

# Producers' Hub for Performing Artists

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A Creative Futures Feasibility Study for  
Creative Scotland – March 2012

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## **1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The following study examines ways in which Creative Scotland might best enable producing support for Scotland's independent performing artists. The premise of the study is that with appropriate, consistent and informed producing support, artists are able to focus on their creative development in order to make their best work, without the distraction of having to do their own company management and administration.
- 1.2 As I undertook the research and reflection which this complex subject demands, it felt increasingly important to identify and analyse more than one way of supporting producers to provide an environment in which independent performing artists might be held and developed, from which their work could be promoted to appropriate audiences and through which a trusting and mutually respectful relationship could evolve.
- 1.3 Whilst seeking solutions for independent performing artists, I also wanted to address issues for independent producers. What follows is therefore more an Options Appraisal which outlines a number of operating models, than a Feasibility Study of just one option.
- 1.4 Whilst I felt that an 'Artsadmin-type' model that was mentioned in the brief for this study could offer a possible solution, I considered it would be more likely to succeed if it could evolve as a natural extension of an existing and confident independent producing framework. I wished to explore other models that might serve a wider constituency of artists and which would also integrate producers and artists more effectively into the existing sectoral infrastructure, building on what already exists and helping to overcome the isolation which many independent artists and producers currently experience.
- 1.5 The report is informed by extensive research with Scotland's independent performing artists and producers as well as with a broad selection of practitioners and managers working within and in support of Scotland's performing arts sector. Research into a number of operating models from beyond Scotland puts the report in a wider UK context.
- 1.6 Whilst having no particular steer from Creative Scotland in terms of financial parameters, I have presumed that a request for investment to enable and/or sustain the results of the research would be anticipated.
- 1.7 **The key findings from the research are that:**
  - The current project-based funding system means that many of Scotland's independent performing artists are prevented from fulfilling their creative potential either because they are distracted by the amount of administration and company management required of them between projects, or because they are unable to secure the long-term services of an experienced producer – or both.
  - There are a handful of producers working independently in Scotland. None are able to make a living from supporting independent performing artists.
  - Scotland has many very experienced producers currently working within established organisations who have the potential to bring significant expertise to the independent sector, if it were a financially viable and creatively fulfilling option.
  - Artists need access to a diversity of support ranging from practical advice, administrative and project management services and more complex producing relationships. There is unlikely to be a 'one size fits all' solution which will please everyone. Nor will all our independent performing artists be held by a co-ordinated producing service or programme.
  - Trust between artists and producers is vital to ensure a productive working relationship and a trusting relationship needs time to develop.

- Artists don't stop needing the support of a producer once they become established and/or as they mature.
  - The work of the Producer is broad. Producers should be prepared to respect and undertake all elements of the role in order to gain an appreciation of the scope and ambition of an artist's work.
  - Some of our more established performing artists are also our best producers, although they are often not recognised (or paid) for their producing work.
  - Some interesting and successful models of good practice in producing have previously been developed or hosted in Scotland. Where investment has been made in the past, success has been achieved and producers, artists, venues and audiences have benefited. We need to learn from and build on our own experience.
  - Scotland's producers, artists, managers and promoters are already searching for ways to improve the producing landscape and to provide more opportunities for artists to develop their work
  - Any new development or project is most likely to succeed if it is strategically planned, complements existing provision and has continued learning at its heart
- 1.8 In section 7 I outline five possible models which I believe can start to address these issues. An analysis of these models is given in Appendix 4 and estimated costings are appended at Appendix 6. Each model is based on an existing and proven producing project, organisation or initiative.
- 1.9 I propose that any or all of these models would be supported and developed by a **Managing Producer**. This new role would be responsible for facilitating networking, training and learning opportunities for the producers, to ensure that they gain the skills and confidence required to deliver the best service to artists. The role would also broker partnerships and conversations between relevant producers, artists, venues and agencies to help artists find the most appropriate audiences for their work. I believe this role to be an important and distinctive one, able to provide an overview of all and any models that might be developed, and to be a vital link between these producers and Creative Scotland.
- 1.10 **The models are:**
- A. A managed network of independent producing teams hosted by Scotland's existing performing arts venues and support agencies/organisations**  
*Inspired by Catalyst Dance Management at Dance Base, for a selection of Scotland's presenting and producing theatres and agencies each to be given ring-fenced funding to host a small producing team of a producer and an administrator/trainee producer who will provide dedicated producing and administrative/tour booking services to a portfolio of 3 - 4 independent performing artists, and be available to offer advice and resources to a wider range of local artists.*
- B. An extended producing role for Scotland's existing producing companies**  
*Inspired by Catherine Wheels and to complement the venue-based hosting programme in A above, for some of Scotland's producing and touring theatre/dance/performance companies to be funded as host companies to produce a minimum of two or three additional independent companies or independent performing artists' work alongside their own productions. This proposal project brings investment to those artists who are experienced producers, enabling them to support and develop longer-term partnerships with associated artists and producers.*
- C. A managed network of independent producing hubs**  
*Inspired by Artsadmin, for an independent producing company to be established to employ a group of producers to work together to support a portfolio of at least eight independent performing artists with producing and administrative support as well as giving advice and information to a wider constituency of local performing*

artists. I propose that this model should evolve within three years to support two satellite hubs, each supporting up to eight independent performing artists.

**D. Extended funded placement opportunities for producers**

*Inspired by the Federation of Scottish Theatre's producers' bursaries, for four funded placements of up to six months to be made available to mid-career producers to learn from established producers within existing/established producing venues or companies.*

**E. Expanded and co-ordinated web-based information services for independent performing artists and producers, complemented by in-person coaching and advisory services.**

*Inspired by Theatre Bristol, PANDA (Manchester) and Cultural Enterprise Office, for a co-ordinated approach to be taken across Scotland's various performing arts support agencies to collate and promote information and advice for independent performing artists, both through online resources and listings, and through regular relevant advisory sessions.*

- 1.11 I believe that there is scope for any or all of these models to be introduced effectively and to achieve a strategic and widespread impact in Scotland. However, having reviewed the potential benefits, costs, opportunities and challenges of each option, I recommend as a priority in section 10 that Models A & B should be implemented in tandem. I believe that these models in particular have the scope to generate dynamic communities of support for the performing arts across Scotland.
- 1.12 These models would enable the creation of a network of hosted and salaried producing teams who will work independently but under the umbrella (and ideally under the same roof) of a selection of our existing venues, agencies and producing companies. These hosted teams would have access to the host organisation's staff, and would be able to draw on this raft of expertise to enhance their offering to performing artists and their stakeholders, as appropriate.
- 1.13 My proposal is that this hosting opportunity be extended to 10 producing teams across the country in the first instance, six within a venue or agency and four within a producing company. My aim is to ensure there is potential for this service to have national spread, to work across a number of artforms and to avoid the dominance of any one curatorial voice.
- 1.14 The work of the majority of the performing artists whose careers would be supported by these mechanisms requires a significant degree of subsidy to reach an audience. Whilst there may be occasional opportunities for this work to be developed or exploited commercially, this is not the norm.
- 1.15 Significant investment will therefore be required to introduce and establish these models. However, there will also be considerable efficiency savings to be made through the sharing of resources and overheads and the removal of some of the manifold duplication of costs currently incurred to service Scotland's many independent performing artists.
- 1.16 In place of lots of 'one-off' investments in individual producers to work with individual artists on occasional projects, there is the opportunity to make a sustained investment in a core team of producers who in turn can invest in a consistent portfolio of artists, liberating them to fulfil their creative potential.
- 1.17 I believe that there is scope to operate Model C, but only once the culture of successful and viable independent producing is established in Scotland through running Models A & B. However, there are operational, financial and reputational risks involved in setting up an independent company and my expectation is that there may be more of an appetite to continue with the hosting relationships than to create a

new organisation. If Creative Scotland and its communities of confident and successful independent producers and performing artists get to the position of deciding between these two options, I would know that my work on this study will have been worthwhile.

- 1.18 Models D and E are about extending the skills and experience of individual artists and producers, equipping them to operate more effectively and more confidently as independent practitioners. If funds allow I believe there is scope to introduce these two programmes alongside Models A, B (and C) above.
- 1.19 If a more linear or restricted approach is required, I believe that Model D provides a proven, stand-alone training programme which is easily introduced and will achieve immediate benefits both for the producers and for their host organisation. I propose that Model E requires more research but has the potential to provide a rich seam of resources for a wide range of artists, producers and other stakeholders both in and outwith Scotland. It could enhance the role of some of our existing sectoral membership and support organisations and/or bring them into greater partnership.
- 1.20 Depending on which models are implemented and in which combinations, I estimate the need for annual investment of between £33,000 and £754,000. I estimate that there are also cost-savings to be made of at least between £24,000 and £72,000 per year.
- 1.21 **The funding landscape in Scotland is undergoing significant change. By the end of March 2013 more artists and producers will be required to work independently and to compete for project funds. This report is being delivered at a time when Creative Scotland needs to be thinking about what mechanisms it can put in place to hold some of these artists and producers and to ensure that their work is not lost to audiences. I do not believe that doing nothing is an option.**
- 1.22 **I have aimed to provide a coherent overview of the environment in which Scotland's independent producers and artists are operating and of the issues and ambitions they each have for developing mutually rewarding relationships. I have outlined good practice from Scotland and beyond and have drawn on these to propose a series of models which I believe would provide appropriate, achievable and widespread benefit for Scotland's artists, producers and audiences.**
- 1.23 **My hope is that this report will offer Creative Scotland a selection of well-researched starting points from which to make important decisions about investment in the future of Scotland's independent performing artists.**

***‘Whatever it’s called – producing, creating, facilitating, enabling, realising – theatre can’t happen without it’ – Laura Baggaley<sup>1</sup>***

**2 Parameters of the Study**

- 2.1 I was commissioned by Creative Scotland *‘to conduct a feasibility on the creation of an entity – perhaps a body of producers who would work in support of artists who need a small infrastructure.’*
- 2.2 The assumption behind this brief is that many artists are required to put in place structures and administrative systems in order to manage and deliver their work. The brief suggests that: *‘This is often outside their [the artists’] skills set and they have no interest in doing it. A disproportionate amount of their time is used up in activity that diverts energy from their talent.’*
- 2.3 This presented me with a starting point that assumed a change to the current situation for independent performing artists was both possible and necessary. It also provoked me to test out these assumptions and to identify the needs of both the performing artists currently working in Scotland, and of the producers who are assumed from the brief to be part of the solution.
- 2.4 The title of the research is **‘Producers Hub for Performing Artists’**. I have taken the notion of a ‘hub’ as a very broad definition and did not set out with any assumptions of what this would look like structurally, although I have assumed that it would require a level of subsidy to operate on a secure basis financially.
- 2.5 I have worked on the basis that a **performing artist** is an artist who will generally be making work that is performed live, to live audiences in a theatre-based context although their work can be seen by audiences in outside, non-theatre or site-specific spaces; and that it is made by a group of artists trained in the theatre arts, i.e. directors, choreographers, composers, designers, puppeteers, aerialists, movement directors, actors, dancers, musicians, physical performers.
- 2.6 When I refer to **Independent Performing Artists**, I am referring to those performing artists who currently (and potentially in the future will) make work on a project basis and without the benefit of a company, organisation or building that is funded on an ongoing basis.
- 2.7 I have assumed that the work of the majority of the performing artists whose careers are being considered here requires a significant degree of subsidy to reach an audience. Whilst there may be occasional opportunities for their work to be developed or exploited commercially, the operating models given below are not predicated on this as the norm.
- 2.8 The definition of a **Producer** is complex and often misleading. I have taken it to mean the person who takes the lead to ‘make things happen’ for a performing artist. This person can be the instigator of a creative project, or can facilitate the realisation of an artist’s vision. In many cases this role is fulfilled by the artist themselves. I understand the role to be adaptable to undertake whatever creative, financial, administrative, project management or developmental duties are required to deliver an artistic vision to an audience. Within this study, I am assuming the producer to be an independent role, not already employed on a permanent basis by a venue or an organisation.
- 2.9 I have consulted widely to gather information, observations and aspirations for Scotland’s independent performing artists and would hope that, if implemented, the recommendations from this study will achieve wide-ranging benefit across the performing arts.

