UK and worldwide. The model of establishing a Cultural Olympiad to run alongside all future Paralympics has been followed by others.

The Cultural Olympiads associated with Sochi 2014, Rio de Janeiro 2016 and PyeongChang 2018 provided high profile platforms. Using the marketing power and reach of the Olympics, host countries showcased their work with disability, with contributions from the UK. This brought opportunities and challenges, and an international audience.

The UK cemented its global leadership role in arts and disability through the British Council, the Unlimited programme and Southbank Centre's Unlimited festival. The British Council's input in the lead up to 2012 and its work with international partners developing legacy have had an important influence.

During the closing ceremony of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics, a new movement was launched. #WeThe15 is a human rights movement which aims to end discrimination across the globe.

However, the resonance of London 2012 has diminished over time, and there is a need to ensure the momentum continues.

The impact of Unlimited

The British Council's partnership with the Unlimited commissioning programme and the Unlimited festivals helped establish the name as a respected global brand, adding significantly to the work's impact.

Regular high-profile programmes and events focusing on Unlimited commissions, including the Unlimited festivals in 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2021, provided a significant amount of high-quality tour- and exhibition-ready work.

This supported the development of new, aspiring and previously unrecognised disabled artists and practice. It has championed the brand worldwide through its transnational programmes and countries that used the name with no direct association to the UK iteration. This has extended the reach of all parties, although also potentially blurred some boundaries.

Working with the British Council

In general, the work of the British Council worldwide is received positively by artists and organisations. Yet, some artists perceive the British Council as an arts funder. They expect the British Council to operate in the same way as the UK arts councils. This can lead to misunderstanding about how the British Council works and how artists can engage with the organisation.



Charmaine Wombwell and Jess Thom in *Not I*. Photographer: James Lyndsay.

There is much anecdotal evidence that activities supported by the British Council have been welcomed and led to positive change on a local and regional level. The practitioners we interviewed highlighted the value of the British Council's work influencing strategy and policy development.

However, a small number of interviewees were concerned about the extent to which the UK's image overseas was affected by its colonial past. They wanted to ensure their involvement with British Council programmes included rich and nuanced discussion with other countries, and they were anxious to resist over-claiming and self-congratulatory plaudits as part of this work. They also expressed disquiet around the notion of international disability arts exchange being perceived as a 'soft power' exercise, or used for purposes they did not intend.

British Council festivals and seasons

Most of the large-scale initiatives explored in this report were linked to the British Council's Festivals and Seasons programme. This programme uses the momentum of external opportunities such as major anniversaries and sporting events to gain support for high profile cultural platforms for the UK.

These events are developed with a wide range of cultural and funding partners and co-ordinated with government stakeholders in the UK and overseas. Designed to increase the UK's influence and attraction, they may be leveraged for diplomacy and business.

This programme has often featured disability arts strongly, for instance: Transform (Brazil 2012–16), Shakespeare Lives (2016), UK/Indonesia 2016–18, UK/Korea 2017–18, UK/Georgia 2019 and UK in Japan 2019–20.



Rehearsal for *The Tempest: Swimming for Beginners*, a collaboration between Owlspot Theatre (Japan), Graeae (UK), artists from Bangladesh and the British Council. Photographer: Victor Frankowski.

Changing perceptions

With its support of Graeae and Birds of Paradise theatre companies, the British Council has helped broaden experiences of disability aesthetics. Conversations about disability arts have gone beyond seeing disability in binary terms: associated with social barriers or medical problems. This encourages a nuanced debate that helps connect the work to mainstream issues and the broader arts world.

This helps to reframe perceptions of disabled people. Instead of being seen as burdens, they can be perceived as people who can make a meaningful contribution socially, culturally and economically. At a grassroots level, this reframing affects families and social and care networks. This shift cannot be underestimated.

Disability arts and inclusive arts

Across the cultural sector, few artists make a livelihood from their arts practice alone. This is the same within the disability arts and inclusive arts sector, though deaf and disabled artists experience significant hurdles and additional costs caused by structural inequalities.

The British Council has increased opportunities for disabled artists to make a living through their work. However, sometimes disabled artists do not gain financially. For example, in work involving non-disabled and learning disabled practitioners, it is often only the non-disabled practitioner who is paid, while the learning disabled practitioner remains on benefits. This can cause a significant imbalance of power within decision-making and questions the agency of learning disabled artists.

Intersectionality

The UK Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against someone based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, race, religion/belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Recently, conversations around the #MeToo movement, Black Lives Matters and #WeShallNotBeRemoved have helped to broaden discussions and work to encompass work at the intersections where disability meets with race, faith, sexuality and gender in the UK. There is increasing recognition that people have multiple facets to their identities.

Work happening in Bangladesh, South Korea and Indonesia can positively influence and deepen our understanding of intersectional working. British Council colleagues in Indonesia highlighted the significant work done by Indonesian deaf and disabled artists in this area.

Information and research

The Disability Arts International website is a useful repository for current and archive materials, but there is a need to reflect more deeply on practice.

The website aims to support the marketing of artists' work to programmers rather than for academic purposes. It is not designed for researchers to access data to link cause and effect, especially when results are beyond the horizon of short-term reporting. However, it could also be developed to serve this function.

The British Council has played a significant role in bringing these disparate voices and themes together. Disabled artists have been able to broaden their outlooks. They have also been able to assist in the development of leadership potential. There is nothing more powerful than to see new and aspiring disabled leaders emerge from this engagement. Courses like the Sync Leadership programme have provided a training ground, and festivals have not only showcased work, but have been places to develop an international conversation.

Deaf and disabled artists present a microcosm of the issues and concerns facing all within the arts and cultural sector. They do so more acutely. How do we resolve issues of inequality and inequity? How do we support the next generation? How do they access education and training designed with them in mind? How do we ensure deaf and disabled artists are able to make a living from their work? How do we address issues of quality, power and control? How can we help deaf and disabled artists to connect with each other across the globe?

Of course, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to a complex situation. The British Council has been able to provide an international platform from which to explore and address this complexity, gaining insight from many more perspectives.

In the next section, we look at potential ways the British Council could support future development. Now what?

In brief

The British Council's partnerships with the Unlimited commissioning programme and the Unlimited festivals have helped establish the name as a respected global brand.

The large-scale initiatives in this report are linked to the British Council's Festivals and Seasons programme, which uses opportunities such as major anniversaries and sporting events to find investment for high profile cultural platforms for the UK.

The British Council has helped to open up the notion of disability aesthetics, moving beyond simplistic narratives that focus only on social or medical perspectives. This helps to reframe perceptions of disabled people.

Recently, conversations around the #MeToo, Black Lives Matters and #WeShallNotBeRemoved movements have helped to broaden discussions and work to encompass intersectionality in race, gender, faith and neurodiversity in the UK.

What worked?

London 2012 was a game-changer for disability arts. It received worldwide attention for establishing a Cultural Olympiad to run alongside the Paralympics.

Thanks in part to the British Council's input and contacts, other countries have followed suit.

Problems and learning

A small number of interviewees were concerned about the extent to which the UK's image overseas is affected by its colonial past.

UK interviewees wanted to ensure their involvement with British Council programmes included rich and nuanced discussion with other countries, and they were anxious to resist over-claiming and self-congratulatory plaudits as part of this work.

They also expressed disquiet around the notion of international disability arts exchange being perceived as a 'soft power' exercise, or used for purposes they did not intend.

Now what?

Worldwide focus on climate change is set to profoundly affect how we work together in the future. Hybrid ways of working, which blend online and in-person activity, have been born out of the challenges presented by Covid-19. Organisations have had to pivot to meet the new reality.

Structural change at a UK governmental level, together with a diminishing amount of overseas development money, adds to the situation's precarity.

Despite difficulties, work has continued online. The Sync Leadership programme was delivered online for the first time in Canada in 2020. The Southbank's Centre took place mainly digitally in 2021, and the British Council Unlimited Micro Awards – small grants for UK and international artists to connect without travelling – launched shortly afterwards.

In other positive developments, the Unlimited commissions programme becomes an independent entity in 2022. Practice in some countries is advancing – see Marc Brew and Bora Kim in South Korea, Back to Back in Australia and Hana Madness in Indonesia. And the Indonesian government has emphasised the need for a global recovery from the effects of Covid-19 that is inclusive and creative.

More international exchange

For some UK artists, the effects of Brexit and Covid-19 mean they are seeking to broaden their international interests. With British Council support, many more disabled artists could develop a global presence. ACE also aims to support international development. This study recorded disability-related arts activity in 54 of the 100+ countries that the British Council operates in. This work could be expanded.

Navigating the current funding landscape

The effects of departmental change and decreased development funds from the UK government are unclear.

Disabled artists may need to broaden the kind of work they offer, allying to social and economic development and high-quality output. Social activist work is championed in non-arts environments and forms an important yet underdeveloped work area for the British Council.

This raises issues of instrumentality: should art be justified through its capacity to achieve measurable outcomes rather than its innate value?

Yet perhaps there is potential to support more socially engaged work that marries cultural, social and economic development goals more closely.



Dancer Sian Green in *Black Swan*. Part of *11 Million Reasons to Dance*, a touring photographic exhibition by Sean Goldthorpe commissioned by People Dancing.

Developing links between disabled artists

One of the most insightful observations made by an artist in an interview was that they felt more affinity with other disabled artists worldwide than they did with the disabled artists and disability arts sector in their own country.

There are currently no channels to allow regular communication between disabled artists other than ad hoc links. British Council initiatives like DARE in South Asia are beginning to address this issue in some parts of the world.

Sharing knowledge and practice

The National Disability Collection and Archive (NDACA) provides a useful repository of UK disability arts practice, and courses such as the MA in Inclusive Arts Practice in Brighton give opportunities to develop practice, context, overview and examples.

No archive or platform can include all work, so naturally, some practice falls outside an inclusive arts banner and, therefore, may be lost over time.

The sector would benefit from longitudinal research based on precise and concise monitoring and evaluation. There is plenty of good narrative material on activity and outputs, but more attention could be placed on data capture to help establish clear lines of evidence focused on impact and outcomes.

This is an issue across the arts and cultural sector, and the broader development field. Moreover, deaf and disability arts and inclusive practice are currently under-theorised. There is an opportunity for the British Council to significantly add to knowledge exchange within an academic and practice-based environment.

Blending digital and in-person work

Websites such as Disability Arts Online and Disability Arts International can help to inform practice.

A dividend arising from the Covid-19 experience allows online working, networking, and skills development cost-effectively.

Digital platforms will not replace the desire to meet and work together in-person, but a blended approach utilising the benefits of each approach would be cost-effective. How might the sector support more disabled artists to connect, make work, network and develop an international community of practice?

Continuing the Olympic journey

People will always want to engage in arts and cultural activities in-person. There are many different international arts and cultural festivals which the British Council could encourage to provide platforms, including the Olympic pathway: Beijing 2022 (winter), Paris 2024 (summer), Milan 2026 (winter), Los Angeles 2028 (summer).

Relationship between disability arts and mainstream arts

Disabled artists need an approach from all development agencies that support both disability-specific and mainstream festivals. Misplaced or mis-curated work can quickly have a negative impact. Some interviewees believe mainstream arts audiences are tired of seeing lots of similar work. Sharing fresh perspectives from disability culture can encourage audiences to reflect on our world in new ways.

In brief

This report calls for more international exchange, more knowledge sharing, and more links between disabled artists. More research should be done to reflect on the global impact of Covid-19.

The British Council should increase the number of countries it works with in disability arts and continue inviting countries to hold disability arts platforms alongside the Paralympics.

There is potential for the organisation to support more socially engaged work that marries cultural, social and economic development goals more closely.

How might the sector support more disabled artists to develop an international community that blends digital and in person practice?

Section four: International stories of change



Hana Madness. Credit: Hana Madness.

