

UNLIMITED

Unlimited, the largest supporter of disabled artists worldwide, unveils latest commissions with £945,000 to support ambitious artistic work

An adventurous range of projects giving voice to disabled artists producing standout work that is “must see” not “should see”

Tuesday 28 March | Unlimited today announces 24 ambitious new commissions and awards spanning a range of disciplines spotlighting talented and diverse disabled artists working in the world today.

Funded by Arts Council England, Arts Council of Wales, British Council and Spirit of 2012, and delivered by Shape Arts and Artsadmin, Unlimited has, since 2013, provided near to £1.8 million in commissions as well as mentoring support to 72 young and emerging disabled artists.

Jo Verrent, Senior Producer, Unlimited says “This year’s commissions have for the first time been divided into three strands - Main Commissions including several research & development awards, and new for this round, Emerging Artists, and International Collaborations, which see disabled UK artists working with disabled artists from across the globe. The response to Unlimited’s commissions call-out has been staggering and we are thrilled to announce the 2017 awardees from 269 applicants. The newly commissioned artists will be developing their works over the coming year and will be unveiled to the public across 2017 and 2018.”

The 2017 commissioned artists include:

Jo Bannon’s visceral theatre performance **We are Fucked** will explore the internal and external experiences of female desire, sexuality and neoliberalism and the modern feminist experience of both personal and political penetration.

HERTZ by **Juliet Robson** will identify and translate the sound of stars into live visual patterns, creating an orchestra that can be heard, seen and felt.

The British Paraorchestra will work with Goldfrapp’s Will Gregory in **VELOCITY**, reinventing the role of composer to be part of the devising team, supported by Lloyd Coleman and the disabled musicians of the collective.

It Was Paradise by **Rachel Gadsden**, a collaborative multi-visual installation, partnering with artists from Palestine highlighting the voice of the disempowered.

Tony Heaton OBE, CEO, Shape Arts, says "One of my last but very pleasant tasks as the outgoing CEO of Shape is the announcement of the next round of recipients of Unlimited commissions and

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awards. The panels have selected a diverse and eclectic mix of work which will amaze and engage, with some surprises! I think the range of ideas we have funded will once again show disabled artists at their creative and ambitious best, so sit up and take notice!"

Manick Govinda, Head of Artists' Advisory Services, Artsadmin, says "The third round of Unlimited commissions proves that so much exciting, provocative, political and beautiful work is being created by disabled artists. These ambitious commissions carry Artsadmin's ethos to help develop and produce great work by artists."

The judging panels comprised independent high profile disabled artists, curators, critics and senior staff members from organisations including Extant, Southbank Centre and Tramway.

Ruth Gould MBE, Chair, Main Commissions Panel & Artistic Director DaDaFest, says "Unlimited is without doubt one of the most significant developments in creating opportunities for disabled artists and companies to lead in the arts. By challenging and exposing artists to wider audiences and critical acclaim, as well as supporting venues and galleries to take risks, Unlimited provide a way for increased recognition and profile raising of the huge talent and creativity that the lived experience of disability presents. I am so proud to be part of this"

Sarah Pickthall, Chair, International Commissions Panel & Director, Cusp Inc., says "These are life-changing artistic collaborations for artists and their proposed projects which will impact local communities internationally and change the way disabled led innovation is experienced and understood."

Aidan Moesby, Chair, Emerging Commissions panel & former Unlimited awardee says,"It's essential to provide opportunities for the next generation of disabled artists to develop as professional artists and performers, and as someone who has benefitted from an Emerging Artists commission in the past I know the difference it can make to an artists practice. Not only the funded time and space to work on your ideas but the benefits of being associated with Unlimited are invaluable. My practice has developed beyond recognition over the last three years and it would be nice to think this is the beginning of any amazing trajectory for those commissioned from this panel."

www.unlimitedimpact.org.uk/announcing-unlimited-commissions-2017
[@weareunltd](https://twitter.com/weareunltd)

Images | <http://bit.ly/2n9ypgo>

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Notes to Editors

About the 2017 commissioned artists

Main Commissions

Jackie Hagan | Jumble Soul | Theatre North (England)

Solo show using puppetry and object manipulation based on verbatim theatre from interviews with people living in vulnerable circumstances.