### **3 Context:**

#### **3.1 Investment landscape**

- 3.1.1 This study is being undertaken at a time of considerable anticipated change to the investment framework at Creative Scotland, and against a backdrop of concern about the financial viability of touring on the small and mid scale within Scotland.
- 3.1.2 Creative Scotland is currently reviewing its Flexible Funding (FXO) commitments and its strategies in relation to theatre, dance and music as part of its sectoral reviews.
- 3.1.3 It is anticipated that FXO funding, which offered some performing artists and their producers/managers/administrators the security of two to three year funding, will cease to exist after 2012/13.
- 3.1.4 This will increase the numbers of artists working independently and seeking project funding to create and distribute their work after April 2013. It will also increase the number of producers seeking employment and potentially available to work independently or on a freelance basis to support artists.
- 3.1.5 If no secure or sustainable producing opportunities present themselves it is possible that a high proportion of these artists and producers may decide, or be required, to cease working independently or locate themselves outwith Scotland in order to pursue opportunities elsewhere.

#### **3.2 Touring landscape**

- 3.2.1 The majority of independent performing artists in Scotland are making work to present on tour in venues of a variety of scales across the country.
- 3.2.2 With the rising costs of running theatre buildings, cuts in Local Authority funding, and the need for audiences to make careful choices about how to spend their decreasing disposable income, venues across the country (both producing and presenting) are increasingly limited in the fees, financial deals and marketing support they are able to offer to touring companies and artists.
- 3.2.3 The economics of touring the performing arts, particularly on the small and mid-scale have always been fragile but it is becoming less and less tenable for small and under-resourced touring companies and artists to distribute their work successfully in this way.
- 3.2.4 At the same time, the National Theatre of Scotland – a dominant creative and financial force (and potential partner) for the performing arts within Scotland – is regularly producing and touring highly subsidised work across all scales of venues. This further exacerbates the challenge for small independent companies as NTS brings venues the benefit of well-resourced and high visibility productions, for low costs and very limited risk.
- 3.2.5 Some concerns were raised during discussions with promoters about the wisdom of supporting more performing artists to create more work without also addressing these issues.

### 3.3 Adapting to change

#### 3.3.1 **Faced with the need to respond to changing and uncertain times, it is interesting to note some mutually beneficial conversations that are starting to happen in the Scottish performing arts sector between producers and artists, between venues and companies and amongst producers about how best to support independent performing artists:**

- The Citizens' Theatre under new Artistic Director, Dominic Hill, is seeking to bring more artists into the building to make work and to be a creative and dynamic presence within the theatre
- Inspired by a residency at Cove Park for independent producers and facilitated by Fuel, a group of producers based in Scotland (including Angie Bual, Susannah Armitage, Suzy Glass, Kate Bowen and Paul Fitzpatrick) recognise that they have more to gain by sharing their experiences and are seeking to create a formal network to provide each other with peer support.<sup>ii</sup>
- The National Theatre of Scotland is re-structuring to work with more Project Producers on a freelance basis to deliver their increasingly large repertoire of touring productions.<sup>iii</sup>
- Chloe Dear and Jon Clarke are developing new ways to provide resources, training and support to producers and artists working independently within the physical performance sector<sup>iv</sup>
- Puppet Animation Scotland is developing a self-assessment programme to help artists think more strategically and objectively about their work and its intended audience<sup>v</sup>
- The Northern Scottish Touring Fund has been '*making things happen for artists and audiences*' in the Highlands and Islands by commissioning artists and companies to tour selected work to their partner venues with full organisational and promotional support.<sup>vi</sup>
- Hi Arts in Inverness is exploring its potential to become a service provider for the independent performing artists based in the Highlands, supporting both companies and individuals to produce and deliver their work and calling on the expertise of local freelance producers as required.<sup>vii</sup>
- The Federation of Scottish Theatre is looking to extend its website to offer more contract and policy resources for its members, and to expand its membership to include more individual and independent performing artists.<sup>viii</sup>
- Voluntary Arts Scotland has recently re-launched its website to provide more tailored services to its members, including expanded web-based learning, resources and peer support opportunities.<sup>ix</sup>
- A recent meeting of artists and arts organisations in Aberdeen resulted in a move to create a new independent organisation charged with supporting, promoting and representing the cultural sector in Aberdeen and the North East of Scotland. Its membership will be open to individual practitioners and organisations aiming to create and provide opportunities for, a unified community of artists and organisations in the region.<sup>x</sup>
- Mull Theatre is receiving pilot funding from Argyll and Bute to promote the work of small and independent performing arts companies more widely in the region, as

well as its own work. This builds on the role the theatre recently undertook for Wild Bird, making a funding application and providing the expertise needed to produce and tour the company's show around the Highlands.<sup>xi</sup>

- Untitled Projects, Magnetic North and Vanishing Point are exploring ways to develop other artists work within their existing producing company structures.

**3.3.2 The aim of this study is to identify an appropriate, complementary role for a *Producers' Hub for Performing Artists* within the changing investment and touring landscape and amidst the considerable challenges, and rich mix of opportunities, that are already being considered by individuals and organisations within the performing arts sector in Scotland.**

#### **3.4 A note about job titles...**

*' a producer needs a big head but a small ego'* Roanne Dods

3.4.1 The title 'producer' is relatively new in theatre and means many different things to different people.

3.4.2 Many people do the work of a producer without having this title, and some promote themselves as doing the job of a producer when in fact their skills-set and/or experience limits their ability to deliver all aspects of the role.

3.4.3 Most of those who fulfil, or aspire to fulfil, the role of producer for Scottish based performing artists are working in response to, and to facilitate, the ideas, productions and projects that these artists are creating. These people tend to use the title Producer, Administrative Producer, Project Manager, or Line Producer.

3.4.4 A small proportion of producers are initiating and developing their own creative projects and inviting artists to deliver them. These people tend to use the title Producer or Creative Producer.

3.4.5 The role of an Administrator or General Manager is considered by more experienced producers, and many experienced artists, as a vital and often undervalued aspect of producing. Since the term 'producer' has come into common usage in the last five to ten years, there is a perception that these more logistical and administrative roles have lower status.

3.4.6 In many cases, the job currently done by a 'Producer' for an artist or company would previously have been done by someone called an 'Administrator' or a 'General Manager'.

## 4 Findings from research and consultation with Artists and Producers

### 4.1 Consultation with Artists: Survey Monkey response

*'The precarious nature of the performing arts, mixed with the precarious nature of the creative process, mixed with the precarious nature of many people who might be described as creative artists means that there is a real need for solidity in a producer. This is not present because so many producers are freelance and therefore are in a precarious position themselves'.* Survey Monkey respondent

- 4.1.1 46 independent performing artists completed the survey. (See Appendices 2 and 3 for Survey questions and distribution information). These artists used 21 different words or phrases to describe their artistic practice. The highest representation was from those defining themselves as working in 'dance' (26%), 'theatre' (20%) and 'physical theatre' (18%)
- 4.1.2 *Whilst there is a wide diversity of opinions and situations reflected in the survey responses, the overall picture is of a group of creative artists who are thoughtful and resourceful about what is required to get their work produced.*
- 4.1.3 The highest proportion of those who completed the survey have worked as an independent artist in Scotland for between 5 and 10 years (44%).
- 4.1.4 *There is much evidence of extensive and successful multi-tasking, with most artists creating and promoting their work successfully without any producing or administrative support.*
- 4.1.5 80% of those who completed the Survey do not currently work with a producer. Of these, 85% are prevented from doing so for lack of funds.
- 4.1.6 *For some, this is stimulating ('it's a learning curve but my enthusiasm, professionalism and sheer determination to make a project work is what makes things tick!') but for the majority it is a pragmatic necessity ('I do everything in the list above for my company, although I'd rather not').*
- 4.1.7 Many expressed frustration about the limitations perceived by working as artist/producer or artist without producing support – both for its impact on their creative output (*'I spend too much time on administration/ management/ production/marketing and not enough on concentrating on being the artist'*) and on the creative and promotional opportunities which they feel they miss out on due to their own lack of funds, time, contacts and skills. (*'if I had a producer, I am pretty sure I could tour more and that my profile would grow over the years'*).
- 4.1.8 *93% of respondents felt that, if funding was not an issue, having a skilled producer is the one thing that would make the most difference to their ability to bring their ideas to fruition and to audiences.*
- 4.1.9 Some acknowledge that there is a difference between *producing* support – primarily seen as someone who can open up opportunities to develop work or a company beyond a single project or tour, (*I don't have a producer working with me and I have found that this has severely limited the life and potential for some of my work to live its fullest life'*) and *administrative* support – someone who can take care of the 'nitty-gritty' and the logistical and organisational demands of touring. However, for the majority, the role of producer encompasses a wide variety and combinations of visionary and practical roles.
- 4.1.10 Whilst there is recognition of the possibilities that working with a producer might offer, there is also appropriate caution about how and whether to develop a relationship

with a producer, particularly when artists have been used to being very self-sufficient. (*it's like 'finding a husband' when you've become fully used to being single*).

- 4.1.11 *10% of respondents prefer to act as their own producer and promoter.*
- 4.1.12 *85% of respondents bring valuable experience of their own to the role of producer.*
- 4.1.13 Some are concerned that independent producers lack experience and may not have the sector expertise needed to bring their work to appropriate audiences.
- 4.1.14 *77% of respondents seek advice and information about producing their work from other independent artists, rather than through Creative Scotland or other industry advisors.*
- 4.1.15 The foremost gap in the skills and experience of the artists and/or their producers, is in maximising touring and income generation opportunities from successful existing work, including through international touring and networking.