‘The most important thing now is to create a strong community. It is vital to have our voices heard, but it is also important to touch people's hearts and minds. When we've done it right, it will make us more prominent and more powerful. It's about connecting with other human rights issues, giving voice to voiceless and marginalised people. It is also about creating conversation and asking questions which need to be answered. If you stand up and fight against inequality, it is activism. I choose art as my weapon.’ Hana Madness

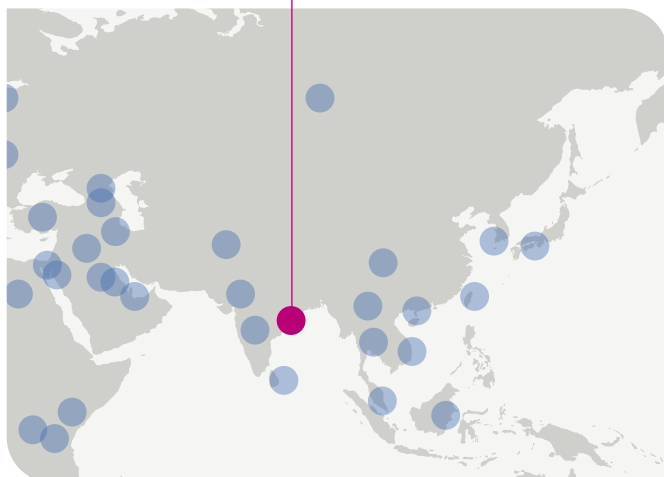
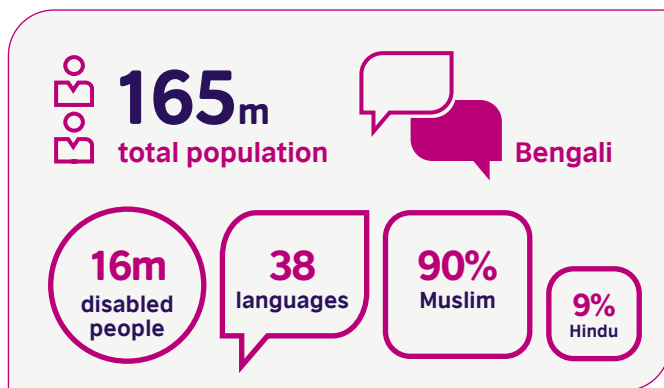
‘For the first time in the theatre’s history, we had an all deaf and disabled cast on stage...’

Jenny Sealey



Jenny Sealey directs a rehearsal for *A Different Romeo and Juliet* in Bangladesh. Photograph: Adnan Wahid.

Dismantling multiple barriers: Bangladesh case study



Timeline

- 2012**
 - Dhaka Theatre presents *The Tempest* at Shakespeare’s Globe, part of London 2012
 - British Council Bangladesh staff member visits Unlimited Showcase at Southbank Centre, also part of London 2012
- 2013**
 - Dhaka Theatre, Graeae and the British Council start work on *A Different Romeo and Juliet*
- 2016**
 - A Different Romeo and Juliet* premieres
- 2017/18**
 - Filmed performance of *A Different Romeo and Juliet* tours Bangladesh
- 2019**
 - New inclusive theatre company Shundaram presents *Fearless*
 - Launch of DARE (Disability Arts: Redefining Empowerment), a three-year disability arts programme
- 2021**
 - A British Council Unlimited Micro Award goes to a Bangladesh-UK music project
 - The Tempest* (Bangladesh/Japan/UK), part of Tokyo 2021 Cultural Olympiad

‘It was amazing. I could talk to so many different people from so many different countries and watch them work in their ways and learn from them.’

Lovely Khatun

What?

The British Council in Bangladesh focuses on developing deep and lasting connections between UK and Bangladesh arts organisations while developing training, showcasing and ‘go and see’ activity.

Dhaka Theatre, often referred to as Bangladesh’s National Theatre, has developed a long-term working relationship with UK-based theatre company Graeae, allowing the development of training and performance opportunities for Bangladeshi disabled performers and new insights for disability arts practice.

In 2012, Nasiruddin Yousuff – the Bangladeshi theatre and film director, political activist and founder of Dhaka Theatre – was invited to direct a production of *The Tempest* at Shakespeare’s Globe, London for Globe to Globe, as part of the World Shakespeare Festival in conjunction with London 2012 Cultural Olympiad.

Shortly afterwards, Eeshita Azad, then Head of Arts at British Council Bangladesh, attended the first Unlimited Showcase in London. On her return to Bangladesh, she organised a roundtable with local arts contacts, including Yousuff, to discuss disability arts. They acknowledged there was a lack of disabled performers on the Bangladeshi stage. Yousuff had a history of working with marginalised people through theatre and was inspired to do something new.

The British Council introduced Yousuff to Jenny Sealey, Artistic Director of Graeae. Together they formed a creative alliance with actor and director Samiun Jahan Dola and disability specialist, Limia Dewan, from Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), an NGO that tackles poverty and inequality.

They decided to stage an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* to be performed by disabled Bangladeshi actors. Yousuff and Dola began scouting for talent, and with Sealey, devised an actor training programme. They established a company of performers through regular visits.

They faced a typical challenge: Dhaka Theatre was based in a physically inaccessible building. So Yousuff set about knocking a hole in the side of the building. ‘He had the dressing room bathroom doors widened, and ramps installed backstage. For the first time in the theatre’s history, we had an all deaf and disabled cast on stage...’ (Jenny Sealey). Besides offering practical access, this became a highly symbolic act of transformation.

The theme of family is at the heart of *Romeo and Juliet*. For many disabled people, ‘family is the first barrier’ (Morshed Mia). Being disabled is seen as a burden. ‘The mother is the only friend of a disabled person in Bangladesh’ (Nasiruddin Yousuff). It is the mother who supports their disabled child and can determine their future.

From early on, one of the actors, Morshed, was determined to support his family. At the age of 10, he was bought a cow, and he began to look after it. When he was 15, he was given another cow. He started a herd. ‘It’s very difficult for us to earn a living through theatre. Of course, we earn a little once in a while, but this is not a stable way. Which is why I own a cow farm.’

Lovely Khatun’s parents were determined to support her. Early on, they recognised her talent: ‘My family noticed I would hear things on the radio and remember them and repeat them exactly how I heard. My parents would read storybooks and recite poetry and teach me how to recite. I became very interested in reciting. At school, I would sing to my peers. I would sing or recite to my teachers. I didn’t receive organisational instructions on being an artist; my family nurtured my artistic instincts. When I started working with Dhaka Theatre, I came in contact with many TV and radio personalities. Now, I am working in the same team as the TV and radio personalities. It’s very exciting.’

Being involved in *A Different Romeo and Juliet* gave the actors a different perspective. It also helped them be seen differently by audiences and wider society. ‘As I started to develop as an artist, the biggest change I noticed was how people’s attitude towards me became more positive, more accepting’ (Morshed Mia).

Samiun Jahan Dola took this as an opportunity to develop and augment the prosaic Bangladeshi Sign Language. It grew from a ‘language of necessity’ (Samiun Jahan) to a poetic gestural language, which could express nuance and complexity.

A Different Romeo and Juliet was performed on 26 March 2016 to 1,600 people. While there have been challenges, the actors have found the experience overwhelmingly positive.

What did the British Council do?

The British Council's contribution included identifying disability arts as an area of interest, creating space to develop a new idea, introducing key people from Bangladesh and the UK, engaging policymakers and government ministers, offering professional advice and support to the producers, funding the production at all stages, and helping to find and approach additional partners and funders.

So what?

Physical barriers are problematic but solvable. A wall can be seen and can be dismantled. It is more difficult to dismantle beliefs and attitudinal barriers. 'The biggest invisible wall we face is the stigma related to disabled or differently-abled people' (Morshed Mia).

But a hole in a wall can become a potent symbol of change. 'We realised we have power; we can bring about change.' (Morshed Mia). I went to my university, which was not accessible at all. I went to my teacher and used Dhaka Theatre as an example; they did this for us. I went to the hospital that wasn't accessible. I said Dhaka theatre did it. You are a hospital. Why can't you?' (Morshed Mia).

Art can become a part of everyday life. For some, it can provide employment. For others, it is part of several things that sustain them. It can also promote practical change.

Now what?

Following the success of *A Different Romeo and Juliet*, there was a desire to continue. A new company was formed, Shundaram, headed by Samiun Jahan Dola. The actors began work on a new piece that focused on young disabled women in Bangladesh. The show *Fearless* tackled rape and abusive power relations both inside and outside marriage. 'Fearless was a protest against the raping and harassment of disabled girls. This is such an important discussion, not only in Bangladesh but worldwide.'

Dhaka Theatre has been transformed, as have the lives of a group of disabled actors. The group collaborated with disabled artists from Japan on a new version of *The Tempest: Swimming for Beginners*, directed by Jenny Sealey, for the Cultural Olympiad alongside Tokyo 2020. It premiered in June 2021, part of the British Council's UK in Japan season.

During the development of *The Tempest*, the actors travelled to the UK to visit Graeae. 'It was amazing. I could talk to so many different people from so many different countries and watch them work in their ways and learn from them' (Lovely Khatun).

The actors would love to be engaged even more with productions. They remain in contact with Graeae. They recognise they have had a privileged opportunity and desire others to have an equal chance.

A filmed performance of *A Different Romeo and Juliet* was screened across seven provinces of Bangladesh during 2017–18. It got a positive reaction from audiences of disabled people and their families, who were keen to be involved in similar initiatives. Some practitioners would like to develop work focusing on specific impairments.

As a result, the British Council started DARE (Disability Arts: Redefining Empowerment) with Dhaka Theatre in 2019. DARE is a three-year programme taking place all over the country. So far it has included a consultation bringing together government, organisations and artists and workshops for disabled and non-disabled artists.

In 2020, while Covid-19 limited group activities, the partners produced online tutorials on inclusive theatre. There are plans to develop opportunities for training, productions, talks and a symposium on disability arts with participants from across South Asia.

During travel restrictions in 2021, a British Council Unlimited Micro Award for remote projects went to Rylan Gleave (Scotland) and Cox's Bazar Rohingya Musicians (Mojjafar Mia, Kamal Mustafa, and Mohammed Yousuf, Bangladesh) to explore new, collective ways of making art, drawing on the therapeutic benefits of music, and reflecting on how community influences music-making.

'We realised we have power; we can bring about change.'

Morshed Mia

Organisations

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), Bangladesh

Bangladesh Reform Initiatives for Development, Governance and Empowerment (BRIDGE), Bangladesh

Centre of the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP), Bangladesh

Dhaka Theatre, Bangladesh

Graeae, UK

Shunderam, Bangladesh

Southbank Centre, UK

Valerie Taylor Trust, Bangladesh



Dialogue: Graeae and Dhaka Theatre

Interviews with Nasiruddin 'Bachchu' Yousuff, Artistic Director of Dhaka Theatre, Samiun Jahan Dola, a theatre artist, working with Dhaka Theatre for the last 18 years, and Jenny Sealey, Chief Executive and Artistic Director of Graeae theatre company, UK took place separately online, and have been woven together here.

Jenny When we went to the theatre in Dhaka, I said 'it's not accessible', and they took sledgehammers to it. They knocked a hole in the wall and built a ramp. There was bewilderment amongst the workers, and the ramp wasn't quite the right gradient, but there was accessibility for disabled people for the first time in that theatre. It was one of those moments when you realise the power and commitment of this man [Bachchu].

Bachchu The British Council introduced me to Jenny Sealey, one of the top disabled directors in the whole world – she's an amazing person. She said, 'we have such negative images in foreign countries about Bangladesh. I am ready to work, day and night, for a country like this.'

Jenny Bangladesh is quite extraordinary. Bachchu came to the UK in 2012. He realised that there's nothing for deaf and disabled people in Bangladesh. So, I went over and started doing a whole series of workshops, with the idea that Bachchu would direct Shakespeare.

Dola We went all over Bangladesh collecting the artists for *Romeo and Juliet*. The women and girls were so shy; they are not allowed flexibility, especially in the family. I heard lots of stories which made me cry because they can't show themselves in the family. This is far away from them on the stage in front of a thousand people. It was a new horizon for them.

Jenny The first thing the actors said was, 'you have come to cure us, Jenny... 'we want you to cure us, we don't want to be like this'. F**k, what do I do? I'm not doing a workshop on that! So, I went right back to the beginning and did lots of things around the social model of disability. We created a manifesto, 'I am what I am, this is me', and some people watching might have thought, 'this is therapy'.

Many drama games are like that, being brutally honest about their stories and their narratives. It facilitated many conversations with people who had become disabled and the people who were born disabled. People being treated as outcasts and discarded from their families.