Owen Lowery | Transitions | North (England)

Metaphorical and personal 'Transitions' are navigated through a series of new poems by Dr Owen William Lowery.

The British Paraorchestra | VELOCITY | South West (England)

The British Paraorchestra will work with Goldfrapp's Will Gregory in **VELOCITY**, reinventing the role of composer to be part of the devising team, supported by Lloyd Coleman and the disabled musicians of the collective.

Fittings Multimedia Arts | Vogue: The Unlimited House of Krip | North (England)

A celebration of Vogue Balls - underground dance and fashion competitions for US drag and LGBTQ communities in the 1960's

Jo Bannon | We Are Fucked | South West (England)

A new large-scale performance project exploring the internal and external experiences of female desire, sexuality and neoliberalism.

Kai Syng Tan | We sat on a mat and had a chat and made maps! | North (England)

A roving participatory installation celebrating mind-wandering, magic carpets, mapping, making, making small talk and making things up.

R&D Awards

Anna Berry | Breathing Sculptures | Midlands (England)

An interactive and experiential outdoor installation lined with cones which breathe in and out - like being inside a lung - powered by static bicycles.

Rinkoo Barpaga | Bubble and Butch | Midlands (England)

A fusion of film and live performance focusing on Deaf identity, mental health issues and utilising British Urban Sign Language.

Raquel Meseguer/Unchartered Collective | A Crash Course in Cloudspotting (the subversive act of horizontality) | South West (England)

An installation piece that explores the experience of invisible disability (chronic pain) and provides a public resting space for neurodiverse people.

Omeima Mudawi-Rowlings | River Runs Through | South East (England)

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Development of an artistic conversation between a Deaf Sudanese textile artist and a dyslexic glass artist referencing childhood affiliations with the Rivers Nile & Tamar.

Chloë Clarke (Phillips) | The Importance of Being Described...Earnestly? | Wales

An improvised comedy that features a fictional theatre company desperately attempting to put on an 'inclusive' performance featuring new audio description practices.

Jack Dean | Jeremiah | North (England)

Development of gig theatre with a full live band to weave the narrative through an original score mixing hip-hop, cinematic composition, spoken word and re-workings of traditional folk songs to tell the story of the Luddite rebellion.

Juliet Robson | HERTZ | South East (England)

Identification and translation of the sound of a number of stars into live visual patterns, creating an orchestra of the sounds of stars that can be heard, seen and felt.

Emerging Artists

Kristina Veasey | My Dirty Secret! | South East (England)

A vibrant, immersive installation transforming common household detritus into stunning fabrics running riot across walls, curtains, cushions and armchairs.

Thompson Hall & Ian Wornast | My Life in London | London (England)

A collaborative project with ActionSpace exploring the experiences and perceptions of people with learning disabilities as they live in and travel around London.

Aby Watson | One way or another [w/t] | Scotland

A new solo 'duet' between two bodies of air: one a helium balloon, one a human being. The balloon is deflating. The human is a dyspraxic woman on roller-skates.

Delson Weekes | Pull Up | London (England)

Creation of a concept album working with Bulblet and leading BLINK Dance Theatre in an interdisciplinary creative response.

Helen Hall | Reflective Moves | Northern Ireland

A solo dance and spoken word piece examining visual impairment and dance, playing with light sources and the sharing of personal viewpoints.

International Collaborations (R&D)

VIVA Carnival & Embaixadores Da Alegria | Alegria Samba School | South West (England) + Brazil

Creation of a fully integrated Brazilian style samba school including drum, dance, costume, theatre, song and float presentations.