## **4.2 Consultation with Artists: Interview responses**

- 4.2.1 Many of the artists consulted with in person echoed the concerns and issues raised by the Survey Monkey, in particular the cycle of not having enough money for long enough to get the level and continuity of support from a producer they feel is needed to help develop the work and take pressure off the artist:
- 4.2.2 One artist gave the example of advertising for a producer for a fee that only enabled a short-term, part-time commitment (and in effect ruled out anyone with high-level producing experience). She received just 3 applications. *'I wanted someone to help me drive the ship and help me out of a rut and to feel less lonely. I am very grateful for all the admin support I am now getting but I still carry the can and am moving the company forward'*.
- 4.2.3 In addition to the issues articulated by the artists who completed the Survey Monkey, the following points were made by those artists consulted in person **as needing to be acknowledged and addressed within any future 'entity' or producer/artist relationship**:
- 4.2.4 In general, younger artists don't feel the need of a producer, but want guidance to the next rung on the ladder. They need someone to help 'open doors' and offer advice. They like the idea of a producer who acts more as an agent – helping to make connections and to get their work seen by people who can champion, and ultimately, programme it.
- 4.2.5 Several more established artists prefer to avoid having a company at all, but instead to work with a variety of producers and enablers who can give their work life in different ways, across the UK.
- 4.2.6 Some older or more established artists are frustrated that they are not acknowledged as being the most experienced producers of their own work. They are uneasy with the notion that any funding available should go to less experienced producers rather than to the more experienced artists themselves. These artists will usually have been funded on a project or occasional basis for many years during which time they will have acquired extensive and direct knowledge of the touring circuits both in Scotland and beyond, and have with a wide network of contacts across the sector. They are also excellent managers and administrators, having had to manage, promote and account for all aspects of their company single-handedly between projects, mostly for no payment.

- 4.2.7 By contrast, some artists can feel overwhelmed by producers and their presumed status, knowledge and experience. This can lessen as artists mature, but can be an issue unless communication and expectations are clearly established at the outset of any relationship. The predominance of the term 'producer' has increased this sense of a newly emerging hierarchy where producers sit 'above' artists.
- 4.2.8 Some voiced frustration about working with a producer who is also working with other artists; these artists would prefer to have someone dedicated to championing just their work to ensure maximum realisation of its creative and promotional potential. Whilst sharing a producer is recognised as a practical necessity by those artists whose work has been project funded to date, it has the potential to be a more challenging adjustment for those who have been FXO funded and used to having the focussed attention of a dedicated producing team.
- 4.2.9 Some felt that artists also need to take some responsibility for their part of the relationship. A free producing service could be '*abused*' unless there are clear parameters for the relationship.
- 4.2.10 It was often remarked that there is a lot of work being generated at a seeding level in Scotland – lots of scratch nights, showings, sharings and platforms – little of which is being progressed to another stage. One experienced artist felt that what is missing in Scotland is a producer who can fulfil the role of '*an objective, informed creative observer*' – someone who can facilitate mutually respectful dialogue with artists and promoters about the quality of work and suitability for its intended audience.
- 4.2.11 Many artists felt that our theatre buildings could be more open to independent artists to populate in interesting and purposeful ways particularly now when venues can offer very little in terms of financial support to artists.
- 4.2.12 It was often stressed that there needs to be investment in the work and in infrastructure as well as in the producer.

#### **4.3 Consultation with Producers: Survey Monkey responses**

- 4.3.1 *22 producers completed the survey. Whilst not all appear to be working independently, all show an articulate awareness of the role and challenges facing producers who are working with independent performing artists in Scotland. The picture is of a group of able and committed producers who mostly feel under-utilised due to lack of secure opportunities and often over-stretched by artists with high expectations and low means.*
- 4.3.2 The producers share with the artists the frustration of the current project-funding system and the limitations this puts on the potential to develop and sustain productive and creative working relationships between the two groups.
- 4.3.3 *84% of those surveyed work on a freelance basis. 80% of all the work undertaken by the producers who completed the questionnaire is done on a voluntary basis. 'I have been doing producing-style work for about 6 years, but only started to be paid for it a year and a half ago'.*
- 4.3.4 The producers who completed the survey indicated that they support artists working in 23 different artforms/styles of performance. The majority of producers support artists creating dance (47%) and theatre (41%).
- 4.3.5 *Whilst it is acknowledged that the role of the producer will vary according to the artist, their project and their own abilities, there is general consensus that, to a greater or lesser degree, the role of the producer is to be a facilitator who 'enables the work of artists to be realised to the fullest extent possible'.*

- 4.3.6 88% of those who responded considered there to be a need for more producers to be working with independent artists in Scotland.
- 4.3.7 In addition to the many practical, creative and technical skills producers believe equip them to support artists in the way they do, are the very personal qualities of *courage, kindness, curiosity, humour, patience, enthusiasm, humility, respect and persistence*.
- 4.3.8 All of those who completed the survey (100%) stated that they have acquired their producing skills through years of working with artists. Only 42% undertook formal training at a college/university. *'Nothing can beat experience'*.
- 4.3.9 Those surveyed believed that to be most effective, it would be desirable to work with no more than 2-3 artists at any one time.
- 4.3.10 'Having access to 'other arts professionals (i.e. fundraisers, marketing, education and audience development specialists)' and 'to rehearsal studio and meeting spaces', would be the best way to overcome the challenges faced by the producers who completed the survey. 61% felt that the challenges could be met by 'working within a producing venue'.
- 4.3.11 Interestingly, only third on the list was 'receiving a regular salary' (56%), the same number who indicated 'being part of a network of other producers' and 'having access to legal and other professional advice'.
- 4.3.12 It is important to note that there are a variety of apparent mismatches between the services sought by artists and those offered by producers. For example, fundraising, which is the service most sought after by artists, is the third on the list of services offered by these producers. Creative or artistic development advice which is joint 2<sup>nd</sup> (89%) on the list of services currently offered by producers, is 9<sup>th</sup> on the list of services artists are looking for from producers. Tour booking and venue liaison which is the second most important service sought by artists, is fifth on the list offered by producers.
- 4.3.13 These mismatches may be due to multiple factors, not least that the survey was completed by 50% more artists than producers. It may also be that the producers who are currently working in Scotland are exactly those people that the artists who completed the survey lack the funds, knowledge or opportunity to engage.
- 4.3.14 Most importantly, it may serve to illustrate that any service, or services, offered to independent performing artists by producers in Scotland will need to be flexible enough to offer a variety of administrative and producing services to artists at different stages of their careers, working across a variety of performance styles and with different levels of financial support at their disposal.

#### **4.4 Consultation with Producers: Interview responses**

- 4.4.1 The Survey Monkey responses from producers were largely echoed by more targeted conversations held with producers.
- 4.4.2 The idea of providing some kind of structured and financially secure support for independent producers to develop and maximise the work of Scottish-based performing artists was very warmly welcomed. It is not a new idea and is a concept that is being actively developed or has been considered (and proposed for funding) by several of those already working in this area.
- 4.4.3 During the course of my research, I was made aware of four detailed proposals which have previously been drawn up, or are being developed to create funded opportunities for independent producers to facilitate artistic projects in Scotland.
- 4.4.4 These proposals recognise and champion the impact that security and continued learning opportunities for producers can bring to artists, and to the confidence and ambition of the sector.
- 4.4.5 There were some who felt that any funded posts should not be full-time to encourage entrepreneurialism, and some who were concerned that more independent producers would lessen the work available to those who are already working with independent artists.
- 4.4.6 However, the idea of a network of independent producers facilitated to share and develop their learning together was broadly welcome.
- 4.4.7 **In addition to the issues identified through the Survey Monkey for producers, the following issues were presented by the producers consulted with personally as needing to be acknowledged and addressed within any future 'entity' or producer/artist relationship:**
- 4.4.8 Producers need to be free to operate as suits their passion, experience and capacity. They should not be required to work with artists specified or funded by Creative Scotland and so be able to retain the vital freedom to curate their own portfolio of artists.
- 4.4.9 A producing service will not serve all of Scotland's independent performing artists. This will need to be acknowledged within any future model, and addressed through greater and more visible access to producing advice and information than is currently available.
- 4.4.10 To avoid artists' personal liability and potential misuse of public funds, a producing service would need to be constituted or have access to a company constitution which has limited company status, or similar.
- 4.4.11 Artists and producers would not have to be based in the same place or region to work together, although remote working is not ideal for everyone.
- 4.4.12 Some producers would be prepared to re-locate to take up a paid position as a producer, others would not.
- 4.4.13 A hub of producers or an arts practice with a roster of artists needs to be guided by an overarching set of values, i.e. an aesthetic or audience-related philosophy and purpose.

- 4.4.14 There is a need to ensure individual artists retain their individual identity within any umbrella producing service, but also to promote branding of the producing service to ensure its own visibility and profile as an enabler.
- 4.4.15 Some producers are working in direct response to artists' ideas and some are developing and initiating creative ideas and projects themselves. Both are valid and necessary to retain a healthy and vibrant performing arts (and wider/cross-over) sector.
- 4.4.16 There need to be opportunities to train up and develop less experienced producers alongside established and experienced producers, of whatever nature.
- 4.4.17 There is a need for recognition of the complexity and responsibility of the independent producer role. Not everyone is prepared to take on the risk – financial and reputational – for supporting and developing the career of an artist or a sector. This can take many years to achieve and often goes unacknowledged.
- 4.4.18 There is a shortage of producers willing, or able, to offer basic skills in book-keeping, administration and tour booking to artists. *'You need to be self-motivated to learn to be a producer. You need to want to do the dull bits to get to the exciting bits'*. Jude Doherty, Grid Iron
- 4.4.19 We need to avoid creating structures that are too fixed and risk losing diversity and vibrancy. We need to remain open to change and not seek to expand or become established too quickly.
- 4.4.20 We need to maximise the opportunities for groups of producers to work collaboratively with Creative Scotland, and with venues, to create a strategic and viable touring circuit.
- 4.4.21 The role of the producer needs to be more visible and higher status, in order to open doors and make things happen for artists.
- 4.4.22 We need more producers to develop the skills and networks, and income streams, that will enable more work to be made for Scotland's larger stages, and more commercially driven tours and presentations.
- 4.4.23 We need to enable producers in Scotland to achieve more mobility – to be able to move around, to see work and learn from others working in Scotland and beyond.

## 5 Good practice within Scotland

- 5.1 **It is worth noting that Scotland has initiated or played host to a number of projects which provide direct support to producers. Where such investment has been made, a tangible step-change has been achieved for producers and for performing artists:**
- 5.2 The **Scottish Arts Council Producer's Bursary** was presented as an example of how the funding of an individual producer can achieve significant success for a wide spectrum of artists. Chloe Dear received £35,000 between 2008 and 2010, during which time she was able to develop her own practice as an independent producer and to establish a company through which to support and develop independent artists working in physical performance. She was able to create and produce two major events; research and develop long-term plans for new projects; provide support for developing companies; invest in marketing and promotion for her company; run an office and employ an assistant and attend meetings and see work nationally and internationally.

*'the long-term benefit has been the establishment of Iron-Oxide as a powerhouse for the creation of physical performance, not just through its own work...but through its ability to support other artists and companies. This will result in a stronger, more dynamic physical performance sector'.* Chloe Dear, end of project report for Scottish Arts Council

- 5.3 The **FST Producer's Bursary** has supported approximately five producers per year since 2009, for a spend of approximately £20,000 per year. This programme was highlighted as a beneficial means of providing short-term training and career development opportunities for producers to learn from more experienced producers. The programme developed from a short-lived Producers' Forum, facilitated by FST, which identified a need for more training opportunities for producers. The Bursary programme was originally intended as a mid-career opportunity but more applications come from those starting out. In recent years, it has enabled producers to gain experience in an international context, and to bring this knowledge and energy back to Scotland. FST has also run a series of training sessions for independent producers which were good at bringing these producers together to learn from more experienced practitioners.