I was a white, deaf woman in Bangladesh with Jeni Draper, my sign language interpreter. I was leading but a lot of time, it was assumed that Jeni was leading.

Dola I had to learn sign language because the interpreter wasn't enough for us. When Juliet says, 'Give me my Romeo, and when I shall die, Take him and cut him out in little stars, And he will make the face of heaven so fine...'

It was hard to explain this line. You have to connect to this star as a lover. The interpreter was really in a profound challenge, 'How I can explain this? They will not understand.'

Bachchu Communication is complicated. One of the sign language experts of Bangla language said it in English and then the English translator, the second Jeni, was translating into sign language to Jenny Sealey.

Dola You don't need words to explain your emotion. You don't even need your eyes. You don't need your legs. You don't need your hands to pick up something. We exist together in this world. So, we will survive. We will make this world better and better. I think people will see our new way of life.

Jenny There were two Romeos, two Juliets, and two Tybalt's. We created an ensemble way of working. I love working overseas because they just try a way of working; they don't question it. I get so frustrated sometimes when they don't hear.

Dola Lovely Begum acted in it; she never performed before, but she completely understands each character. She has a wonderful, artistic soul. She can connect with every line.

Bachchu Rape is an alarming situation in Bangladesh. So, we have done productions with three disabled artists. That was a fascinating performance that Samian directed.

And we have formed a company called Shundaram. It means 'Beautiful'. We are telling our artists and people that they are beautiful. The British Council is helping us to establish this theatre company.

Dola I got a chance to work with Graeae for three months in London. It was an excellent experience to see how light and sound can work together for disabled people. I went to London with my Bangladeshi life, my culture, my attitude, my opinion. I wasn't the same person when I came back.

When I got back to Bangladesh, I directed *Fearless*, a drama about female issues and disabilities. It is more difficult for women in this society. If I am riding on a bus and someone touched me, I could indicate 'that guy touched me', but a blind woman can't.



A DARE workshop, run by the British Council and Dhaka Theatre, in Mymensingh, Bangladesh.



In brief

Disability arts wasn't on the agenda among Bangladeshi arts leaders until the British Council introduced the idea. Dhaka Theatre (Bangladesh) and Graeae (UK) created a new production, *A Different Romeo and Juliet*, presenting disabled performers on a high profile stage in Bangladesh for the first time.

The collaboration took place over four years. It included sharing different attitudes to disability, adapting Bangladeshi Sign Language and making physical changes to a key theatre building. Participants speak movingly about the change they experienced.

The project was driven by unique individuals who headed their own organisations. As well as the British Council, it was funded by NGOs and a trust.

A film of the performance toured the country and the performers reunited for a collaboration with UK and Japanese artists alongside the Tokyo Olympics.

Following this project, partners formed a new inclusive theatre company, Shundaram, in Bangladesh.

The British Council launched a disability arts programme with Dhaka Theatre, offering opportunities to a larger number of practitioners all over Bangladesh and in other parts of South Asia.

What worked?

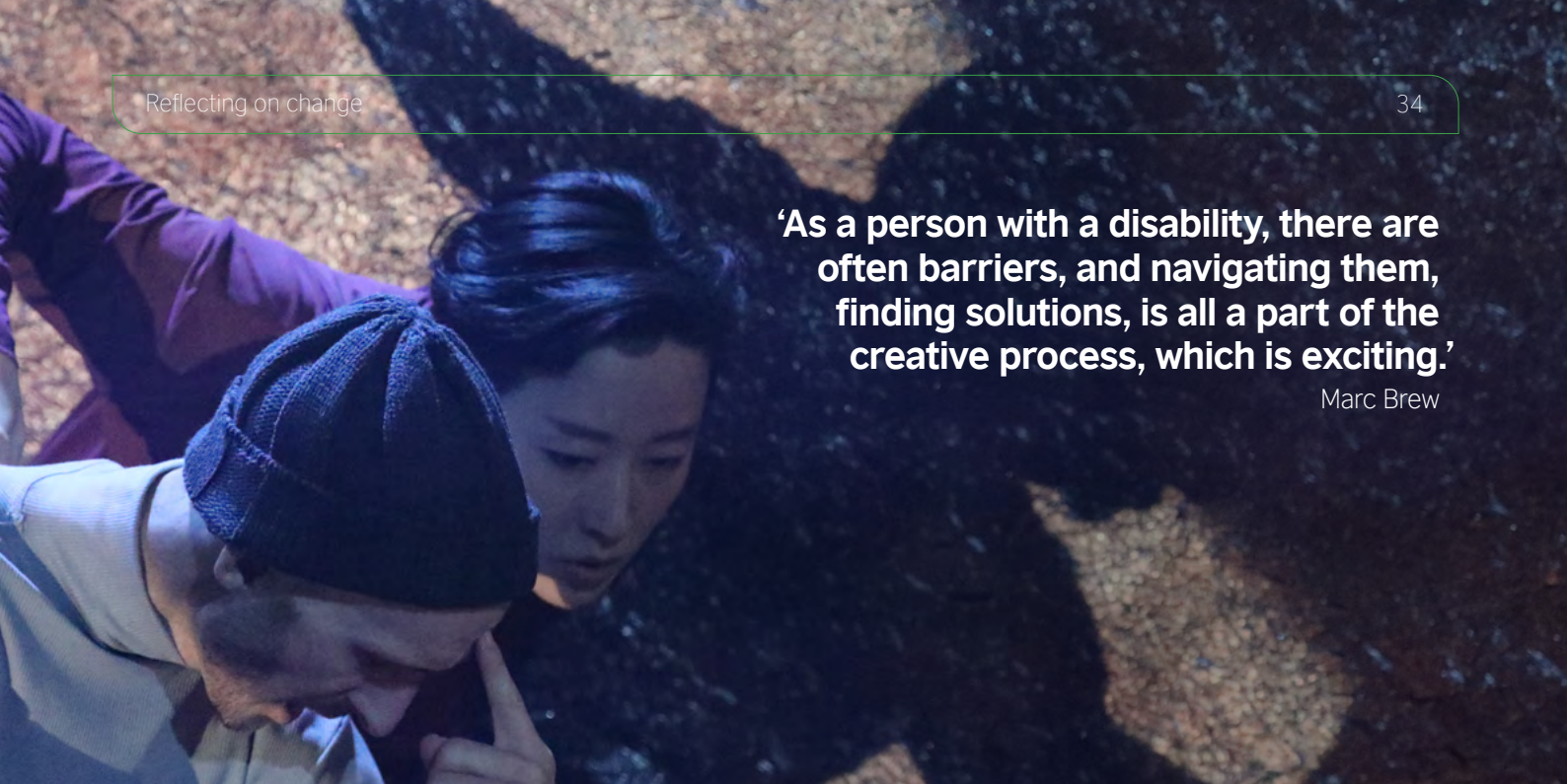
Introducing partners and ideas but stepping back from the creative decision making, so that the key people decided whether to work together and what they wanted to do together.

Problems and learning

Theatre companies in the UK have a much longer planning timeframe than those in Bangladesh. This meant one partner would sometimes need a firm commitment to a particular activity before the other partner was able to make one.

To address this, producers from both companies dedicated time towards working closely together and understanding each other's ways of working.

This helped them build a strong relationship, understand each other's constraints, and find ways to adapt.

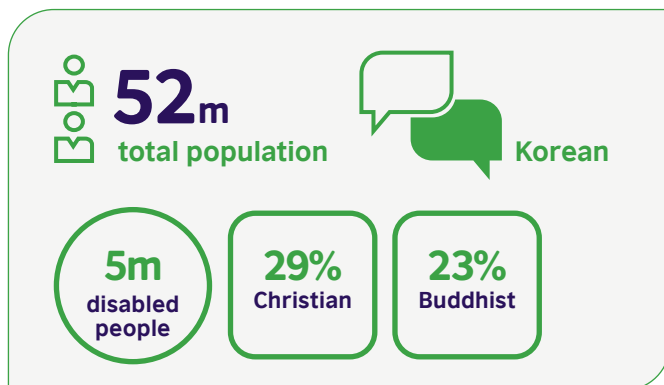


‘As a person with a disability, there are often barriers, and navigating them, finding solutions, is all a part of the creative process, which is exciting.’

Marc Brew

Marc Brew and Bora Kim. Photographer: Susan Hay.

Fast-moving change: South Korea case study



Timeline

- 2015**
 - Jo Verrent (Sync Leadership/Unlimited commissions programme) visit to South Korea
 - Marc Brew and Bora Kim meet during a visit as part of UK-Korea Dance Exchange
- 2016**
 - Korea Disability Arts and Cultural Centre (KDACC) formed
 - South Korea delegation visits Unlimited festival
 - UK practitioners speak at ThisABLED, UK-Korea arts and culture conference
- 2017**
 - Marc Brew and Bora Kim begin their collaboration
- 2018**
 - British Council’s UK/Korea season takes place
 - Festival Arts and Disability: Beautiful Differences, part of the PyeongChang 2018 Cultural Olympiad
 - South Korea delegation visits Unlimited festival
- 2019**
 - I-eum International Performing Arts Showcase: Alice Fox residency, Hijinx, Jo Bannon, Dan Daw
 - Attitude is Everything arts access guides translated into 11 languages, including Korean
- 2020**
 - No Limits in Seoul, a digital disability arts festival

‘There was real curiosity the whole way through the process. She had never worked with anybody with a disability.’

Marc Brew

What?

The British Council in South Korea has taken a systematic and comprehensive approach to disability arts development. Early projects included short residencies, ‘go and see’ activity and showcase performances by Candoco.

The organisation has supported the development of professional collaborations between UK and Korean artists, the Sync leadership programme, the rapid rise of Korea Disability Arts and Cultural Centre (KDAC) and the inception of inclusive arts practice. The British Council has helped to stimulate action and government policy development.

In 2009, the British Council supported a 48-hour inclusive design challenge with the UK’s Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design and disabled design partners. A journalist from Korea’s main broadcasting company refused to cover the event as the company feared complaints from its viewers. Now, the British Council is working with KDAC, an organisation that has an annual budget of £10m. The rate of change has been rapid.

Over the next few years, exchanges and new structures laid the groundwork for a new chapter in disability arts. In 2015, dancer and choreographer Marc Brew and Unlimited lead Jo Verrent conducted short study visits. The following year, KDAC was formed. In 2017, Verrent and Alice Fox spoke at ThisABLED, a high profile UK-Korea arts and culture conference funded by the British Council and Arts Council Korea, which explored inclusion among other subjects.

In 2018, the British Council and Arts Council Korea organised Festival Arts and Disability: Beautiful Differences, as part of the 2018 PyeongChang Cultural Olympiad and the British Council’s UK-Korea 2017-18 season.

Marc Brew (UK) and Bora Kim (South Korea) presented *Zero: Restriction Body and Time* for the first time. Candoco (UK) and Eun-Me Ahn (South Korea) premiered *Good Morning Everybody. 11 Million Reasons to Dance*, an exhibition commissioned by People Dancing from photographer Sean Goldthorpe, was shown at I-eum Arts Gallery. The Sync leadership development programme underpinned the work.

Work continued in 2019, with a presentation of *Meet Fred* by Hijinx, *Exposure* by Jo Bannon and *On One Condition* by Dan Daw. Alice Fox led a residency at Seoul National Art Museum, developing an inclusive arts project.

In 2020, a disability arts festival – No Limits in Seoul – moved online due to Covid-19 travel restrictions. The programme featured *Artificial Things* with Stopgap Dance Company, *Scored in Silence* by Chisato Minamimura, *Into the Light* by Hijinx and *Unspoken Spoken* with Candoco, alongside a talk on developing accessibility in the arts and leadership development by Sync.

What did the British Council do?

The British Council’s UK/Korea 2017–18 season coincided with the Winter Olympics in PyeongChang. It attracted investment into high profile platforms for artists, including Festival Arts and Disability: Beautiful Differences.

More generally, the organisation’s role included creating a strategic plan to develop disability arts, advocating to policymakers, developing partnerships with key organisations in the UK and South Korea, co-designing and supporting visits to both countries, co-organising conference and showcase events, providing information on and introductions to the UK sector, funding almost of the above projects and helping to find additional funding partners. The organisation has advocated for mainstreaming disability arts and for better access to the arts.

