

UNLIMITED ...



Media Release

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Spirit of 2012 Trust awards £500,000 for UNLIMITED IMPACT

Unlimited today announced an award of £500,000 from the Spirit of 2012 Trust (Spirit) – enabling the programme to build on the legacy at the heart of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad, which celebrated the work of disabled artists on an unprecedented scale.

UNLIMITED IMPACT will maximise the potential and extend the impact of Unlimited, the £2million major scheme supporting excellent work by disabled artists, funded by Arts Council England and Creative Scotland and led by Shape and Artsadmin, with Jo Verrent as Senior Producer.

The funding from Spirit will enable Unlimited Impact to focus on three areas: developing and inspiring the next generation of young disabled people passionate about making change through the arts; extending our reach by supporting venues across the country to successfully programme ambitious and high quality work by disabled artists; and deepening discussion and debate around work by disabled artists.

The Unlimited Impact programme will create a significant and sustainable legacy and enable a real cultural shift in perceptions of disability in the UK.

Spirit of 2012 Trust (Spirit) is a new organisation set up to sustain the spirit from the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics by investing in happiness. It tackles isolation and disadvantage by supporting projects that provide opportunities in the arts, sports and volunteering. It was established by the Big Lottery Fund with an endowment of £40m.

Debbie Lye, Chief Executive of Spirit said: *“We are delighted to be able to support Unlimited extend its reach to empower disabled artists. Their work during the Cultural Olympiad had such impact in changing perceptions of disabled people and also making creativity and the arts such a point of celebration during the Games. We are very proud and excited to be able to enable them to extend their reach and to support disabled emerging artists in communities across the UK.”*

The award was warmly welcomed by Unlimited’s funders Arts Council England and Creative Scotland.

Leonie Bell, Director of Arts and Engagement, Creative Scotland, said: *“Unlimited is one of these fundamental initiatives that has the ability to create real change in terms of artistic excellence by promoting the potential of artists in society, bring real equality and support valued and needed diversity.”* **She added:** *“There is a need to sustain this work and a need to develop emerging talent to connect with the growing national and international interest in arts and disability from Scotland to achieve a cultural shift in perceptions of disabled artists and their work and this is what Unlimited Impact can do.”*

Ultimately, Unlimited illustrates the potential in all of us and shows what can be achieved by considering your limits and disregarding them."

Joyce Wilson, Area Director, London, Arts Council England, said: *"The decision by Spirit of 2012 to invest in the Unlimited programme is excellent news. Unlimited is all about the creation of great art, but this art needs an audience, and audiences come through venues. The investment by Spirit of 2012 will help get venues on board with the programme - ensuring artists are able to reach new audiences and bring great art to a diverse range of venues across England."*

Unlimited's partners – British Council, Southbank Centre, DaDaFest and DAO (Disability Arts Online) were equally delighted as it will see the impact of art by disabled artists magnified – and the range of places and people who can be involved dramatically increase. **Ruth Gould, Artistic Director of DaDaFest said:** *"Unlimited offers focused opportunities for disabled artists to nurture their ideas and practices towards crucial exposure and publicity. By putting access at the heart, disabled artists are freed to develop their arts, not hindered by the barriers that can often prevent progression therefore creating a more equal playing field for their work to be seen. Unlimited Impact will really push these opportunities so much further: enabling Unlimited to work in key arts spaces and venues, creating debate and exchange, and making sure disabled people are represented throughout the arts."*

One of the key elements that Unlimited Impact offers is the opportunity to involve younger disabled people – as artists, activists and enthusiasts. Unlimited is building a network of allies throughout the UK to support all disabled artists – which includes Diverse City, Dorset and Solar Bear, Glasgow.

Claire Hodgson, Chief Executive of Dorset based Diverse City said: *"Diverse City has been working with a group of young disabled artists from Dorset aged between 12-25 over the last seven years in a programme called Remix. Last year we launched Remix Gold for those who want to make the arts their career. These young people have been enjoying a great deal of success – Freya Garner has undertaken a choreographic residency, Antony Perriera has had training with the National Centre for Circus arts and Dave Young is soon to perform a solo show. I am delighted that Unlimited Impact now exists to support us, and to take these young people to the next level in their careers. The south west of England is a hot spot for young talent – in the future, you will see Dave, Freya and Anthony on your stages and screens. Watch them fly."*

Gerry Ramage, Artistic Director of Solar Bear said: *"Without funding and support from organisations like Spirit of 2012 and Unlimited Impact it would be harder to provide opportunities for young people with any form of disability to have the training and support required for a career within the arts. For a company like Solar Bear, Unlimited Impact will raise awareness among the arts community of how we can integrate deaf performers into the cultural sector in Scotland, and how we can integrate BSL (British Sign Language) into performances."*

INFORMATION, IMAGES, INTERVIEWS CONTACT:

For Unlimited: Sam Scott Wood (Artsadmin) on 020 7247 5102 / sam@artsadmin.co.uk
or James Monteith (Shape) on 020 7424 7330 / james@shapearts.org.uk

For information on Spirit of 2012 and the programmes and projects it is funding: Penny East Head of Communications on 020 3701 7440 / penny.east@spiritof2012trust.org.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Unlimited is delivered by the disability-led arts charity, Shape, and arts producing organisation, Artsadmin, and funded by the National Lottery through Arts Council England and Creative Scotland. The programme supports disabled artists to develop their practice, forming new relationships and collaborations with producers, venues and promoters. It will increase distribution of the work (through touring, including international touring, and digital iterations) affording greater opportunities for audiences to see some of the very best work available from disabled artists right across the UK and internationally. In March 2014 Unlimited announced £400,000 of support for nine major works and 17 Research and Development awards. The selected works will be staged in collaboration with arts venues and festivals across the UK. From Monday 1 - Sunday 7 September 2014, London's Southbank Centre will once again present many of the Unlimited supported works in a high profile cross-art form festival. Unlimited partners The British Council will help to broker international touring opportunities for supported works.

Shape is a disability-led arts organisation working to improve access to culture for disabled people by developing opportunities for disabled artists, training cultural institutions to be more open to disabled people, and running participatory arts and development programmes. www.shapearts.org.uk

Artsadmin is an arts lab for the 21st Century, supporting the creation of new performance, site-specific and interdisciplinary work by the most talented and innovative artists through mentoring, development and producing support. www.artsadmin.co.uk

Spirit of 2012 is a new independent organisation established with a Big Lottery endowment of £40 million. It invests in happiness and supports projects that empower people to get out, be involved and feel better. It has the task of ensuring the spirit that radiated from the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics is felt by everyone, everywhere. By connecting events to communities across the country, it ensures investment is of local, regional and national benefit. It tackles isolation and disadvantage by supporting those providing opportunities in sports, the arts and volunteering. . www.spiritof2012trust.org.uk

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