*This opportunity to develop my practice with another company has been an important phase of my development and has been integral to the formation of Trigger.* (Angie Bual who received a bursary to work with Fierce in Birmingham)

- 5.4 The award of Paul Hamlyn Foundation Breakthrough funding to **Stewart Laing and Untitled Projects** has enabled three senior arts workers to be employed on a part-time basis for three years. This funding is visionary and only available to nominated artists. It is also highly competitive. However, the benefits of having a funded infrastructure include: being able to respond immediately to ideas and to focus on artistic development; being able to raise funds for projects rather than for salaries (although it was noted that finding funding for projects was proving more challenging than anticipated); being able to plan ahead; being able to train and develop younger producers and also having the infrastructure through which to support and develop other artists<sup>xii</sup>.
- 5.5 The funding by Scottish Arts Council/Creative Scotland of a salaried post at Dance Base since 2005, dedicated to providing advice, administration and producing services to professional dancers has had a profound impact on the scope and reach of Scotland's independent dance artists. As well as operating within a creative learning environment for the salaried producer, **Catalyst Dance Management** has facilitated training and coaching opportunities for other producers and dance-artists, and has provide a point of contact for national and international promoters seeking to

promoter dance from Scotland. '*Catalyst frees up artists to make the work*' Leigh Robieson-Cleaver, Acting Manager, Catalyst.<sup>xiii</sup>

- 5.6 Funded by SAC and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, **Space 11** was created at CCA in 2004 and ran until 2011. It came from a desire by Vanishing Point's Artistic Director, Matthew Lenton, to find a way to provide practical and artistic support for artists and companies making non-text-based theatre. It provided office space and administrative facilities to small and emerging companies, enabling them to focus their energy and resources on making work. As well as practical support, Space 11 companies benefited from facilitated peer learning, mentoring from Vanishing Point Artistic Director and Producer, and a curated programme of masterclasses and meetings with experienced producers, agents, dramaturges and programmers aimed at improving these companies' access to people who could help them.<sup>xiv</sup>
- 5.7 The creation of **Conflux** with funds from the Legacy Trust UK for four years to develop a skilled and confident community of physical and circus performers has resulted in a small dedicated team of paid staff who are available to offer a range of creative, business and development advice and opportunities to performing artists working in this field. This project has also been instrumental in generating new opportunities to train in the field of Physical Performance (at Adam Smith College in Kirkcaldy and in association with the Arches) and in programming a new festival in Glasgow (Surge). It has also grown to include some direct producing of young artists' work. By providing an overview of the sector, Conflux is able to maximise opportunities for its artists, both nationally and internationally and to avoid internal competition between artists. Helping artists to be self-reliant '*costs nothing but time*', Al Seed, Director of Conflux.<sup>xv</sup>
- 5.8 **We can to learn from and build on these successes, shoring up projects that need to be sustained and extending opportunities where necessary. The successes of Imagine, Catalyst, Conflux and Puppet Animation Scotland are evidence of the power of focussed investment in people to act as producers, facilitators, lobbyists and networkers on behalf of particular artforms.**
- 5.9 **We now need to find ways to extend this investment to serve a wider constituency of Scotland's performing artists and to ensure that all performing artists have access to the information and advice they need to make the best choices about their careers.**

## **6 Learning from examples beyond Scotland.**

- 6.1 It is interesting to set the current and anticipated future opportunities and challenges for Scotland's independent performing artists and producers within a wider UK context.
- 6.2 Artists' support organisations, along with all cultural organisations, in England and Ireland are having to re-consider how best to provide services to independent performing artists with dwindling resources both for themselves and for the artists they wish to support.
- 6.3 From the research undertaken with organisations who have a particular remit to support independent performing artists (see Appendix 5 below for case studies and Appendix 3 for full list of organisations consulted with), there would appear to be the following key learning points:
- 6.4 Existing entities in England that exist to provide producing and advisory services to independent performing artists (Performing Arts Network in Manchester (PANDA), Crying Out Loud, Artsadmin, The Empty Space, Fuel, China Plate) appear to have grown organically from a desire to address a particular geographic issue, to bring a particular artform or style of work to audiences and/or to support a particular group of artists at a certain stage in their careers. The producers who have taken the initiative to create these entities tend to have learned their craft through working with experienced producers and in an environment that empowers the producer to support artists (e.g. Sadler's Wells, Battersea Arts Centre etc).
- 6.5 These entities struggle to achieve their goals for artists without the core financial stability to provide salaried staff who can explore and implement opportunities for their artists; and unless they have a dedicated operational budget or are enabled to apply for additional investment to support and develop particular services and projects.
- 6.6 The dismantling of fixed term funding for performing artists in Ireland and England has greatly increased the numbers of numbers of performing artists seeking producing support to make work. Venues and existing agencies are responding to the needs of this expanded sector in a variety of ways including providing space to house independent companies and artists and expanding the remit of existing staff to offer them producing support. However, it can be a challenge for these venues/organisations to provide the level of service required by independent performing artists alongside running their core business.
- 6.7 The challenges of touring work is not unique to Scotland. Producers with an informed overview of provision can play a leading role in addressing and developing solutions to these issues as can be seen through initiatives like House at Farnham Maltings and English Touring Theatre both of which bring larger organisations together to mentor and support, including with financial investment, the work of smaller companies to tour to rural areas.
- 6.8 Web-based resources can be provide vital information and support for independent artists, and producers, but to be truly effective, such offerings need to be backed up with personal interaction through coaching or personal advisory services.
- 6.9 There is need to be able to tailor and adapt a service to accommodate a variety of different needs at different times for different artists. Opportunities and respect comes to those who put in the time to make a difference.

## 7.1 Producing models to consider

***‘independent producers can help companies make their best work, with the best opportunities and the best audiences’*** Judith Doherty, Producer, Grid Iron

- 7.1.1 Having assessed and considered all the issues and ideas arising from the consultation process, it is clear that:
- **There are no opportunities to progress and develop a sustainable career as an independent producer in Scotland**
  - **There is unlikely to be a ‘one size fits all’ solution which will please everyone**
  - **We need to build on what we already have**
  - **Artists need access both to basic advice as well as to more complex producing relationships**
  - **Trust between artists and producers is vital to ensure a productive working relationship and a trusting relationship needs time to develop**
  - **Artists don’t stop needing the support of a producer once they become established and/or as they mature**
  - **The work of the Producer is broad and producers should be prepared to undertake all elements.**
  - **There are some very experienced managers working within Scotland’s cultural organisations who have the potential to bring high level producing skills to the independent sector.**
  - **Some of our independent producers still have a lot to learn**
  - **Any new development or project is most likely to succeed if it is strategically planned and facilitated**
  - **Funds will need to be invested to achieve change and sustained funds will need to be invested to achieve success**
  - **There will always be some tension between whether it is the artists or the producers who receive the investment, but it is the end result – the creation of artists’ work - that we need to focus on**
- 7.1.2 **This paper proposes five different ways in which producers might be supported to provide the support required to enable Scotland’s independent performing artists to create and deliver their best work.**
- 7.1.3 It is envisaged that any or all of these models would be supported and developed by a **Managing Producer**. This role would be responsible for facilitating networking and training and learning opportunities for the producers, to ensure that they gain the skills and confidence required to deliver the best service to artists. The role would also broker partnerships and conversations between relevant producers, artists, venues and agencies to help artists find the most appropriate audiences for their work. This role is a new and important one, able to provide an overview of all and any models that might be developed, and to be a vital link between these producers and Creative Scotland.
- 7.1.4 Each model is described, put in the context of a model from which it is inspired and detail is given about how it might be operated. This is followed by a summary of the finances of each model and their potential scope of reach. An assessment is then given of recommended routes to follow. Full analysis of the opportunities and risks (SWOT) involved in each model is given in Appendix 4. Full financial modelling is given in Appendix 6.
- 7.1.5 Key to consideration of these models is acknowledgement that this is the start of a process and that, as we have seen from examples of good practice in Scotland and elsewhere, the process of learning, adapting and developing is the key to future strength and success.

7.1.6 The proposals are not a definitive list of options but are intended as a starting point from which more informed thinking can develop at Creative Scotland and amongst the performing arts sector.

7.1.7 **The five producing models are:**

- A. A managed network of independent producing teams hosted by Scotland's existing performing arts venues and support agencies/organisations**
- B. An expanded producing role for Scotland's existing producing and touring companies**
- C. A managed network of independent producing hubs**
- D. Extended funded placement opportunities for producers**
- E. Expanded and co-ordinated web-based information services for independent performing artists and producers, complemented by in-person coaching and advisory services.**

**7.2 Model A** A managed network of independent producing teams hosted by Scotland's existing performing arts venues and support agencies/organisations

*'It would be ideal if a producer could have their own space but access to the resource of the theatre'* Susannah Armitage, Independent Producer

**7.2.1 For a selection of Scotland's presenting and producing theatres to be given ring-fenced funding to host a small producing team who will provide dedicated producing and administrative services to a portfolio of two to four independent artists of their choosing, and be available to offer advice and resources to a wider range of local artists, as required.**

**7.2.2 These producers would form a nationwide network, co-ordinated and supported by an experienced Managing Producer responsible for their professional development and learning.**

**7.2.3 The model for a funded hosted producer would be Catalyst Dance Management at Dance Base. This project provides a dynamic mix of advice, management and producing services to professional dance artists in Scotland. It has had a huge impact on the professionalisation of Scotland's dance artists and on the ambition and delivery of their creative projects. It has also provided a clear point of contact for and about dance in Scotland and has been instrumental in expanding international touring and exchange opportunities for Scotland's dance-artists. *'Artists need someone to get their work to an audience...Artists gain confidence and knowledge through working alongside a good producer'* Katie Stuart, CEO Dance Base.**

**7.2.4 This model would require approx **£61,500 per year** to be committed to the selected host venues specifically to pay for overheads, expenses and full-time salaries for a producer and an administrator/trainee producer **for two years**. These salaries could be allocated flexibly over three years, or to suit a larger team, as mutually agreed between the producer and the host. It is anticipated that this model would be implemented at at least 6 host venues.**

**7.2.5 The producing team would then provide **general advisory services** to independent artists in their region and **producing services** (strategic planning and company development) and **administration and project management** (tour booking, practical and logistical support for projects) for a small portfolio of independent artists.**

**7.2.6 The host venue would be required to give the producer structured opportunities to observe and learn from all elements of the venue's operation and would ensure that venue staff were available to offer advice to the producer as required, i.e. on marketing, fundraising, technical, payroll, contracts etc.. However, the producer would be expected to work independently and it is not anticipated that the venue staff will directly fulfil any duties for or on behalf of the producer, unless it was mutually agreed that this was desirable and practical for both parties.**

**7.2.7 The producer would provide a mentoring and training environment in which a trainee producer could learn through working as an administrator, providing valuable practical and organisational support to artists alongside the producer.**

**7.2.8 The producer would make an annual contribution to the costs of being hosted within venue and would have a dedicated budget line within the host organisation budget, able to bring in funds to spend on their project and to allocate funds across all their activities.**

**7.2.9 The producer would be responsible for raising funds with which to develop and present the work of the portfolio artists. They would be doing this with the benefit of**

a secure salary and without the need to raise funds to support themselves in addition to the artists.