So what?

Activity has taken place on a policy and strategy, training and performance level. Disability arts has taken a massive leap forward.

The British Council has pursued a coherent plan focused on presenting high-quality work by leading practitioners, engaging local disabled artists, and introducing UK models to help the South Korean sector develop an infrastructure to nurture and grow new talent.

The aim has been to raise the profile of the work and encourage more people – arts practitioners and audiences – to be interested in disability arts. Emphasis has been on inclusion.

Some interviewees expressed concern that change in Korea has occurred so rapidly, it may lack deep roots.

The UK disability arts sector draws strength from a robust social and political movement that campaigns for deaf and disabled people to be genuinely at the heart of power and decision-making processes.

There's a worry that Korea's emphasis on inclusion could see control remain in the hands of non-disabled people. This doesn't have to be the case with inclusive practice: power-sharing is possible, though it often requires an unbalancing of the status quo which can be uncomfortable.

There is also concern that education at all levels is yet to fully engage, which means investment in aspiring and emerging artists is essential.

Deaf and disability arts still lack sufficient research. New practitioners have to attempt skills development without access to training and educational opportunities. Experience in the UK suggests there is a role for arts companies to offer these opportunities when mainstream providers are reluctant to change.

Now what?

South Korea has become a significant presence in the East Asian disability arts scene.

South Korea is both a collectivist and competitive culture used for rapid development. At the same time, it has only just begun to develop a coherent disability rights movement aimed at challenging public perceptions. There is a great deal for the UK disability arts sector to share and learn.

Future plans are currently paused but have included discussions with the National Theatre and Birds of Paradise.

For one UK interviewee, there is a perception of cultural and political fatigue within the UK. Engagement with a dynamic culture like South Korea has value as it might re-invigorate developments in the UK.

‘Hijinx took *Meet Fred* to South Korea in 2019. The British Council supported it, and we worked very closely with them. We felt completely cared for and valued.

The show remains the same everywhere we do it. The only difference is surtitling. We offer this translated into whatever language it's being performed in.

We did a workshop while we were in South Korea with an organisation working with learning disabled and autistic adults. [Theatre is] not ingrained within the participants and often, they're coming from a place of very little experience. We're starting very much at the beginning.

Our work relies quite heavily on the ability to accept mistakes and failure. It's part of the creative process. We make mistakes, and sometimes those mistakes are the best part of what we do. In South Korea, it's difficult to make a mistake or to be seen to have made a mistake. It changed the dynamic within the workshop. There was a feeling that people were holding back quite a lot because of that fear of being shown up.’

Ben Pettitt-Wade, Artistic Director, Hijinx

‘I changed my perspective of disability arts and choreography altogether. I started to reconsider my work and my choreography, which helped me develop a new chapter of my work.’

Bora Kim

Organisations

Art Project BORA, South Korea
Arts Council England, UK
Arts Council Korea, South Korea
Attitude is Everything, UK
Marc Brew Company, UK
Candoco, UK
Creative Scotland, UK
Graeae, UK
Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design, Royal College of Art, UK
Hijinx, UK
Korea Disability Arts and Cultural Centre (KDACC), South Korea
Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, South Korea
National Theatre of Modern and Contemporary Art (MMCA), South Korea
People Dancing, UK
Seoul Art Space Jamsil, South Korea
Shape Arts, UK
Southbank Centre, UK
Stopgap Dance Company, UK
Sync Leadership, UK
University of Brighton, UK
Unlimited commissions programme, UK
VocalEyes, UK

Independents

Eun-Me Ahn, South Korea
Jo Bannon, UK
Dan Daw, UK
Wonyoung Kim, South Korea
Chisato Minimamura, UK



Dialogue: Marc Brew and Bora Kim

This dialogue comprises two interviews separated by 5,340 miles, 21 days and eight time zones.

Marc Brew, artistic director, choreographer, dancer and teacher, with Marc Brew Company, and Bora Kim, artistic director and choreographer of Art Project BORA worked together to create *Zero: Restriction, Body and Time* and performed it at the Beautiful Differences festival of disability arts in 2018. The piece was devised during a five-week residency in Seoul, commissioned by the British Council and supported by Creative Scotland.

Bora It wasn't easy for me to agree to work with Marc, because I usually prefer to work with people I'm familiar with over an extended period. I like to take my time and work with people I know. This posed a big challenge for me as an artist, but it created this amazing synergy in the end and created something great on stage.

Marc I love, absolutely love, collaborations, and I've been doing a lot more in recent years. I love barriers. As a person with a disability, there are often barriers, and navigating them, finding solutions, is all a part of the creative process, which is exciting.

Bora I was apprehensive about it. I thought everything about my work or choreography would have to be reset. Still, I realised this difference between these two realms would give rise to something new, something innovative. That's when I changed my perspective of disability arts and choreography altogether. I started to reconsider my work and my choreography, which helped me develop a new chapter of my work.

Marc I think with Bora, I just connected. She was also a choreographer who made her work with a producer. We both use improvisation as well as set material. She had a clear aesthetic: strong, physical. It was also quirky and went to uncomfortable, interesting places I was excited by as a fellow choreographer.

Bora I liked to do everything fast – speed is the key to everything in Korea, to try to get results quickly. There are advantages and disadvantages of this approach. Through this process of working with Marc, we realised that speed was not always the answer to everything.

Marc Because sometimes, going through translations takes longer, and being in dance, we work so closely, we were able to learn a lot more about each other, I think, rather than just talking to each other.

Bora When it comes to Marc, I understand that he started as a non-disabled choreographer and dancer, and then he became disabled through an unfortunate accident. We already had art that helped us communicate across this boundary. We were able to come up with a very highly sophisticated piece of art.

Marc There was real curiosity the whole way through the process. She had never worked with anybody with a disability. One of the best things was having to get over the fear, and it's like, 'hey, I'm not going to bite, my wheelchair might!'

Marc Brew and Bora Kim in *Zero: Restriction, Body and Time*.
Photographer: Susan Hay.



Bora We, of course, have different backgrounds, different languages and different body structures. Still, the people who brought us together made it easier for us to get to know each other from different perspectives.

Marc I love being immersed in a foreign country and culture and socialising together. It was about being in the studio and immersing yourself in Seoul, and of course, being artists. When we had a day off, we went to galleries and went exploring.

Bora As far as Korea's situation, I don't think that there's enough support or funding for disability arts, especially compared to the non-disabled sector. There are not enough festivals or performances or opportunities out there reserved for disabled artists or disabled artists to work together with non-disabled artists.

Marc I feel like there's more risk-taking in some ways because there's so much rigidity and conformity. Just being there and seeing how immaculate everyone dresses and behaves and are all so respectful, just being on the subway. It's like the cleanest subway; no one talks to each other. They sit there politely.

But down on the other side, there's this different dimension of hysteria and going to these intriguing, unexpected places. There's almost like there's this dual personality in that culture, which I love.

Bora We attracted a lot of attention from many different organisations and different countries. We had three invitations from three other countries after the work was completed, and we are trying to work out the right kind of schedule between Marc and me at the moment. As well as the British Council, our producers are doing everything they can to promote this work to different venues and countries worldwide.

In brief

The Winter Olympics, new investment and a new institution helped Korea's disability arts scene to develop rapidly over just a few years.

The British Council enabled a range of UK and Korean partners and artists to visit each other's countries and start working together in 2015. Three years later, a new disability arts platform premiered two UK-Korea collaborations, as part of UK-Korea 2017-18.

A disability arts showcase followed in 2019, and a digital festival in 2020. These events have greatly raised the profile of disability arts in Korea, encouraging participation.

Key partners include the Korean government, Arts Council Korea and KDAC, a new disability arts organisation.

UK specialists have shared learning, helping activity to increase at a professional standard and a fast pace. There is potential for the UK to learn from Korea's dynamic culture.

Korea's projects have focused on inclusive arts, which questions how disabled people will share power in the future.

What worked?

Strong long-term relationships with key organisations, including an existing partnership with Arts Council Korea and a new relationship with Korea's new disability arts organisation KDAC.

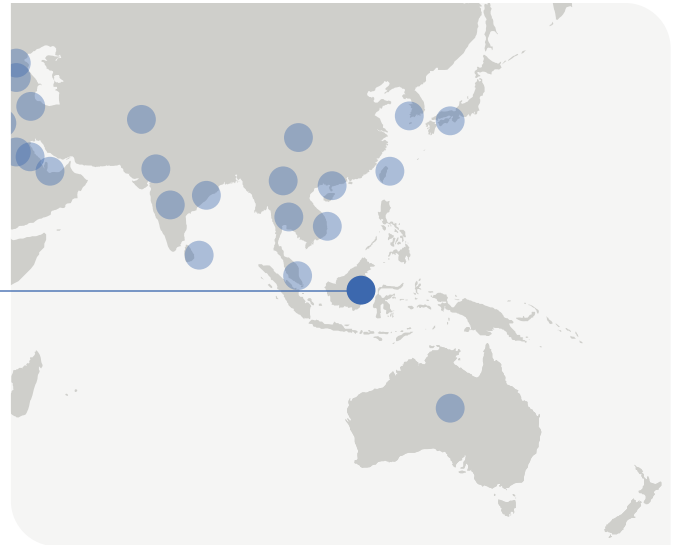
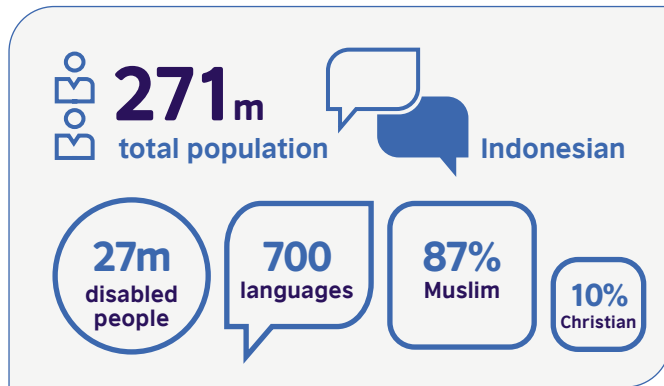
This enabled partners to collaborate on big initiatives and learn from each other.

Problems and learning

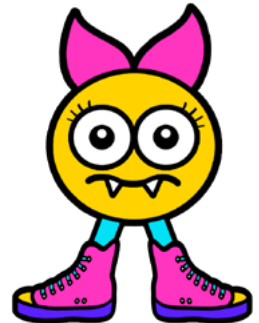
The British Council's overall timeline for its disability arts programme focused on delivery rather than preparation and long-term impact.

Staff feel in hindsight, it would have been useful to allocate more time for market research, stakeholder mapping and consultation with practitioners in both countries before planning an intervention.

A festival of collaborations: Indonesia case study



Images: Hana Madness



Timeline

- 2016**
 - British Council's UK/ID season
 - Study visit to Indonesia by Jo Verrent (Unlimited commissions programme)
 - Indonesian delegations visit Unlimited festivals in Glasgow and London
- 2017**
 - Arts and disability mapping by the Centre for Disability Studies, Brawijaya University
 - Ballet.id's Second Indonesian Ballet Gala launches new company CANdoDANCE in collaboration with Candoco (UK)
 - UK artist Caglar Kimyoncu residency at Padepokan Seni Bagong Kussuardja (PSBK)
- 2018**
 - Indonesian curators visit Arts and Disability International Conference and True Colours Festival in Singapore
 - Roundtable on arts events for the Asian Paralympic Games, with the UK's DaDaFest and Epic Arts
 - Festival Bebas Batas in Jakarta, at the same time as the Asian Paralympic Games, features numerous Indonesia-UK collaborations
- 2019**
 - Caglar Kimyoncu works with PSBK and Indonesian artists to present transmedia installation
 - DICE grants include three Indonesia-UK projects with a disability arts focus
 - Indonesian disability arts practitioners go on a UK study visit partnered by DaDaFest
- 2020**
 - Connections through Culture grants include four Indonesia-UK disability arts projects
 - Animation by Hana Madness (Indonesia) and Alexis Maxwell (UK) screens at DaDaFest
 - Inclusive workshop for Indonesian filmmakers with Scottish Documentary Institute and In-Doc
- 2021**
 - Hana Madness speaks on a panel discussion as part of Unlimited festival
 - Two British Council Unlimited Micro Awards go to Indonesia-UK projects
 - Writing for Inclusion, online inclusive journalism training run in partnership with Disability Arts Online, Alliance of Independent Journalists and KamiBijak

What?