Baluji Shrivastav OBE & Shri Ramana Maharishi Academy | Antardrishti - Inner Vision | London (England) + India

Creation of new compositions from an orchestra of blind musicians fusing musical styles from a

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wide range of cultural traditions, with multimedia aspect (Addictive TV).

Rachel Gadsden & Ali Saied | It was Paradise | London (England) + Palestine

It Was Paradise by Rachel Gadsden, a collaborative multi-visual installation, partnering with artists from Palestine highlighting the voice of the disempowered.

Kaite O'Reilly & Peter Sau | The Singapore 'd' Monologues | Wales + Singapore

A new version of the 'd' Monologues" based on the lived experience of being disabled in Singapore.

Billy Read & Ariel Ching-wai | Somebody's Watching Me | Midlands (England) + Hong Kong

Deaf street dancers exploring a dystopian future where sign language users are exposed through surveillance with their language captured by CCTV.

Richard Butchins with Atelier Corners & Kazuyo Morita | The Voice of the Unicorn | London (England) + Japan

A multi-disciplinary collaboration incorporating the artists' silence, revealing to the audience the unknown world of non-verbal behaviour & communication.

About Unlimited

Unlimited is an arts commissioning programme that aims to embed work by disabled artists within the UK and international cultural sectors, reach new audiences and shift perceptions of disabled people. Unlimited has been delivered by the disability-led arts organisation Shape Arts and arts-producing organization Artsadmin since 2013, and is funded from 2016-20 by Arts Council England, Arts Council of Wales, British Council and Spirit of 2012. Since 2013 Unlimited has awarded over £1.8 million to ambitious disabled artists working in theatre, visual arts, literature and music. These artworks resulted in 2,323 performance and exhibition days, which were seen by 132,059 people.

www.weareunlimited.org.uk

www.unlimitedimpact.org.uk

www.twitter.com/weareunltd

About Shape Arts

Shape Arts 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. Tony Heaton OBE will be Chief Executive of Shape until 3 April 2017, when he will be succeeded by David Hevey. Tony Heaton will then become Chair of Shape.

www.shapearts.org.uk

www.twitter.com/shapearts

About Artsadmin

Artsadmin enables artists to create without boundaries, producing bold interdisciplinary work to connect with local, national and international audiences. At Toynbee Studios in East London, Artsadmin have established a centre for the creation and presentation of new work. Their advisory service supports artists at every stage of their development with free advice and opportunities.

www.artsadmin.co.uk

www.twitter.com/artsadm

About Arts Council England

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2015 and 2018, we plan to invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.

www.artscouncil.org.uk

About Arts Council Wales

Arts Council of Wales is responsible for funding and developing the arts in Wales. Arts Council of Wales is an independent charity, established by Royal Charter in 1994. Its members are appointed by the Welsh Government's Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure. Its principal sponsor is the Welsh Government and they also distribute funding from the National Lottery and raise additional money where we can from a variety of public and private sector sources. Working together with the Welsh Government, they are able to show how the arts are helping to meet the Government's policy ambitions.

<http://www.arts.wales/>

About British Council

The **British Council** is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. Using the UK's cultural resources we make a positive contribution to the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections and engendering trust. We work with over 100 countries across the world in the fields of arts and culture, English language, education and civil society. Each year we reach over 20 million people face-to-face and more than 500 million people online, via broadcasts and publications.

Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. The majority of our income is raised delivering a range of projects and contracts in English teaching and examinations, education and development contracts and from partnerships with public and private organisations. Eighteen per cent of our funding is received from the UK government.

www.britishcouncil.org

<http://twitter.com/britishcouncil>

<http://blog.britishcouncil.org/>

About Spirit of 2012

Spirit of 2012 is a funding charity, established with a £47m endowment from the Big Lottery Fund. Spirit of 2012 fund partners across the UK that provide opportunities in sports, physical activity, arts and culture, volunteering and social action. It was founded to continue and recreate the spirit of pride, positivity and social connectedness that people experienced during the London 2012 Games and they invest to create good outcomes for people and their communities.

www.spiritof2012trust.org.uk

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