- 7.2.10 Funding applications to Creative Scotland for investment in work created by artists supported by host producers would not be looked on more or less favourably by Creative Scotland.
- 7.2.11 If the producer works with any artist or company who does not have their own company structure or bank account, the host organisation would provide access to its own banking services, and/or a subsidiary account, being prepared to provide cash flow support to projects as necessary and, if necessary, taking the risk on projects which would otherwise be borne by individual artists.
- 7.2.12 Fundraising to charitable trusts and foundations and other private sources would be undertaken independently by the producer on behalf of their portfolio artists. Where these artists do not have their own charitable status or bank account, applications could be made through the host organisation but only if such an application would not prejudice any similar applications being made by the host venue to support its own programme of work.
- 7.2.13 If the producer works with an artist who is in receipt of funds from Creative Scotland, or other public or private funding, the producer would be enabled to charge a management fee of either a % of the cost of realising a project or of income earned from the project. This will help to cross-subsidise the producer's overall programme, enabling investment in the elements of the programme which generate no income.
- 7.2.14 The placement of a producer will require the agreement of the host organisation's Board of Directors. The role will report to the Administrative Director, or equivalent member of the Senior Management Team.
- 7.2.15 The host venue will have no obligation to support the selected artists/companies with performance slots or rehearsal space, although it would be desirable, and may be strategically appropriate, if it did. A contract between the producer and the venue would be drawn up with clear expectations outlined of what the association would, and would not, mean for the producer and their portfolio of artists.
- 7.2.16 The producer might contribute advice or ideas to the programming of a host venue. This would not be part of the core role of the producer but if appropriate and of mutual benefit, this could be separately negotiated and agreed as part of the contract.
- 7.2.17 The opportunity for a venue to host and for a producer to be hosted would be advertised through Creative Scotland and host venues and producers selected through an application process, co-ordinated by the Managing Producer who would take overall responsibility for establishing, overseeing, developing and evaluating the programme.
- 7.2.18 The hosted positions would be for a period of two years (or three years pro-rata), to ensure that: relationships can develop between the producers and their artists, and between host venue and producer; opportunities can be maximised for artists by producers in terms of getting to know their work, making connections with potential partners and promoters and other networks; producers' learning can be sustained and put into practice.
- 7.2.19 Potential venues to host a producer could include:
- Traverse ; Arches
  - Citizens' ; Tron
  - Perth ; Eden Court
  - Mull Theatre ; Dundee Rep

- Macrobert ; Platform
- Royal Lyceum
- Howden Park; The Byre

7.2.20 It is understood that many of these theatres already struggle to find space for their current staff and finding room for additional staff will be a challenge. There would therefore need to be some careful planning of work spaces near to or associated with the venue which could act as a host office. More than one producer in the same city could be hosted together.

7.2.21 Being hosted offsite would increase costs and would reduce the benefit of being associated with a venue. It would increase the need for a structured involvement of hosted producers in opportunities to shadow and observe the workings of a host venue. Hopefully this would not become too big a challenge to undermine the viability of this option.

### **Continuing Professional Development**

7.2.22 Each individual producer would become part of a nation-wide network, encouraged to share their experience and to provide peer to peer support to each other on a regular basis. These producers would be supported with a tailored programme of mentoring, meetings, exchanges and opportunities of the highest level and intended to strengthen their skills as producers and facilitators. This programme would be facilitated by the Managing Producer.

7.2.23 The cpd programme would be informed by the opportunities offered to those participating in other managed development programmes, i.e. the Clore Leadership programme, The Cultural Leadership Programme, Space 11 and by The Empty Space in Newcastle.

7.2.24 Over time, it would be desirable to connect this producing network to other producing networks across the UK, setting up exchanges and development opportunities with agencies such as The Empty Space in Newcastle, Fuel in London and Project Catalysts in Dublin.

7.2.25 The producers would also be supported with a budget to be able to travel to see work in and beyond Scotland – to create a frame of reference from which to view Scottish work; to gain a sense of audiences for different work across the world; to attend international conferences and meetings; and to promote Scottish work to UK and international promoters and presenters.

### **Artform Focus**

7.2.26 A producer hosted by a venue associated with a particular artform, style of work or audience focus (The Traverse, Macrobert and The Arches, for example) may develop a portfolio of artists whose work reflects this specialism. This would ensure that the support given by the host organisation's core staff (around marketing, audience development and technical for example) is likely to be of most benefit to the producer.

7.2.27 However, it is anticipated that in general venue-based producers would be free to create a portfolio of theatre-makers and performing artists in response to approaches by artists and which reflects their own passion and experience.

7.2.28 It is further anticipated that certain specialist artforms may be best hosted by specialist venues or agencies which exist to support that artform:

### **Dance**

7.2.29 Building on the success of the Catalyst model at Dance Base, it is proposed that other dance agencies and/or dance-based organisations are able to bid to host a producer to support dance artists. As with Catalyst, and the proposed theatre venue

hosting model outlined above, it is anticipated that the host organisation would provide direct management and organisational expertise to support this producer. However, the choice of dance artists worked with would be that of the hosted producer.

7.2.30 Dance-based organisations which could host a dance producer could include:

- Dance House, Glasgow; City Moves, Aberdeen
  - The Space/Scottish School of Contemporary Dance, Dundee
  - The Work Room at Tramway
- Dance Base – to ensure the continued survival of the Catalyst model which currently operates with one part-time member of staff.

7.2.31 As with the theatre-based hosts, physical space may present serious challenges for these dance organisations wishing to host a dance producer. However, again it would be hoped that creative/collaborative solutions could be found which enabled these producers to be housed in like-minded offices/organisations in the locality.

### **Children's Theatre/Puppetry/Physical Performance**

7.2.32 Whilst acknowledging the need to manage the sensitivities of allocating additional funding to support a small portfolio of artists to an agency with a remit to support a whole sector, it would make good use of our existing infrastructure if Imagineate, Puppet Animation Scotland and Conflux were also able to bid to host an independent producer specialising in their respective artforms.

7.2.33 The responsibilities of the host and the hosted producing team would be exactly as outlined above, although these agencies might choose to work with a partner venue to ensure that their hosted producers benefitted equally from structured access to observe the workings of a building-based producing or presenting theatre.

**7.3 Model B: An expanded producing role for Scotland's existing producing and touring companies**

*'everyone needs a Paul Fitzpatrick' Survey Monkey respondent*

- 7.3.1 To complement the venue-based hosting outlined in A above, for some of Scotland's producing and touring theatre/dance/performance companies to be funded as host companies to produce other company/artists' work alongside their own productions. It brings investment to those artists who are experienced producers, enabling them to support and develop longer-term partnerships with associated artists and producers.**
- 7.3.2 The model for this would be Catherine Wheels who currently support the development and production of a number of independent artists alongside their own productions. Those artists supported by Catherine Wheels have an existing or long-standing relationship with the Artistic Director and the work of these artists complements or enhances that of Catherine Wheels itself. The Producer at Catherine Wheels is the lead producer for the work of the independent artists and all staff at Catherine Wheels help to facilitate the production and delivery of a project.**
- 7.3.3 This model can also provide a secure structure for those producers who initiate creative concepts and who bring artists together to realise them, both with and without subsidy.**
- 7.3.4 Companies which currently fulfil a producing function for other independent artists, or who voiced an ambition to do so during consultation, include:
- Cryptic ; Grid Iron
  - Magnetic North – as a natural extension of their Rough Mix programme
  - Untitled Projects ; Plan B Dance Company
  - Starcatchers ; Iron Oxide; Trigger
- 7.3.5 This would require approx. **£50,000** to be allocated on an annual basis to a producing company, ring-fenced to pay the overheads, expenses and salary of a full time experienced producer and a part-time Administrator/trainee producer to work alongside the company producer for a period of 2 years. These salaries could be allocated flexibly over three years as mutually agreed between the producer and the host company. It is anticipated that this model would be implemented in at least 4 host companies.
- 7.3.6 The company would then be able to provide:
- Producing, Administration and Project Management for two or three independent artists/companies whose work aligns with or develops through the host company and which can be programmed to complement the host company's own producing schedule.
- 7.3.7 The principles governing the relationship between the host organisation and the hosted producer would be broadly as outlined in A above with the *key* exceptions that:
- the independent performing artists to be produced by the hosted producer/administrator would have to align with, and complement or enhance, the artistic vision of the host producing company
  - the hosted producers would be gaining a thorough grounding in the running of a touring producing company rather than a building-based producing/presenting organisation
  - the hosted producer and administrator would not be expected to work independently, but instead for their work to be integrated into and expand on the core producing role of the host company under the direct guidance of the

leading producer within the company, who could be either the Artistic Director or Producer.

- 7.3.8 The host company would need to demonstrate how they would manage and schedule their resources to accommodate support for these other artists alongside their own core work. The hosting arrangements would need to be agreed by the host company Board of Directors.
- 7.3.9 The company hosting programme would be managed and co-ordinated by the Managing Producer, as outlined for Model A above. The hosted producers would form part of the network of independent producers and would benefit from the cpd programmes developed to extend the learning and networking of Scotland's new framework of producing talent.

### **Next steps**

- 7.3.10 Following two or three years of running and refining these hosted positions at venues and within producing companies, and as the scheme makes a tangible difference to the quality and scope of artists' work, it will then be appropriate to consider establishing an independent company or framework to house some or all of the hosted producers to support their portfolio of artists, along the lines of Artsadmin or Fuel, and as outlined in Model C below.
- 7.3.11 We know that these producing entities have been successful because of the time over which they have developed relationships with the artists they wish to support, and that they have a clarity about their purpose.
- 7.3.12 With the benefit of a few years of working under the umbrella of a host venue, it should be clear:
- **Whether there is a need to create an independent entity to hold these producers or whether they are best sustained and nurtured within the host organisation**
  - **If there is a desire to create a new entity, where it might be best situated and whether more than one base would be required**
  - **What the services are that artists most value from an independent producer**
  - **What the financial bottom line needs to be to be secure and sustainable**
  - **How such a body might be best constituted**
  - **How many people and in which roles any independent organisation requires**
  - **Who will be the key partners for that organisation**
  - **What capacity there is to generate income from producing, touring or partnerships which can achieve a level of financial self-sufficiency**
  - **How to make the case for continued funding – both from Creative Scotland and other public funds, and from charitable Trusts and Foundations**

#### 7.4 **Model C** A managed network of independent producing hubs

- *Long-term relationships with artists result in a greater depth and breadth of work for a wider audience'* (Tony Reekie, Imagine)

7.4.1 For an independent company to be established to employ a group of producers to work together to support a portfolio of Scotland's independent performing artists. Between them, this team would support a minimum of eight performing artists in a direct producing and/or project management capacity, as well as giving advice and information to a wide constituency of local performing artists on request.