British Council Indonesia aims to involve many artists in its disability arts development work. It acts as a catalyst, bringing people together so they can learn from each other. Its focus on disability arts coincided with a cultural industries development programme that supported individual artists to connect with the commercial sector. It also coincided with UK-Indonesia 2016-18, a three-year initiative growing links between the two countries that invested in visits and collaborations.

British Council staff in Indonesia recognised that there were already pockets of disability arts activity, but it wasn't clear if this was professional or recreational in intent. They commissioned a disability arts mapping exercise led by Slamet Thohari of the Centre for Disability Studies and Services at Brawijaya University. This identified three areas as problematic: the social stigma and infrastructural inequalities surrounding disabled people, the lack of curatorial ethics, and the dominance of non-disabled people as cultural brokers.

In 2016, Indonesian professionals visited the Unlimited festivals in London and Glasgow: disabled artist-activists Hana Madness and Annisa Rahmania; and Mariska Febriyani and Belinda Oh, two dance producers from Ballet.id. The following year, inspired by the visit, Ballet.id devoted its second Indonesian ballet gala to inclusive dance.

The gala also established CANdoDANCE, an inclusive company of Indonesian deaf and hearing dancers formed by Ballet.id in collaboration with the UK's Candoco. It came out of a two-part residency led by three Candoco artists. CANdoDANCE premiered its first piece alongside Candoco's Studies for C and six short pieces, almost all created or performed by disabled dance artists from around the world.

In 2017, UK digital and video artist Caglar Kimyoncu took up a one-month residency at the Padepokan Seni Bagong Kussudiardja (PSBK) art complex to explore notions of identity. Kimyoncu returned in 2019 to develop his work with Indonesian artists, creating what makes you who you are, a collaborative transmedia storytelling installation that aimed to be accessible for all.

2018 was set to be a big year, with the Asian Paralympic Games in Jakarta. British Council Indonesia organised a roundtable, bringing together disability arts contacts from around the country with Indonesia's Ministry of Youth and Sport, and Ministry of Education and Culture.

'I have a message that needs to be heard.'

Hana Madness

Representatives from the UK's DaDaFest and Epic Arts attended, sharing their experiences and helping to grow ideas.

A group of artists, curators and activists (including Hana Madness) came up with the idea for a festival of disability arts in Jakarta: Festival Bebas Batas ('Festival Without Boundaries', or 'Unlimited'). It was Indonesia's first major disability arts festival, co-created by multiple partners and built around a significant exhibition at the National Gallery of Indonesia.

The venue hosted a series of Indonesia-UK collaborations that had been developed over the past three years. DaDaFest provided advice for the festival organisers and co-commissioned some of the work.

Deaf Rave (UK) worked with Jakarta dance music collective PonYourTone. CANdoDANCE presented a new work in collaboration with Ballet.id and Candoco, accompanied by renowned Indonesian pianist Ananda Sukarlan.

Car Free Day was a series of memorable shows and public interventions by deaf artist Aaron Williamson working with Jakarta Barrier Free Tourism.

Jakarta Fashion Week collaborated with designers Sean Sheila (Indonesia) and Teatum Jones (UK) to bring disabled models onto the runway for the first time. Actor and comedian Barbara Lisicki (UK) devised a new theatre performance with Teater Tujuh (Indonesia). UK neurodiverse punk band Fish Police performed.

There were links with other countries in East Asia. Sujud Dartanto of the National Gallery of Indonesia and independent curator Hendromasto Prasetyo visited a disability arts conference and festival in Singapore, the first of its kind. Their visit and the events were supported by the British Council. A few months later, at Festival Bebas Batas, they curated Principals on the Threshold, an exhibition of disabled artists' work which included work made in Japan and in psychiatric hospitals in Indonesia.



Images: Hana Madness

‘I had doubts, not only whether it is or isn’t relevant to the Indonesian audience; but also because what in the UK might be basic provision, like good accessibility for the artists and their work, might not be available in Indonesia.

But I realised that human limitation is not caused by our physical limitation, but rather by our own fearful thoughts.’

Belinda Oh, Ballet.id (Indonesia)

Finally, the festival included a collaboration between Hana Madness and a UK artist – who wishes to remain anonymous – on work that drew on their lived experience of mental health disability.

They made *In Chains*, an installation and documentary about a radical mental health community in Indonesia whose members have experienced shackling. The film was made with VICE Media and was also presented internationally.

Since Festival Bebas Batas, connections have continued. Indonesian practitioners went on a UK study visit designed by DaDaFest. In 2020-21, during Covid-19 travel restrictions, there were digital exchanges: an inclusive documentary workshop and Hana Madness participating in two UK festivals.



Images: Hana Madness

What did the British Council do?

The British Council’s role included planning a three-year programme, initiating early visits and mapping followed by residencies and collaborations.

It funded and co-organised events, and helped to bring key people together to generate ideas, partner with each other and influence policy – most noticeably with Festival Bebas Batas.

A large range of partners and independents from both countries were involved in the programme. The partnership with DaDaFest has created a long term link between the UK festival and Indonesian artists.

So what?

The activity in Indonesia increased government recognition of and support for disability arts. Following the success of the first edition of Festival Bebas Batas in 2018, the Ministry of Education and Culture took ownership of it and committed to supporting an annual festival. A second edition took place in the city of Solo in Central Java in late 2019. Unfortunately, plans for other festivals have paused for now due to Covid-19.

Overall, Indonesia has a very young population, and there has been a focus on economic development in an intensely competitive environment. Many of the above examples of arts practice have developed within this environment. Yet Indonesia’s collectivist culture provides a strong structure that supports individuals who can succeed. Furthermore, Adam Pushkin, Director Arts Indonesia at the British Council from 2015-19, argues that the UK cultural sector could learn from Indonesia’s models of building collectives rather than institutions and sharing power more equally between organisations, artists and communities. So, disability arts practice is growing within highly competitive yet supportive conditions.

The link between art, social engagement and economic enterprise has led to some exciting collaborations, for instance, in the fashion sector with designers Sean Sheila and in the travel industry with Jakarta Barrier Free Tourism. Perhaps the most developed practitioner is Hana Madness (see Monologue on page 45), whose artwork adorns this report.

Now what?

With 10% of Indonesia's population estimated to be disabled, there is a huge opportunity to engage with people who are often underserved.

Now that connections have been seeded between Indonesia and the UK in inclusive arts and disability arts, practitioners and organisations are in a stronger position to apply for opportunities. In 2019, the British Council's DICE (Developing Inclusive and Creative Economies) programme announced six Indonesia-UK grants, half of which had a disability arts focus. In following years, awards went to Indonesia-UK disability arts projects in four out of 13 Connections through Culture grants and two out of 19 British Council Unlimited Micro.

British Council Indonesia plans to keep focusing on disability arts within a wider programme of inclusive arts, moving towards a more intersectional approach.

The Indonesian government continues to support inclusion. It is significant that in 2016 an amazing new law was passed which enshrined disability rights. A new commission to ensure compliance is currently being developed.

The UN General Assembly declared 2021 the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development – the result of a proposal led by Indonesia alongside six other countries. The year promotes sustained and equitable economic growth and innovation alongside respect for all human rights. As part of this, the Indonesian government has emphasised the need for a global recovery from the effects of Covid-19 that is inclusive and creative.



‘Art has saved my life.’

Hana Madness

Image: Hana Madness

Organisations

Alliance of Independent Journalists, Indonesia

Art Brut Indonesia, Indonesia

The Arts Development Company, UK

Ballet.id, Indonesia

Borderless Art Museum NO-MA, Japan

Candoco, UK

CANdoDANCE, Indonesia

Centre for Disability Studies, Brawijaya University, Indonesia

Coral, UK

DaDaFest, UK

Deaf Rave, UK

Difabel and Friends, Indonesia

Disability Arts Online, UK

Disability Empowerment Centre, Indonesia

Disability Murals, UK

Embassy of Spain, Indonesia

Epic Arts, UK

Epic Encounters, Cambodia

Fish Police, UK

Gigi Art of Dance, Indonesia

Handai Tuli, Indonesia

In-Docs, Indonesia

Institut Français, Indonesia

IntoArt, Indonesia

IT Centre for the Blind, Indonesia

Jakarta Barrier Free Tourism, Indonesia

Jakarta Fashion Week, Indonesia

Jogja Disability Arts, Indonesia

KamiBijak, Indonesia

Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Indonesia

Ketemu Project, Indonesia/Singapore

Literature Across Frontiers, UK

Marc Brew Company, UK

Ministry of Education and Culture, Indonesia

Ministry of Youth and Sport, Indonesia

Nalitari, Indonesia

National Arts Council, Singapore

National Gallery of Indonesia, Indonesia

The Nippon Foundation, Japan

Padepokan Seni Bagong Kussudiardja (PSBK), Indonesia

Persatuan Penyandang Disabilitas Indonesia, Indonesia

PonYourTone, Indonesia

Red Ochre, UK

Scottish Documentary Institute, UK

Sean Sheila, Indonesia

Singapore International Foundation, Singapore

Southbank Centre, UK

Teater Tujuh, Indonesia

Teatum Jones, UK

Tramway, UK

Unlimited commissions programme, UK

Very Special Arts, Singapore

VICE Media, USA

Independents

Alliance of Independent Journalists, Indonesia

Erni Aladjai, Indonesia

Lily Yulianti Farid, Indonesia

Caglar Kimyoncu, UK

Barbara Lisicki, UK

Hana Madness, Indonesia

Alexis Maxwell, UK

Pop Joy Sign, Indonesia

Hendromasto Prasetyo, Indonesia

Annisa Rahmania, Indonesia

Fitrah Ramadhan, Indonesia

Lisa Simpson, UK

Ananda Sukarlan, Indonesia

Matthew Taylor, UK

Aaron Williamson, UK



Monologue: Hana Madness

This is an imagined keynote address by Indonesian visual artist and mental health campaigner Hana Madness, based on an interview that took place remotely on 31 December 2020. You can see Hana's artwork in this study. Companies often commission her to produce artwork for clothes, shoes and accessories, and she has a growing international reputation. Hana also worked with a UK artist to examine the practice of 'shackling' in Indonesia. Together they created a film called *'In Chains.'*

Hana: Art has saved my life.

My name is Hannah Alfieki (AKA Hana Madness). I am a visual artist based in Jakarta, Indonesia. My work mostly presents my mental health condition. My journey with the British Council started in 2016 when I met Jo Verrent and heard about Unlimited.

In April 2016, the British Council, in collaboration with Unlimited festival, invited me to attend a seminar discussing mainstreaming disability arts. It was relevant to my practice as an artist who is vocal in campaigning around mental health disability in Indonesia. I was part of the Indonesian delegation for the Unlimited festival in London in 2016. It was such a new experience and a great opportunity.

When I got back, I met the Director-General of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. I talked about my journey at the Unlimited festival. I said we should have our arts and disability festival in Indonesia.

In 2017, we hosted an exhibition and discussion for the government. I was involved in many talks with the British Council to create the festival in collaboration with the government. Finally, it happened in 2018.

I've also received a commission from the British Council in Indonesia to design their merchandise. In the same year, I was involved in the UK/ID festival, where I exhibited some of my paintings and conducted a workshop with some people who have mental health issues. I also spoke on a discussion panel.

I first discovered art as a way of maintaining my sanity during high school. It was my response to a crisis. I spent my childhood in a toxic environment. I was far from supported, feeling lonely, and I experienced verbal, physical and sexual violence. I had conflict within myself. I was self-destructive and even attempted suicide.

I couldn't get my family to understand what was happening to me back then and it caused prolonged conflict with my parents. I depended on my sketchbook and drawing pen as my loyal friends. I found comfort in writing and doodling.

I graduated from high school in 2011. I got my first commercial client, who printed five pieces of my work on a thousand lighters to be sold in supermarkets in Indonesia.

My father once said, 'no one in my family can be an artist'. My family is quite religious and they didn't understand anything about the art world, but I kept on creating art.