7.4.2 The model for a hub of independent companies operating through an independent company is Artsadmin. By providing a secure framework from which to provide producing services to independent, project and occasionally funded performing artists, Artsadmin has been instrumental in supporting and raising the profile for independent performing artists across the UK and internationally and in particular those who work across disciplines. Led with passion and humility, Artsadmin has provided guidance, advocacy and opportunity to an established generation of independent producers and artists, and inspiration to a new generation of independent producers and artists. The organisation has remained flexible and reactive, responding to opportunities to develop a variety of support and advisory services in response to the needs of artists. *'Artists like the model and although they would also like more money they mostly like not having the hassle of running their own company'* Judith Knight, Director and founder of Artsadmin.<sup>xvi</sup>

7.4.3 This model would require approx **£160,000** per year to be committed to supporting the creation and operation of a hub of producers to employ one full-time Senior Producer/CEO, two full-time Producers, one full-time Administrator/Trainee Producer and one part-time Finance & Office Manager.

7.4.4 The producing team would then provide **producing services** (strategic planning and company development) and **administration and project management** (tour booking, practical and logistical support for projects) for a minimum of eight independent performing artists per year.

7.4.5 And **general advisory services** to local independent performing artists delivered in response to need and to complement and/or in partnership with other service providers. This could include surgeries to address practical, artistic and/or communication needs - including funding applications – and the brokering of relationships between artists and venues/programmers.

7.4.6 This company would be need to be set up as a legal entity, as a Scottish charity and governed by a Board of Directors made up of leading UK and international producers and independent performing artists and promoters.

7.4.7 The ethos and artistic focus of the company would be agreed with the Board of Directors who would recruit the CEO/Senior Producer who would be responsible for overall leadership and management of the staff team towards achieving an agreed vision and annual strategic plan.

7.4.8 The company would seek and pay for the costs of an office base and would be responsible for all office management and costs. It would be ideal to locate this office within an existing cultural building, such as The Briggait or The Citizens' Theatre in Glasgow and at the newly developing cultural centre at Summerhall in Edinburgh.

- 7.4.9 The company would be responsible for operating its business and delivering its services within available resources.
- 7.4.10 The company would need to generate income from its producing services, charging either a % of the cost of realising an artist's project or of income earned from the project.
- 7.4.11 If the producer works with any artist or company who does not have their own company structure or bank account, the company will provide access to its own banking services, and/or a subsidiary account, being prepared to provide cash flow support to projects as necessary and, if necessary, taking the risk on projects which would otherwise be borne by individual artists. The company would also apply for funds on behalf of its artists, using its own charitable status to support projects or artists without charitable status.
- 7.4.12 The hub of producers would need to receive CS core support for a period of at least three years to ensure that: relationships can develop between the producers and their artists; connections can be made between the producers and promoters and presenters appropriate for their artists; forward and strategic planning can be developed for artists by producers; artists' and producers' networks can be established; other funding can be secured; and producers' learning can be sustained and put into practice.
- 7.4.13 Funding applications to Creative Scotland for investment in work created by artists supported by the hub of producers would not be looked on more or less favourably by Creative Scotland.

#### **Continuing Professional Development**

- 7.4.14 The Managing Producer would be appointed to manage the process of establishing the company and recruiting a Board of Directors who would then be responsible for employing a Chief Executive/Senior Producer. The Managing Producer would continue to have an association with the company, providing an independent mentoring and guidance programme for the Chief Executive/Senior Producer.
- 7.4.15 The company would then operate a 'cascade of mentoring', with the Senior Producer providing mentoring and support to the Producers who would in turn support and mentor the Administrator/Trainee Producer. The company would operate with an active learning culture where the staff team learn through practical experience in a supportive environment.
- 7.4.16 The Senior Producer would work with the Managing Producer to implement an external learning, development and networking opportunities for the producing team.
- 7.4.17 The hub of producers would be supported with a budget to be able to travel to see work in and beyond Scotland – to create a frame of reference from which to view Scottish work; to gain a sense of audiences for different work across the world; to attend international conferences and meetings; and to promote Scottish work to UK and international promoters and presenters.

#### **Artform Focus**

- 7.4.18 The producers would be free to select the artists with whom they wish to work, perhaps focussing on a particular artform and style of work or geographic area. Key priorities would be to create a complementary portfolio of artists whose work is not in competition and about whom the producers are passionate.

#### **Next Steps**

- 7.4.19 To ensure maximum impact and geographic diversity, it is envisaged that this company would develop to support two other satellite groups of producers.

- 7.4.20 Each group would employ a full-time Associate Producer (who would form the SMT with the Senior Producer/CEO for the Group), two full-time Producers, one full-time Administrator/Trainee Producer and one part-time Finance and Office Manager. It is anticipated that between them, each satellite team would support a minimum of eight performing artists in a direct producing and/or project management capacity, as well as giving advice and information to a wide constituency of local performing artists on request.
- 7.4.21 To ensure that the satellite teams grow from a secure base, with an appropriate artist to producer/administrator ratio, offering an appropriate level of service on a realistic financial basis, it is anticipated that the first group of producers runs for one year before the second and third group is established.
- 7.4.22 The process of growth and development of the company would be managed by the Senior Producer/CEO in conjunction with the Managing Producer as consultant and under the guidance of the Board of Directors.
- 7.4.23 It is envisaged that first of these hubs would be placed in Edinburgh or Glasgow with satellites in either Dundee, Perth, Aberdeen or Inverness.

## **7.5 Model D Extended funded placement opportunities for producers**

- *'I was not in a position to undertake a further educational qualification, but the award gave me a definite stamp of approval'* (participant feedback on the FST Bursary programme)

**7.5.1 The creation of extended bursary placement schemes for developing producers to learn from established producers within a company or venue-based producing organisation.**

**7.5.2 The model for this would be the FST Producers' Bursary, but extended to six months, or longer on a part-time basis at a cost of £8,000 per bursary.**

7.5.3 As outlined above, this scheme has been successful in giving mid-career producers tangible experience of 'on the job' training, under the supervision of experienced producers and producing artists.

7.5.4 This scheme could be a pre-cursor to either of the hosted positions outlined in A and B above or could run in tandem with this programme – providing a wide spectrum of skills development and sector investment across the country.

## **7.6 Model E Expanded and co-ordinated web-based information services for independent performing artists and producers, complemented by in-person coaching and advisory services**

- *'The Scottish mentality is to hold things tight to yourself. There needs to be more generosity to open things up'* (Tom Pritchard, independent performing artist).

**7.6.1 For a co-ordinated approach to be taken across Scotland's various performing arts support agencies to collate and promote information and advice for independent performing artists, both through online resources and listings, and through regular and relevant advisory sessions.**

**7.6.2 The model for this would be the various existing frameworks which have developed beyond Scotland to provide a mixture of face-to-face and web-based resources and advice to artists. Particular exemplars include:**

- [www.theatrebristol.net](http://www.theatrebristol.net); [www.irishtheatreinstitute.ie](http://www.irishtheatreinstitute.ie);
- [www.panda-arts.org.uk](http://www.panda-arts.org.uk)

**The driving force behind these organisations is their desire to serve the performing artists based in a particular location ('a community of interest' – Theatre Bristol) and who share a common interest in becoming stronger and more effective through learning and sharing together.**

7.6.3 It is clear from the consultation and observation of the sector that for some of Scotland's performing artists, whilst access to a producer may be the ideal means of developing their work and careers, for many artists this has not been, and in the future still may not be, achievable.

7.6.4 For these artists it is important that they have access to informed, updated and freely available information which can provide advice and support to them at different stages of their careers.

7.6.5 For some, the need is to meet and talk with a producer or advisor about their particular creative, administrative or development needs. For others, it is access to contract and policy templates or contact details and programming policies of venues.

7.6.6 Clearly sign-posted and freely available, this provision has the potential to reduce the time that independent (and venue/company hosted) producers spend on unplanned

reactive requests from artists, so freeing them up to dedicate more of their time to developing the careers of their portfolio artists.

- 7.6.7 Several of our support organisations are already doing, or developing, this kind of support for artists: **Catalyst** and **The Work Room** are investigating ways to provide template contracts and policies for dance artists to use, and have already been successful in matching producers with dance artists through their *Kaffeeklatsch* surgery programme<sup>xvii</sup>; producers **Chloe Dear** and **Jon Clarke** are developing an online resource and network for physical performers; The **Federation of Scottish Theatre** holds the **Scottish Arts Touring Resource** which provides basic data about touring companies and receiving venues across Scotland<sup>xviii</sup>, **The Cultural Enterprise Office** provides information, advice and training to artists working across the cultural industries<sup>xix</sup>; **Voluntary Arts Scotland** has created a website which enables networking, peer learning and web-based training for its members<sup>xx</sup>; and **Conflux** provides weekly surgeries for artists to show and discuss their work and to give advice on business and career development issues.<sup>xxi</sup>
- 7.6.8 **This model is distinct in its emphasis from the previous four models and will require further research to refine the brief and identify the best ways to deliver it. Approaches could include:**
- 7.6.9 Expanding an existing cross-sector website (The Federation of Scottish Theatre or Voluntary Arts Scotland, for example) or creating a new web-based resource, open to all, with specific sections for members, to include listings, venue information, contact details, residency information, funding details and deadlines and generic contract templates and codes of practice and contacts for affordable support services (marketing, PR, technical, legal, finance etc).
- 7.6.10 Expanding the offering through this website to include individual surgeries for performing artists with artform specialists and other industry and business advisors.
- 7.6.11 Extending the time for and/or expanding the number of advisors who are working through Cultural Enterprise Office to provide specialist advice to performing artists. As a proportion of their annual services, those taken up by performing artists account for just 11%.<sup>xxii</sup>
- 7.6.12 Providing ring-fenced funds for a dedicated and centralised coaching programme for performing artists. The current one-to-one coaching programme offered by Cultural Enterprise Office is highly successful and sought after.
- 7.6.13 *At the Maltings Theatre in Farnham which runs an extensive programme of artists' support, the single most valuable investment they believe they have made is in a coach who works with 10 companies per year, giving advice and helping artists/companies set and deliver targets. Each company has 3 sessions and costs the host organisation £9,000 per year.*<sup>xxiii</sup>
- 7.6.14 Considering the potential of a centralised resource to take more of a developmental role for performing artists, having access to the people and resources to respond creatively to these artists' needs by initiating events, projects and opportunities which might not be available elsewhere.

## **8 Issues to consider when selecting an operating model**

### **8.1 Financial comparisons**

A summary of the costs of operating each model is listed in Table 1 below. Full financial workings are appended at **Appendix 6**. All costs should be seen against the estimate of annual savings in overheads and staffing costs achieved through sharing the resources of a producer across a number of performing artists. A full examination of the opportunities and risks involved in each model is given in **Appendix 4**.

Table 1	A	B	C	D	E	
	Venue based hosting (*)	Producing company based hosting (*)	Producing hubs (*)	Extended producers' placement	Web-based resource and advisory service	A Managing Producer (1)
<b>Sub-total annual cost</b>	£67,465	£56,374	£176,369	£10,043	£77,563	£43,461 (1)
<b>Anticipated annual self-generated income</b>	£6,000	£6,000	£17,000	£1,800	£3,750	£5,000
<b>Shortfall per project</b>	<b>-£61,465</b>	<b>-£50,374</b>	<b>-£159,369</b>	<b>-£8,243</b>	<b>-£73,813</b>	<b>-£38,461</b>
<b>Number of projects anticipated</b>	6	4	3 (by year 2 - 3)	4	1	1
<b>Total level of annual investment required</b>	<b>£368,790</b>	<b>£201,496</b>	<b>£478,107 (by year 2-3)</b>	<b>£32,970</b>	<b>£73,813</b>	<b>£38,461</b>

\*NB. To operate as managed and facilitated models, as outlined in 7 above, Models A, B and C require the Managing Producer to be supported in tandem

(1) This is based on a part-time salary and including facilitation/training expenses. Depending on how many of the models were adopted, this may need to be re-considered as a full-time post.