I got treatment on a psychiatric ward in Jakarta. The doctor confirmed my condition – bipolar disorder, type one with psychotic symptoms. My work represents my journey as a person with a mental disability who lives in a patriarchal culture and a conservative environment. I try to normalise mental health issues through my work. My life experiences inspire me.

The problems are getting stronger in Indonesia. People are more aware of mental disability. I describe how I deal with them every day, how I deal with so many emotions, how I struggle to wake up every morning, and how I struggle to deal with the euphoria. It's all beyond my control. I try to communicate all those symptoms beautifully.

I work a lot with commercial brands. I aim to meet their trust in me. I used to feel that my disability identity will be a significant barrier to me, but I was wrong. I have a strong filter; I choose who I work with. I always like to research the company, its purpose and the way it works. I make it a platform to deliver my message without losing my identity as a disabled artist. I have a message that needs to be heard. We have such diversity in this country.

In 2018, I worked with a UK artist (who wishes to remain anonymous). After randomly emailing artists from an arts and disability (Disability Arts International) site in the UK, I got his name.

We decided to create a documentary film that looks at shackling in Indonesia, specifically in West Java. It was my first international commission from the British Council. Shortly after the film was released, we had the opportunity to present our work at two different festivals in Berlin and Munich. The film continued to be screened at various events in Indonesia, the UK and Australia.

I got a second opportunity to visit the UK after the Unlimited festival. I conducted a workshop at the oldest psychiatric hospital in the world, Bethlem Royal Hospital. There are so many ways to advocate this issue. We have to stand together to make the message stronger. I think what the British Council has done so far is excellent because they keep us moving. Also, by continuing to urge the power holders to provide us with equal opportunities in education.

In today's digital era, we can use social media as a platform for promoting our work. Although I know many people are not on there, especially those in the remote areas who have difficulty accessing it.

The most important thing now is to create a strong community. It is vital to have our voices heard, but it is also important to touch people's hearts and minds. When we've done it right, it will make us more prominent and more powerful.

It's about connecting with other human rights issues, giving voice to voiceless and marginalised people. It is also about creating conversation and asking questions which need to be answered. If you stand up and fight against inequality, it is activism. I choose art as my weapon.

In brief

A huge number of collaborations and partnerships, including a new disability arts festival, came about through the British Council's UK/ID 2016-18 season in Indonesia.

The British Council organised exchange visits and supported artists to test new ideas with each other and create new work together.

The Indonesian government, national arts organisations, commercial bodies, and the travel industry involved many independent practitioners and small-scale collectives. Long-term partnerships were established with DaDaFest and Epic Arts in the UK.

The UK's Candoco helped Ballet.id to set up a new inclusive dance company, CANdoDANCE.

After visiting the Unlimited festival, practitioners, including Hana Madness, proposed holding their own festival at the same time as the Asian Paralympic Games in Jakarta.

Festival Bebas Batas became a high profile platform for disability arts as part of UK/ID. The Indonesian government supported the festival for a second year. Its future is currently uncertain due to Covid-19.

UK and Indonesian practitioners continue to work together, and the Indonesian government is campaigning for a creative, sustainable and inclusive global recovery from the pandemic.

What worked?

Early mapping research identified 90 Indonesian arts practitioners working in arts and disability.

They are all now part of a group on social media in which they add new members and share information, including British Council opportunities and resources. This helps to maintain links and ensure disabled people continue to be closely involved in programmes.

The British Council team in Indonesia involved this network in disability arts projects from the start when they planned activity.

During festival preparations, the team held monthly meetings with leaders of disabled-led organisations to share updates and seek advice on issues such as programme relevance, access and marketing.

Problems and learning

At the start of this programme, it was common in Indonesia to use the medical approach to disability. There was little awareness of the social approach.

No one wanted to simply ask Indonesian artists to follow the UK model. Instead, there was a sensitive series of conversations, raising awareness of the differences between the two models and asking all sides how best to support the disabled community.

Indonesian staff feel they were able to manage this effectively because of their deep understanding of the context, culture and perceptions of disability in Indonesian arts.

Artistic champions, including Hana Madness, made an important difference by sharing their understanding of the social model of disability with wider audiences.

Transnational programmes: Europe

The UK formally left the European Union (EU) on 31 January 2020, and left the single market and customs union on 31 December 2020.

This will have a profound impact culturally, socially, and economically, taking decades to emerge fully. Arts and cultural organisations are already feeling the effects of the separation. See *ICM Unlimited Impact of Brexit* on the arts and culture sector by ICM (2017). Many companies are reporting new levels of complex bureaucracy when touring work in other countries.

Before Brexit, the British Council began working on transnational programmes to support disabled artists and organisations in the EU and Wider Europe. This has included making links, developing collaborative practices and informing future policy.

These programmes seek to amplify change and forge lasting connections across borders. These are not simple tasks. Borders and social-political alliances change, sometimes mid-programme, which can have a knock-on effect.

Unlimited Access (EU, 2013–14)

Inspired by the Unlimited festival, the British Council and three partners embarked on a two-year programme, Unlimited Access: celebrating remarkable work by disabled artists in Europe.

The partners were a mix of mainstream and inclusive arts organisations: the Onassis Cultural Centre (Greece), Vo'Arte (Portugal) and the Croatian Institute for Movement and Dance (Croatia).

With support from the EU Culture Programme, the partners aimed to improve the transnational mobility of disabled artists. They also wanted to enhance audience engagement with disability arts and challenge perceptions of disabled artists within the European arts sector.

‘This will have a profound impact culturally, socially, and economically, taking decades to emerge fully.’

They achieved this by framing activities specifically through two perspectives:

- **Access:** removing barriers and working towards equality for deaf and disabled artists
- **Aesthetics:** developing and promoting a narrative around the excellent and unique work created by deaf and disabled artists.

Unlimited Access adopted the social model of disability and the Creative Case for Diversity (Creative Case) developed by ACE, as core principles.

The Creative Case argues that a diverse arts sector improves our creativity and cultural life. It aims to move the debate beyond practical issues connected with infrastructural access. ACE includes socio-economic disadvantages within the Creative Case.

Some have found the Creative Case challenging to articulate, but it has opened up a much needed dialogue around quality and intersectionality.

The first year of Unlimited Access focused on creating opportunities to learn about different inclusive approaches, exchange learning and build creative skills.

The second and final year of the project focused on showcasing work by disabled artists. Each partner took responsibility for presenting work on a mainstream stage and promoting artists and companies through the Disability Arts International website.

Unlimited Access was the first disability arts transnational scheme of its kind. It began a fruitful international dialogue between disabled artists at different stages of their careers. During the project's life, it's estimated there were over 40,000 face-to-face contacts and digital engagements.

The programme evaluation's key findings (2015) included the need to commission, tour and showcase new work, develop the Disability Arts International website, and develop partnership mentoring, professional skills, and leadership.

The partners also called for engagement with European decision-makers and European disability networks on a policy level, and communication with mainstream artistic networks within Europe.

Unlimited Access culminated in a conference attended by partners who would go on to work on Europe Beyond Access. The British Council in the EU established disability arts as one of its key priorities.

Disability Arts International website (launched 2014)

Disability Arts International is a legacy project of Unlimited Access, now supported as part of Europe Beyond Access. It's a website, and regular email newsletter, developed and coordinated by the British Council in partnership with Disability Arts Online.

The website is a resource for cultural professionals, organisations and policymakers. It explores and shares best practice around accessibility to the arts, and showcases disabled artists and inclusive companies working internationally. Its newsletter has more than 2,000 subscribers from around the world.

www.disabilityartsinternational.org

Europe Beyond Access (EU, 2018–23)

Europe Beyond Access is a much larger scale programme than Unlimited Access: it is taking place across eight countries over five years.

It's a €4m project, with €2m Creative Europe funding and €2m contributed by seven core partners.

The core partners are: the British Council (operating for this project in the UK and Poland), Onassis Stegi (Greece); Holland Dance Festival (Netherlands), Kampnagel (Germany); Per.Art (Serbia), Skånes Dansteater (Sweden) and Oriente Occidente (Italy).

The aims of the programme are to:

- support disabled artists to internationalise their artistic innovation and careers
- develop a network of leading mainstream organisations with a commitment to present and commission at the highest level
- build European audiences interested in high quality, innovative work by Europe's disabled artists
- develop tools and understanding in the broader performing arts market
- collaborate with many of the world's leading arts networks to champion excellent artistic works and educate arts professionals
- Share ideas and information by running the Disability Arts International website.

The programme has been affected by Covid-19. Some of its activities have moved online, including residencies, policy exchanges, mentoring and broadcasts. There have been concerns for some of the disabled artists in the programme.

Yet the pandemic also gave organisations time to campaign. One output of Europe Beyond Access is the European Arts and Disability Cluster, a consortium of 20 organisations that aims to advocate for the sector and influence policy at a transnational level.

In 2020, the consortium made approaches to policymakers arguing that future EU funding should:

- support greater cultural engagement of disabled professionals
- focus on the work of disabled artists and cultural operators, rather than 'simply' on audiences
- encourage greater participation and leadership within the programme of disabled artists and cultural operators
- provide specific budget lines to meet costs that reduce barriers for disabled people as artists, arts professionals and audiences
- ensure the access budget is not considered within the total project budget but rather is considered separately from the usual budget ceilings
- develop a funding mechanism to support the cultural engagement of audiences with access needs through dedicated audience development actions.

It has since been confirmed that the new Creative Europe programme – a €2.44 billion fund lasting eight years – will include disabled artists and access to arts as two of its priorities. The cluster believes that it has contributed to this change.

The European Arts and Disability Cluster has already taken advantage of this change in priority. In 2021, a consortium of 20 organisations across Europe worked together to apply for a €2.5m project designed to support emerging deaf and disabled artists. Results are expected in early 2022.

As part of its long-term work in Europe, the consortium aims to engage the British Council to continue coordinating the Disability Arts International website with Disability Arts Online.

‘A €2.44 billion fund lasting eight years will include disabled artists and access to arts as two of its priorities.’

Unlimited – Making the Right Moves (Wider Europe, 2016–19)

Unlimited – Making the Right Moves was a transnational programme run by the British Council in Wider Europe, with partners from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ukraine.

It aimed to increase the participation of disabled people in the creative economy, develop skills, build sustainable networks and partnerships, and influence social policy and legislation.

As well as the British Council, the programme was supported by a wide range of partners:

- **Armenia:** Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Small Theatre, High Fest International Performing Arts Festival, Yerevan, Bridge of Hope disability rights NGO
- **Azerbaijan:** Economic University Inclusive Education Centre, Vocational Rehabilitation Centre, DOM Theatre, Carpet Museum, a range of NGOs.
- **Georgia:** Kareli Cultural Centre, Azdaki's Garden, Tbilisi International Festival/ Marjanishvili Theatre
- **Ukraine:** Ukrainian Cultural Foundation, Uvimkneni Performing Arts, disability rights NGO 'Harmoniya' Vinnitsa.

The programme included UK artists and organisations, including Candoco, Deaf Men Dancing, Stopgap, and individual artists and consultants.

It culminated in *The Argonauts*, an inclusive performance made in collaboration with disabled and non-disabled performers from the four countries. The piece was choreographed by Ben Duke (UK) in association with Candoco. In 2019 it toured to Tbilisi, Yerevan and Baku. A film of the performance was screened in Kyiv.

Also in 2019, the Parliament of Georgia hosted a disability arts forum. Senior officials participated, demonstrating a serious interest in policy development.

‘Disabled participants in Making the Right Moves reported it had been a transformative experience and had challenged contemporary dance's marginal status in each country.’

Disabled participants in Making the Right Moves reported it had been a transformative experience and had challenged contemporary dance's marginal status in each country.

The programme also highlighted the lack of accessible infrastructure and demonstrated the powerful potential of partners from neighbouring countries working together.

One general concern was highlighted: the need to better understand the differences between disabled-led and inclusive practice. As discussed elsewhere in this report, both approaches have considerable value though raising quality, power and control issues.

There were plans to rework *The Argonauts* for UK performances in 2020. These were cancelled due to Covid-19, but the partners are investigating future possibilities.