## 8.2 Scope of reach:

The total number of performing artists supported through each model is given in table 2 below. In addition to those directly produced and managed, it is estimated that an average of 80 performing artists each year would call on each service for advice, guidance and support.

Table 2	A	B	C	D	E	
<b>Anticipated min. no. of performing artists produced per year</b>	24 (max.4 per project)	12 (max 3 per project)	24 (max. 8 per project by year 2 – 3)	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Total no. of producers &amp; support staff employed per year</b>	12	8	18 (by year 2 – 3)	4	1	1
<b>Estimated annual cost savings @ £2k per artist</b>	<b>£48,000</b>	<b>£24,000</b>	<b>£48,000</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a

## 9 Assessment of Models

### 9.1 Proposed Models to consider

- A. A managed network of independent producing teams hosted by Scotland's existing performing arts venues and support agencies/organisations
- B. An expanded producing role for Scotland's existing producing companies
- C. A managed network of independent producing hubs
- D. Extended funded placement opportunities for producers
- E. Expanded and co-ordinated web-based information services for independent performing artists and producers, complemented by in-person coaching and advisory services.

- 9.2 **The original brief suggested that ‘a body of producers’ might be brought together to support artists. I believe that models A – D above all provide strategic and considered approaches to achieving this ‘body’. However, I believe that some models are more robust and sustainable than others.**
- 9.3 Whilst the creation of an independent group of producers (**Model C**) as an independent entity could be an achievable option for Scotland, and the proposal outlined above allows for it to grow strategically, building on experience and benefitting a potentially large group of independent performing artists, it is an expensive undertaking and carries a high degree of financial and operational risk which has the potential to distract from its core creative purpose. The creation of a new company structure in a climate of retraction would also need to be considered carefully.
- 9.4 The number of producers employed by the company, and of performing artists supported could be adjusted with the potential to generate more income from producing more projects, or projects with more commercial return, but the danger is that the work of each producer expands too greatly and the vital, personal and available relationship that should exist between a producer and a performing artist is diluted. Whilst this risk exists with each of the direct producing models (A,B and C), an independent company is more exposed to financial risk than the model where producers are hosted within existing organisations.
- 9.5 By contrast, **Model A** allows for a similar portfolio of artists to be supported but without the need to create an independent company until and if the time for such an entity becomes necessary and achievable. In the meantime, the producers hosted within established organisations become embedded into the wider performing arts sector with many opportunities for mutual learning between host organisations, hosted producers and their portfolio of artists. This presents an appropriate model for the relatively small body of independent producers working in Scotland and the level of experience at which these producers are currently operating. It also starts to create a framework which is attractive to more experienced producers to move into.
- 9.6 The occasional financial risk (of cash flow management or project shortfall) would be borne by larger organisations, potentially more able to manage and mitigate such risk than either an independent producing company or the individual artist themselves.
- 9.7 **Model B** builds on the good practice and generosity within Scotland’s small and mid-scale producing companies. It provides a simple and effective means of generating more work, curated by our experienced and respected *artists* and creative producers and is a natural companion to the venue hosted producer programme outlined in Model A.
- 9.8 **Model D** is a valuable and proven means of providing a mutually beneficial learning experience to producers within Scottish arts organisations. It is a good stand-alone programme and it would be strongly recommended if none of the previous models are adopted. However, its role may be covered, to some extent, within Models A and B, were these to be implemented.
- 9.9 The provision of a web-based resource (as outlined in **Model E**), supplemented by coaching and advisory sessions with artists, is a valuable addition to the fabric of support required by independent performing artists and research should continue into the best way to achieve this. It is not a cheap option, and it requires engagement with technology in a way that not all artists, or producers, will be comfortable with. But it could provide some useful solutions particularly for those who live in more remote parts of the country and/or who do not have access to an experienced producer.

- 9.10 I have introduced the idea of a **Managing Producer** to provide strategic guidance, support with networking and the facilitation of continued learning and training as required to strengthen the implementation and impact of any of the models outlined. I believe that this will add a layer of rigour and expertise to each of the models, ensuring that any one is implemented with integrity and that any combination of models is introduced to maximise resources and to achieve maximum, long-term, mutual benefit. I feel it is particularly necessary given the lack of experience of many of those currently working as independent producers in Scotland. The post is currently budgeted as a part-time post but has the capacity to expand as required to fulfil the role effectively, and in response to the number of independent producers supported through any of the above schemes.
- 9.11 The feedback from all those consulted is that ring-fenced investment is required if any organisation, entity or support service is to be successful and serve project- and occasionally-funded independent performing artists appropriately. Without subsidy performing arts projects, particularly on the small and mid-scale, will flounder and talented people will disperse. We know from the consultation that many of Scotland's producers, and artists, are already working without being paid for much of what they do. While some very good developments are being achieved through this personal investment of time and passion, this situation is not desirable or sustainable.
- 9.12 To offset investment in Models A, B and C in particular, considerable efficiency savings will be made through the sharing of resources and overheads and the removal of some of the manifold duplication of costs currently incurred to service Scotland's many independent performing artists. In place of lots of 'one-off' investments in individual producers to work with individual artists on occasional projects, there is the opportunity to make a sustained investment in a core team of producers who in turn can invest in a consistent portfolio of artists, liberating them to fulfil their creative potential.

## 10 Recommendations:

I would recommend the following action is taken, listed in order of priority:

1. For Models A and B to be implemented in tandem to provide a comprehensive hosted programme of producers in 10 organisations across Scotland.
  - a. This will require £368,800 to be allocated per year, to pilot the network of 2 hosted producers at each of 6 venues or agencies (Model A) over the next two years, resulting in the employment of 6 producers and 6 trainee producers, providing direct producing and project management support to up to 24 independent performing artists across Scotland, and saving at least £48,000 in duplication of resources each year.
  - b. and £201,500 to be allocated per year to pilot the network of 1.5 hosted producers at each of 4 producing companies (Model B) over the next two years, resulting in the employment of 4 producers and 4 trainee producers, providing direct producing and project management support to at least 12 independent performing artists across Scotland, and saving at least £24,000 in duplication of resources each year.
2. For the position of part-time Managing Producer to be created, including all expenses and training budgets, at a cost of approximately £43,500 per year. The post could exist independently or be placed within an existing organisation or agency (Federation of Scottish Theatre, Cultural Enterprise Office).
  - a. Funded alongside models A and B (as proposed in the model descriptions in 7 above), the role could become a vital part of establishing and over-seeing the delivering a dynamic new producing model for Scotland.
  - b. As a stand-alone post, this role could act as a co-ordinator of high level training opportunities for producers and facilitator of partnerships and dialogue between producers, artists, venues and agencies. *'We need bigger eyes and a broader horizon', Kally Lloyd-Jones, Choreographer*
3. For research to continue into the best way to provide a co-ordinated web-based advice and information service for independent performing artists in Scotland, complemented by individual, in-person coaching and advisory sessions. (Model E).
4. For funding for the FST producers' bursary (Model D) to be increased to £33,000 per year to support the extended and embedded training and development of 4 producers each year across Scotland.

**NB.** For Models D and E above, the role of the Managing Producer, whilst not crucial to their success, would provide a valuable layer of co-ordination and support. This would add approx £30,000 to the annual cost of these projects.

Whilst it would be desirable to implement all 4 recommendations and to achieve a real step-change for Scotland's performing arts sector, I believe the options outlined above can also

provide a menu of choices which can be delivered singly, in complementary combinations and/or developed and added to over time. For example:

- For a **limited investment** it is possible to implement **either Recommendation 2b or Recommendation 4** and to achieve either a strategic role (2b) able to co-ordinate and enhance existing provision in Scotland or (4) to extend an existing model to be more effective and efficient for all parties with the potential to feed expanded experience back into Scotland's producing talent.
- For a **more substantial investment** it is possible to achieve a network of managed producing development opportunities (**Recommendations 1 and 2a**) that both support a significant number of Scotland's performing artists and strengthen and greatly enhance our current infrastructure. This would be my priority.

I would hope that this Study can provide a useful context for informed decision-making about the scale, scope and potential return on any future strategic investment in producing support for independent performing artists in Scotland.

It is now for Creative Scotland to decide how best to deliver any or all of these models to address its current and future priorities for support to artists.

## Appendix 1: Methodology

I was engaged to work for 47 days over a six month period.

I undertook to consult widely to investigate the potential for a 'body of producers' as outlined above.

The groups consulted with were:

- Independent performing artists in Scotland
- Independent producers in Scotland
- Producers/Managers and/or Artistic Directors at Scottish venues
- Producers/Managers and/or Artistic Directors at Scottish agencies and support organisations
- Independent performing artists working outwith Scotland
- Independent producers working outwith Scotland
- Producers/Managers and/or Artistic Directors working within venues and other agencies outwith Scotland

A full list of those consulted is available at Appendix 3.

Consultation was undertaken through face to face meetings, telephone conversations, *Survey Monkey* questionnaires and desk-based research.

The *Survey Monkey* was circulated as extensively as possible both directly to individual artists and producers and through a range of sector networks. It was sent to:

- 64 members of the Federation of Scottish Theatre, for further dissemination to their sector partners
- 10 cultural agency or sector support organisations for distribution to their artists/networks, i.e. Dance Base, Imagine
- 5 online sector networks, i.e. Voluntary Arts Scotland, Scot-Nits
- 4 companies/venues working closely to commission/produce the work of other artists
- 58 individual independent artists
- 11 individual independent producers

46 respondents completed the survey for artists and 22 completed the survey for producers. Given the 'viral' nature of its distribution, it impossible to know what percentage the 68 completed surveys represent of the total distributed.