Some of the countries continued disability arts activity in 2020–21. British Council Azerbaijan ran access and inclusion training for museum professionals, with input from the Ministry of Culture. Offices in Azerbaijan and Georgia produced toolkits to help the arts sector plan inclusive projects and events.

Claire Cunningham, an artist who participated in the Europe Beyond Access programme, in *Give Me A Reason To Live*. Photographer: Ben Nienhuis.





In brief

The British Council has led and partnered transnational programmes in Europe that have brought together performing arts organisations from different countries.

These partnerships have shared resources, exchanged practice, programmed art and developed networks that advocate for change in the arts.

Evidence suggests these initiatives influenced policy development in Europe and created new structures to support disabled practitioners.

Significant funders of these programmes include EU cultural funds, governments, cultural foundations and NGOs.

There are future recommendations to remove funding barriers, improve infrastructure, increase representation and develop leadership.

What worked?

The Europe Beyond Access partners, together with a network they grew, encouraged a major EU cultural fund – a €2.44 billion programme that will run for eight years – to prioritise disabled artists and access to arts.

Problems and learning

Across Europe, there are few opportunities for disabled artists to access long-term training and establish a practice.

It's difficult for international projects to address this problem in a two- or three-year programme.

In Wider Europe in particular, this means non-disabled practitioners or overseas artists usually lead artistic creation.

There is also serious under-representation of disabled people in European cultural leadership.

Although large-scale projects like Europe Beyond Access have advisory groups with disabled professionals, they are not directly led by disabled people.

Therefore, high level programming and decision-making about arts and disability in Europe is almost all done by non-disabled people.

A UK artist's approach to international exchange: East Africa

Birds of Paradise Theatre Company (BOP) is based in Glasgow and began when the city was European Capital of Culture in 1990. Robert Softley Gale is the current Artistic Director. His recent works include *My Left/Right Foot* (2018) and *Purposeless Movements* (2019). The company has been involved in many British Council projects, including Brazil, India and Nepal.

In 2018, BOP was invited to work with Amizero Dance and East Africa Nights of Tolerance Dance Festival, facilitating workshops in Kigali, Rwanda.

This was part of the British Council's East Africa Arts programme, which worked with artists and companies from across East Africa with a focus on cross-artform practice and disability equality. The programme aimed to promote new art, share creative skills, and ignite partnerships between the UK and countries in East Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda.

The workshop series took place between Kigali and Glasgow throughout 2018. It built on an original project exploring disability arts through the lens of performing arts and fashion, initiated with Amizero Dance and Collective RW, with support from Candoco.

The workshops led to a series of work-in-progress presentations at numerous festivals and events in Rwanda, including the East Africa Nights of Tolerance Festival, Ubumuntu Festival and RW Fashion Week.

The final performance piece premiered at *Tuzinne Festival: Where Human Rights Dance* in Kampala, Uganda in late 2018.

In the following monologue, Softley Gale discusses his approach to working with artists from a different country. As he says, although the project has brought immense value to him as an artist, it's difficult to point to a tangible outcome. Yet this text demonstrates that he has developed a thoughtful approach to working with international collaborators from different cultures.

Robert:

I was in New York and I got a call from the team at the British Council saying, 'can you go to Rwanda next week and do a choreography project?' And I was like, 1. I'm not a choreographer, and 2. I'm in New York. But yeah, I'll go.

We went in early 2018 and again in late 2018. Because we had a great relationship, we were able to plan more robustly over that time, and also, one of the artists from Rwanda came to Glasgow for a week. It became much more strategic.

There were ideas around choreography and fashion and how those intersect with disability. That's not something I've ever thought about before, but we've got an attitude of giving it a go and seeing what happens.

We were anxious about imposing any narrative or telling people how to do it; we'd never do anything like that. We had underlying feelings about being British and going to another country and telling them how to do things. It's important to be aware of our colonial past but not let it take over, so you are always apologising because that doesn't help anybody. It doesn't move anything forwards.

The other part of the problem is that we were there for such a short amount of time. The first time in Rwanda was five days, and there's not enough time to consult people or embed them in the creative process.

So, we did everything that we could to say 'we want to hand this over to you. It's your project.' Then when we went back to Rwanda, it was much more about them. They wrote the piece, and they came up with the ideas, and we just shaped it.

We're not the experts; we're not the gatekeepers of disability and inclusion. We've been thinking about it for quite a long time, and we're happy to share some of that thinking, but we're not telling you 'this is how it must be done' because we don't know how it must be done.

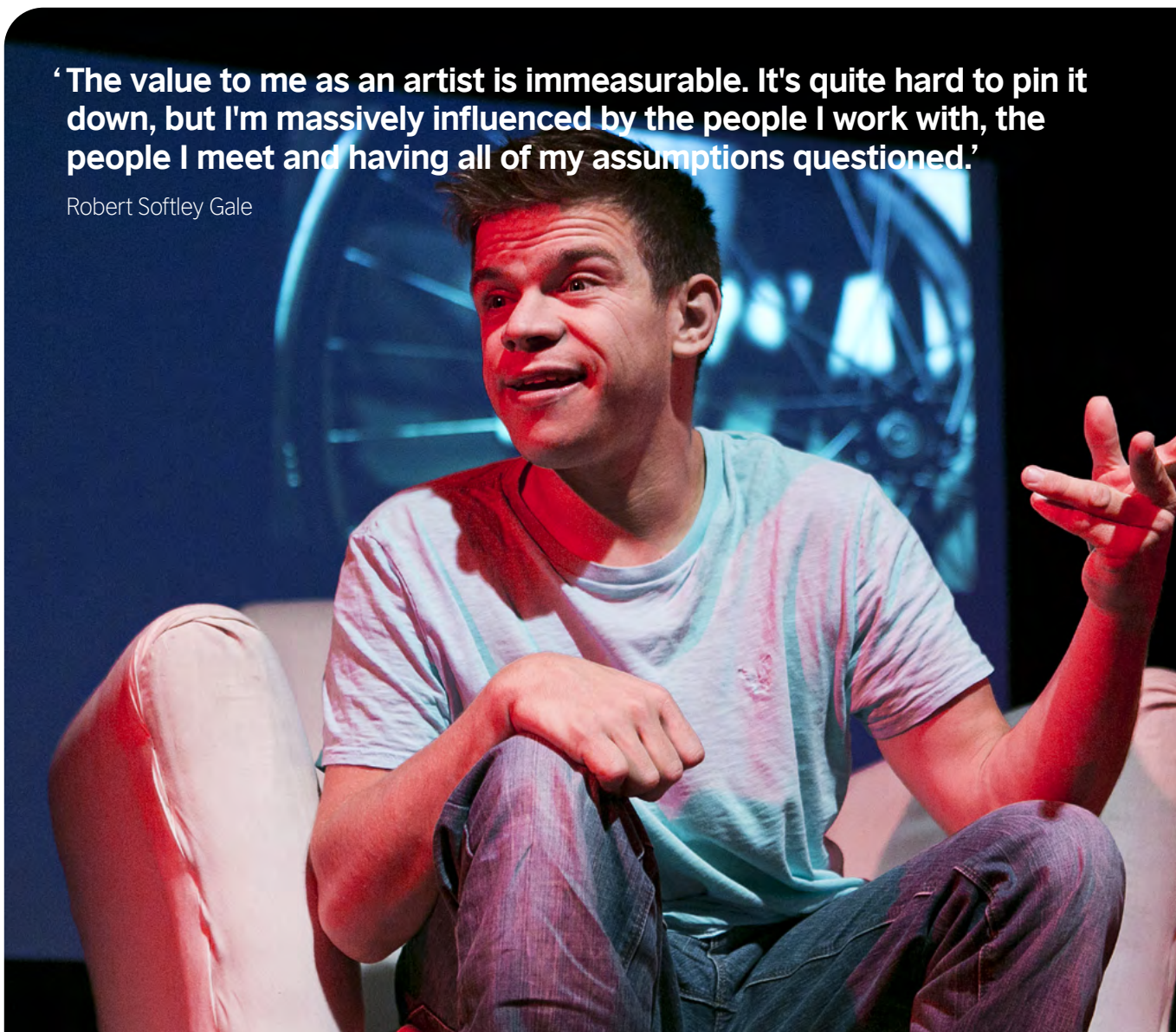
Every time I make a show, I'm making new mistakes. That's what this is, that's ok. Because we go in with that attitude of not being the experts, it helps to say, 'ok, we can bring what we've got, and you can bring what you've got, and we can collaborate somewhere in the middle.' That's what we always aim for; whether we ever get there, I don't know.

The value to me as an artist is immeasurable. It's quite hard to pin it down, but I'm massively influenced by the people I work with, the people I meet and having all of my assumptions questioned. It's hugely valuable for me to then go on and create work.

‘The value to me as an artist is immeasurable. It's quite hard to pin it down, but I'm massively influenced by the people I work with, the people I meet and having all of my assumptions questioned.’

Robert Softley Gale

Robert Softley Gale in *If These Spasms Could Speak*. Photographer: Eoin Carey.



In brief

UK disabled-led company BOP worked with Amizero Dance, Collective RW and East Africa Nights of Tolerance Festival (Rwanda) to support the development of a new work exploring ideas around choreography and fashion.

The final piece toured to numerous events in Rwanda as a work-in-progress before premiering at Tuzinne Festival: Where Human Rights Dance in Uganda, 2018.

What worked?

Bringing together specialists in fashion and performing arts from the UK and Rwanda to explore how disabled perspectives on design, the body and storytelling could spark new artistic and technical ideas.

The partners aimed to provide opportunities for disabled professionals in the creative sector and inspire others to do so.

Problems and learning

There was relatively little time to work together, and Artistic Director Robert Softley Gale was concerned about imposing UK practice on artists from another country.

These issues were addressed by making the UK company's role more about helping to shape the piece, while the Rwandan artists led the creation.

Conclusion

We hope we have conveyed the extent to which the British Council has amplified deaf and disabled arts and inclusive practice. For many disabled artists, the support of the British Council has changed lives.

All artists we spoke to said how important the support of the British Council had been in helping them to develop international connections. Some used the experience to develop their own practice and own journey forward. Others welcomed the chance to develop a relationship with staff in the British Council offices.

With so much work monitored differently, it is difficult to scientifically 'prove' the impact of this work. Was there one moment of impact or a series of effects that caused the change?

In the past, the UK cultural sector could be said to have safeguarded exclusivity and privilege. What if work doesn't speak to you because it doesn't talk in your language? What if it uses a sense you don't and provides no access? What if you weren't there because you couldn't get into the building, or on the bus, or out of your house? What if you didn't feel you belonged because nobody speaking was like you?

The impression gained from the research is that arts are integral to cultural, social and economic progress for deaf and disabled people worldwide. We have spoken with people who are passionate, articulate and driven by the need for change.

Perhaps it is time to bring together artists, cultural development practitioners and evaluators in laboratory exploration of arts and cultural impact. New systems or new processes are often devised with the exclusion of key players. We need a new way of counting, which doesn't benefit just one part of the ecology, capturing data useful to all.

In a world of diminishing resources, it is essential to know what works and for whom. Undoubtedly as reduced budgets will impact the overseas work of the British Council, the argument needs to be made that this work is crucial.

The response to Covid-19 has shown that we can bring about unprecedented change when we challenge accepted wisdom and harness global energy for a common purpose. At the height of the pandemic, there was much to learn from disabled people who had lived in lock-down for most of their lives. We learnt to harness technology and reach out beyond the confines of our own homes, own countries, to find new ways to connect.

As the pandemic becomes endemic, it is tempting to snap back to in-person activity. As humans we need to connect. We hope we can build-in access, and champion hybrid forms which fully utilise disability arts and inclusive practice worldwide.



Hijinx in *Meet Fred*. Photographer: Holger Rudolph.

Afterword:

Learning from this report

After the global Covid-19 pandemic, an international disability arts programme like that explored in this report may never happen again in the same way. It's a difficult time for the cultural sector, and for anyone working internationally, to make plans and consider new strategies.

Yet, as we look to work in more equitable ways, what can we take away from this report?

Tim Wheeler has thoughtfully avoided providing a single set of recommendations. As he says, every country, every organisation and every practitioner is different.

So maybe readers of the report can ask themselves: could they, like us, benefit from inviting an outside eye to reflect on their work with disabled colleagues and practitioners; with disabled participants and audiences?

The following page contains resources we have developed, or have used in our work, that might help to provoke ideas or turn them into reality.

In a spirit of transparency, here are some examples of what myself and my colleagues at the British Council have learned and how we are responding.

- **Organisational change**

Throughout this report, you'll find examples of where the British Council could have gone further and how we're improving. We need to involve more disabled people in leadership and decision making and be more encouraging to a disabled workforce. We must make our work and our processes more accessible to those with access requirements, including digital access requirements.

We are embedding disability inclusion into our organisation. Our UK Disability Advisory Panel is a group of sector professionals with significant personal and professional experience of disability who act as our critical friends. Our recently updated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy focuses on creating a more inclusive organisational culture and introduces new tools to help us measure our progress.

- **Working together**

This study demonstrates the power of collaborating with others to create change: new art or new funding, grassroots change or international campaigns. Everything the British Council does is in partnership with others. This will continue to be vital and we will look for new ways in which to be good partners.

Addressing specific challenges

On a practical level, we have updated our evaluation processes, and we are currently exploring partner opportunities for arts and disability alongside the Paris 2024 Paralympics. We are proud to have been a founding partner of Unlimited since 2012 and we look forward to the next stage of our partnership as it becomes an independent organisation.

We're exploring different ways of approaching what we do. We're partnering on a project led by the Centre for Cultural Value that brings together cultural practitioners and researchers to develop a new set of principles for evaluation that can be used across the sector.

We invite anyone working with culture and development to read *The Missing Pillar*, our recent report on culture's contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. It recommends that we take an inclusive approach to our projects, involving communities and participants more deeply. It calls for organisations to use the Sustainable Development Goals as a framework to evaluate their work, making it possible to join together to demonstrate impact.

‘We have much to share and much to learn from those in other countries – which is the beauty of cultural exchange.’



The Tempest: Swimming for Beginners. Photograph: Jun Ishikawa.

We have made some important commitments. The British Council endorsed the Seven Principles published by *We Shall Not Be Removed*, which put inclusivity at the forefront of conversations around arts and culture. We are also a signatory of the Global Disability Summit's Charter for Change which pledges to pursue rights and freedoms for disabled people. We are part of the UK government's Disability Confident employer scheme, which means we want to benefit from disabled people's skills within our workforce.

Wheeler suggests that we consider the concept of power at a deep level in our programmes and have more conversations about the differences between inclusive arts and disability arts, while supporting both approaches.

Are there opportunities to support hybrid international networks, to initiate in-depth, long-term research or to assist rigorous reflection and archiving? This will be interesting food for thought as we reappraise our work.

Reimagining our future

With the climate emergency and current difficulties travelling internationally, we will be looking at new digital and hybrid ways of working, alongside our face-to-face activity. Disabled people are key to this ambition; many individuals have long experience of connecting remotely

and have a history of being excluded from travel. *Time to Act* – the new Europe Beyond Access report, which we partnered with – gives a stark picture of the barriers faced by disabled people in performing arts in Europe, including the UK. We will keep listening to disabled people and help to address these barriers.

To quote Robert Softley Gale, 'We are not the gatekeepers.' We have much to share and much to learn from those in other countries – which is the beauty of cultural exchange.

As we seek to make sense of the world, I strongly believe that valuing difference is key to reimagining our future.



Neil Webb
Director Theatre and Dance
British Council

Appendix 1: Resources

This list includes guides that the British Council has developed, partnered, or utilised and tools that its staff have used or recommended in their disability arts work.

British Council

Creative Equity Toolkit

This toolkit is focused on cultural diversity, but there are also a number of resources with an intersectional approach addressing disability. Co-created by British Council Australia and Diversity Arts Australia.

creativeequitytoolkit.org

El Alto

The second edition of the British Council's arts and culture review focuses on disability arts, featuring artists from across the Americas.

elalto.wearethebritishcouncil.org

The Missing Pillar – Culture's Contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

This report calls for an inclusive approach to culture and development projects and encourages organisations to use the Sustainable Development Goals to demonstrate impact.

www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/our-stories/the-missing-pillar-sdgs

Open Access: Keys to creating accessible venues and events

This British Council Mexico guide focuses on exploring the importance of creating accessible cultural spaces and events. Prepared by Goss Consultancy (UK) in collaboration with CIE Eventos Especiales and OCESA (Mexico).

www.britishcouncil.org.mx/APuertasAbiertas

Promoting Inclusion

A British Council guide to disability equality.

www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/guide-disability-equality.pdf

Relaxed Performances

Training materials, videos and a report to help arts organisations produce accessible, relaxed performances. Published by British Council Canada, working with the Harbourfront Centre, Include Arts, Tangled Art + Disability, Canada Council for the Arts and Ontario Arts Council.

www.britishcouncil.ca/relaxed-performance-programme

Attitude is Everything

Resources for live music events, including the DIY Access Guide, which the British Council partnered and helped to translate into a range of different languages.

www.attitudeiseverything.org.uk/resources

Birds of Paradise Theatre Company

A collection of documents that includes advice on creating accessible events and working in an inclusive way.

www.boptheatre.co.uk/what-we-do/resources

Culturehive

Includes tips, research, videos and blogs on disability issues in cultural practice.

www.culturehive.co.uk

Disability Arts Cymru

The Crip Talks are a video series of discussions with disabled and deaf artists in Wales.

disabilityarts.cymru/criptalks

Disability Arts International

This website includes an artist directory, country profiles and a toolkit section. It's part of Europe Beyond Access, coordinated by the British Council in partnership with Disability Arts Online.

www.disabilityartsinternational.org

Equity

Equity's Guide to Good Practice with BSL in the Arts aims to deepen our understanding of how to work with deaf people and those that use sign language.

www.equity.org.uk/news/2020/july/equity-launches-guide-to-good-practice-with-bsl-in-the-arts

Europe Beyond Access

Through surveys and interviews, the Time to Act report reveals the immense barriers faced by disabled people seeking to engage with arts in Europe.

<https://www.disabilityartsinternational.org/resources/time-to-act-final-results/>

Graeae

Graeae theatre company's Digital Library includes case studies, toolkits, guides, videos and the Disability And... Podcast.

graeae.org/beyond-online

Independent Cinema Office

Resources include Developing deaf audiences for film and How do I make my cinema inclusive and accessible?

www.independentcinemaoffice.org.uk/advice-support

Inclusive Cinema

A website for exhibitors to share case studies, guidance and data around diverse audience groups.

inclusivecinema.org

Shape Arts

A wide range of resources on subjects including accessible marketing, working with learning disabled people and making your organisation more inclusive.

www.shapearts.org.uk/pages/news/category/resources

Theory of Change

A framework that helps you plan projects that aim to create change. Designed to be used in international development, sustainability, education, human rights and social change settings.

www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change

Unlimited

Resources on subjects including marketing, access riders and online connections, and a useful video explaining the social model of disability.

weareunlimited.org.uk/resources

We Shall Not Be Removed

The Seven Principles, officially endorsed by the British Council, offer practical guidance for arts and cultural organisations to support disabled artists, audiences, visitors, participants and employees.

www.weshallnotberemoved.com

Appendix 2: Acknowledgements

Bangladesh

Hawa Akter	Artist
Saddam Bepary	Artist
Souradeep Dasgupta	Project Manager Arts, British Council Bangladesh
Limia Dewan	Senior Program Manager, Inclusiveness and Capacity Development Unit of BRAC Education Programme
Nahin Idris	Head of Arts, British Council Bangladesh
Samiun Jahan	Artist
Srity Jannutal	Artist
Lovely Khatun	Artist
Morshed Mia	Artist
Rabbi Mia	Artist
Nasir Uddin Yousuff	Director, Dhaka Theatre

Indonesia

Sheila Agatha	Designer, Sean Sheila
Isro Ayu	Dancer, Theatre Performer, Teater Tujuh
Rain Cuaca	100% Human Film Festival
Budi Dharma	Difability Community & Friends
Juniati Effendi	GERKATIN
Mariska Febriyani	Co-founder, Ballet.ID
Cameila Harahap	Head of Arts and Creative Industries, British Council Indonesia
Marta Hardy	Dancer, Theatre Performer, Teater Tujuh
Ricendy Januardo	Artist, Youth Leader, Co-founder, Handai Tuli
Yoana Wida Kristiawati	Founder and Program Manager, Nalitari
Sean Loh	Designer, Sean Sheila
Hana Madness	Artist
Hasna Mufidah	Artist, Co-Founder, Fantasi Tuli
Amin Mulya	Activist, Musician
Jeannie Park	Executive Director, PSBK
Suryo Pramono	Mitra Netra
Faisal Rusdi	Jakarta Barrier Free Tourism
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Kania Widjajadi	Public Relations, Teater Tujuh Services
Levinia Wirawan	Arts Programme Manager, British Council Indonesia

Rwanda

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South Korea

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Suyeon Park	Arts Officer, British Council Korea
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Minjoo Jee	Producer, National Theatre Company of Korea
Wonyoung Kim	Artist
Bora Kim	Artistic Director and Choreographer, Art Project BORA
Miyeeon Lee	Affiliated Professor, Pusan National University. (Former Director of Busan Cultural Foundation)
Sehyung Oh	General Manager of Planning Department, Korea Disability Arts & Culture Center (KDAC)

Uganda

Janan Eochu	Arts Project Officer, British Council Uganda
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Ukraine

Anna Bubnova	Head of Arts, British Council Ukraine
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UK

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Ellie Douglas-Allan	Senior Producer, Candoco
Ben Evans	Head of Arts & Disability, European Union, British Council
Alice Fox	Deputy Head of the School of Art, University of Brighton
Ben Pettitt-Wade	Artistic Director, Hijinx
Sarah Pickthall	Independent Leadership Coach & Consultant
Jenny Sealey	CEO, Artistic Director, Graeae Theatre Company
Robert Softley-Gale	Artistic Director and CEO, Birds of Paradise Theatre Company
Joe Turnbull	Assistant Editor, Disability Arts Online
Jo Verrent	Senior Producer, Unlimited
Neil Webb	Director of Theatre and Dance, British Council
Trish Wheatley	CEO, Disability Arts Online

Appendix 3: Questions

The following questions formed the basis of semi-structured interviews. Participants were provided with an Interviewee Information sheet which explained the nature of the research, data collection and retention policy. This was accompanied with an Informed Consent form. All interviews were conducted online. An automatic transcription service was used, which provided audio and text transcription. Text transcriptions were then cross-checked for accuracy.

Questionnaire

I am looking for evidence of CHANGE.

- Can you give me a brief description of who you are and what you do?
- What work have you done with the British Council?

Impact on: policy, attitudes, society, skills development, opportunities for disabled artists and creatives

- What social, economic and cultural value does this work have?
- What structures are needed to move this work on culturally, socially and economically?

1. What is the cultural impact of... on disabled artists

Keywords: aesthetics, intercultural, intra-cultural

- Do disabled artists make the work they want to make?
- Has it led to/could it lead to a 'disability art scene'?
- Is there demonstrable CAREER PATH development (in regions/UK)
- Who controls the work? Disabled or non-disabled people? (Leadership)
- Is the impact felt in/on the 'mainstream' cultural sector in the region/UK?
- What is the cultural impact of widening access?
- Is the impact felt in/on the 'mainstream' cultural sector in the region/UK?
- How are attitudes/perspectives shifted? How do we view things differently?
- Is there consideration of what disabled audience members want to experience?

2. Is there a social (non-monetary) value? How is this defined?

Keywords: communities of practice, engagement, interest, well-being

- What are the immediate or long-term effects?
- What does it impact on – Policy? Status? Non-arts agendas?
- Is it felt in regions or the UK? Or both?

3. Is there an economic benefit? For whom? (Who gets the money?)

Keywords: cost/benefit, budget, partnerships, long-term funding?

- Is this immediate or longer-term? (i.e.) re developing more sustainable careers longer term. Can artists make a living?
- Who gets paid? Who pays to participate?
- Is it felt in regions or the UK? Or both?

4. What can we learn?

- What strengthens development/projects/disabled artists?
- What limits development/projects/disabled artists?

5. Power and control

- Who controls the work?
- Do disabled artists have agency in their work?
- Were you happy with the questions?
- Are there any documents you can send to me?

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