**Appendix 2: Survey Monkey Questions (attached)**

### Appendix 3: List of those interviewed

Al	Seed	Conflux	Artistic Director
Alasdair	McCrone	Mull Theatre	Artistic Director
Alice	McGrath	MacRobert	Development Director
Amanda	Monfroe		Independent Performing Artist
Amanda	Chinn	Scottish Dance Theatre	Administrative Manager
Andy	Manley		Independent Performing Artist
Angie	Bual		Independent Producer
Anita	Clark	Creative Scotland	Portfolio Manager
Anne-Marie	Crowther	PANDA (Manchester)	Director
Caroline	Routh	The Empty Space (Newcastle)	Producer
Carrie	Rhys-Davies	Theatre Bristol (Bristol)	Associate Producer
Cathie	Boyd	Cryptic	Artistic Director
Chloe	Dear	Iron Oxide	Producer
Christine	Hamilton		Creative Scotland Theatre Review
Christine	Devaney		Independent Performing Artist
Cian	O'Brian	Project, Dublin	Artistic Director
Claire	Pencak	Tabula Rasa Dance Company	Independent Performing Artist
Clare	Moran	Cryptic	Producer
Dani	Rae	Independent producer	
Deborah	Keogh	Cultural Enterprise Office	Director
Duncan	Hendry	Aberdeen Performing Arts	
Ed	Littlewood		Independent Producer
Eileen	O'Reilly	National Theatre of Scotland	Producer
Fiona	Bradley	Fruitmarket Gallery	Producer
Fiona	Ferguson	Imagine	Development Director
Frank	McConnell	Plan B	Artistic Director
Gavin	Stride	Maltings, Farnham, Surrey	Director
Gwen	Van Spyk		Independent Producer, W. Midlands
Jackie	Wylie	The Arches	Director
Jaine	Lumsden	Creative Scotland	Portfolio Manager
James	Brining	Dundee Rep	Artistic Director
Jean	Cameron	Glasgow International	Producer
Jennie	Green	Great Leap Forward	Director
John	Stalker	John Stalker Productions	Independent Producer
Jon	Morgan	Federation of Scottish Theatre	Director
Jude	Doherty	Grid Iron	Producer
Judith	Knight	Artsadmin, London	Director
Kally	Lloyd-Jones	Independent Performing Artist	
Kate	Bowen		Independent Producer
Katie	Stuart	Dance Base	Chief Executive
Kirsty	Bailey	Federation of Scottish Theatre	Training Manager
Laura	Mackenzie Stuart	Creative Scotland	Portfolio Manager
Laura	Collier	National Theatre Studio, London	Director (previously BAC, London)

Laura	Cameron Lewis	The Work Room	Producer
Leigh	Robieson-Cleaver	Catalyst	Acting Manager
Linda	Crooks	Traverse Theatre	Administrative Director
Lorna	Duiguid	Untitled Projects	Independent producer
Lu	Kemp	Independent Performing Artist	
Margaret Anne	O'Donnell	National Theatre of Scotland	Producer
Matthew	Lenton	Vanishing Point	Artistic Director
Michelle	Knight	Oxford Playhouse/Shared Experience	Producer
Neil	Murray	National Theatre of Scotland	Producer
Nicholas	Bone	Magnetic North Theatre Productions	Independent Performing Artist
Paul	Fitzpatrick	Catherine Wheels	Producer
Roanne	Dods	International Futures Forum	Director
Robert	Livingston	Hi Arts	Director
Sandy	Thomson	Cultural Enterprise Office	Independent Performing Artist
Sarah	Gray		Independent Producer
Sevi	Wyper	Vanishing Point	Producer
Simon	Hart	Puppet Animation Scotland	Artistic Director
Siobhan	Cain	Plan B	Producer
Steve	Slater	Untitled Projects	Independent Producer
Stewart	Laing	Untitled Projects	Independent Performing Artist
Stuart	Brownlee	HITN/Northern Scottish Touring Fund	Independent Producer
Susan	Hay	Cultural Enterprise Office	Dance Advisor
Susannah	Armitage		Independent Producer
Suzy	Glass		Independent Producer
Tom	Pritchard		Independent Performing Artist
Tony	Reekie	Imaginate	Director
Virginia	Radcliffe	Licketyspit	Independent Performing Artist

I was unable to consult with providers of training for producers at further education level in Scotland. It would be advisable to research these opportunities further to ensure that mutually beneficial communications exist between those responsible for training the practitioners of the future and those developing opportunities for emerging producers.

**The Survey Monkey was sent directly to the following artists and producers:**

- Jen Patterson – All or Nothing aerial dance company
- Natasha Gilmore – Barrowlands Ballet
- Claire Pencak, Tabula Rasa
- Stewart Laing – Untitled Projects
- Norman Douglas – Norman Douglas Dance Company
- Adrian Osmond - Sweet scar
- Ben Twist – Hebrides Ensemble
- Cora Bissett - pacamama
- Gerry Mulgrew - Comunicado
- Glas(s) Performance
- Hazel Darwin Edwards – theatre artist
- Ian Spink – dance artist
- Janis Claxton – Janis Claxton Dance
- Kally Lloyd Jones, Company Chordelia
- Kirstie Skinner – visual arts curator/academic
- Muriel Romanes - Stellar Quines
- Ros Masson – dance artist
- Roxana Pope – theatre artist
- Ruby Worth – dance artist
- Sheila Macdougall – dance artist
- Steinvor Palsson – dance artist
- Trish McGuinness - Arts International
- Stephen Deazley - Music at the Brewhouse
- Nicholas Bone - Magnetic North
- Errol White – Errol White Dance Company
- Tim Nunn - Reeling and Writhing
- Virginia Radcliffe - Licketyspit
- Chris Devaney – Curious Seed
- Merav Israel – La Nua
- Rhona Matheson - Starcatchers
- Chloe Dear - Iron Oxide/Articulation
- Paul Fitzpatrick – Catherine Wheels
- Janice Parker - dance artist
- John Stalker - producer
- Catherine MacNeil - producer
- Alasdair McCrone – Mull Theatre
- Susannah Armitage - producer
- Di Robson - producer
- Dani Rae - producer
- Ed Littlewood - producer
- Karl Jay Lewin – dance artist
- Frank McConnell – Plan B
- Alan Greig - X Factor
- Clea Wallis - Dudendance
- Ross Cooper – dance artist
- Karen Anderson - Independence
- Louise Marshall - Dance Artist in Residence at Eden Court
- Lorayne McLucas - Skye Dance
- Maria Leask - Shetland Arts

- Tony Mills – dance artist
- Dawn Hartley – Scottish Dance Theatre
- Emma Jayne - Black Swan Dance
- Daniel Krass – theatre artist
- Daniel Bye – theatre artist
- Clare McGary – theatre artist
- Eilidh Macadskill – theatre artist
- Fiona Manson – theatre artist
- Gemma Nicol – theatre artist
- Joanne Timmins – theatre artist
- Heather Fulton - Frozen Charlotte
- Puppet Lab
- Kate Wilson – theatre/visual artist
- Karen Watts – dance artist
- Lewis Hetherington – theatre artist
- Lu Kemp – theatre artist
- Xana Maclean - theatre artist
- Matt Adicott – theatre artist
- Shona Reppe – theatre artist
- Ross MacKay – theatre artist
- Sacha Kyle – theatre artist

## Appendix 4

### Analysis of proposed models: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats:

#### Model A A managed network of independent producing teams hosted by Scotland's performing arts venues

##### **Strengths**

- Provides a managed umbrella of support for independent artists and producers within an existing infrastructure
- Offers parity of funding to a number of producers working simultaneously across the country
- Provides mentoring and learning opportunities for producers from experienced staff at venues, across all departments – strengthening skills-base of independent producers
- Provides building-based staff with opportunities to learn about touring and producing for independent artists
- Creates a network of independent producers with opportunities to share learning and provide mutual advice and support to each other
- The programme is supported by an identified senior producer who is responsible for managing issues arising from the producer/host relationships, responding to the cpd needs of the producers and having an overview of the programme and opportunities for it to develop and adapt as necessary to be most effective
- Enables independent producers to have a secure financial base from which to seek producing funds
- Provides a cost-effective use of investment, overseen by experienced venue-based personnel
- Saves the overheads and administration costs incurred by individual artists and producers who currently work separately and duplicate services and resources
- Venues can help manage and or offset potential financial risk involved in small/unfunded projects by independent performing artists
- Enables producers to develop long-term relationships with artists and companies, learning through experience together
- Provides structured and consistent apprenticeships for trainee producers
- Gives status and avoids isolation of the producers
- The hosted producers are free to select artists to work with and to manage own work load, developing their curatorial and management skills
- The scheme joins up the building-based sector with independent performing artists in an organic way
- Provides 'try out' for producers/artists and venues before establishing a more permanent/independent company/entity with purpose of serving independent performing artists in Scotland

##### **Weaknesses**

- Will add to the line management responsibility of building-based senior managers, requiring additional time from already over-stretched staff
- Producers may be over-loaded with unplanned/reactive enquiries and work load expands beyond capacity of one or two personnel
- Not all independent artists can be supported through this programme.
- Lack of physical space in a venue/host organisation may result in some venues/organisation being unable to host a producer
- The success of a particular show, or of an individual artist requires more attention than is possible whilst also giving time to a mixed portfolio of artists.

##### **Opportunities**

- Security for Producers provides opportunities for more work generated in Scotland to be sold more widely within Scotland and beyond, generating a higher profile for Scottish work and more clarity about points of contact for external promoters

- The programme is open to all producers and may attract very experienced producers who are currently working in building-based organisations but who have much to offer the independent performing arts sector
- Having two people working in a hosted team enables the work to be spread and avoids the strain of one producer trying to give equal time and support to a portfolio of artists
- Training for new generation of producers in Scotland as an investment in the future of Scotland's artists.
- Provides a framework for some of the previously FXO funded companies to continue to produce and develop work on an ongoing basis
- Supports producers to be curators, selecting artists to support and not limiting supported artists to those funded by Creative Scotland.
- Opportunity for producers to develop and strengthen relationships with venues as programming partners (not just host venues) and not just bookers of product
- Creating the role of the producer as a link between Scotland's venues and the artists' work, helping to facilitate strategic touring and audience development across Scotland
- The concept of a managed network of hosted producers may be attractive to larger charitable grant-giving trusts, such as Esmée Fairbairn Foundation or Jerwood Charitable Foundation.
- Any future independent producing entity more likely to succeed if grown organically from a 'safe' hosting programme where producing relationships can be established, financial models developed and administrative processes refined.

### **Threats**

- The relationship between a producer and the host organisation will take a lot of work to be mutually beneficial if the producer is not able to be based at the venue
- There may be some conflicts of interest which prevent some producers working comfortably within particular venues, or with particular artists
- The curated producing programme has the potential to widen the gap between those artists who feel supported and those who don't
- Producers may not be willing to base themselves outwith Central Belt, or away from home-base to take up positions in regional theatres
- There may not be enough funding to support either sufficient numbers of producers to make it a viable option or sufficient numbers of production grants to enable the artists to realise their projects
- There may not be enough funding available to pursue to the next stage of creating an independent company to support some of these producers to establish their own company/agency.
- Not enough artists in regional areas to justify local hosting of producer, i.e in Aberdeen
- Lack of audiences at venues for some work, i.e. contemporary dance, to justify generating opportunities for artists to create more product.

## **Model B      An expanded producing role for Scotland's existing producing companies**

### **Strengths**

- As a balance to the venue-based hosted positions, these hosting are developed in response to the artist at the heart of the producing company, investing resource with the artist as producer.
- Builds on existing artistic relationship between the Artistic Director of a producing company and other independent artists – creating a stronger and more joined-up sector.
- Maximising producing and support skills within producing companies, ensuring that existing knowledge of touring circuit and associated issues are extended to benefit other artists
- Saves the overheads and administration costs incurred by individual artists and producers who currently work separately and duplicate services and resources
- Provides training/learning opportunities for new/additional producers
- Provides a complement to the venue hosted producers, ensuring that a range of producers are developed, some with valuable touring company based experience
- Strengthens the impact and reach of Scotland's producing companies.

### **Weaknesses**

- Adds to workload of existing staff at producing companies
- Potential for confusion by promoters and audiences, and other external stakeholders about identity of product, i.e. independent artists' work confused with that of producing company, and vice versa

### **Opportunities**

- Strengthens strategic role of producing companies within difficult financial climate
- Provides greater opportunities for independent artists than they would be able to access themselves or with less experienced producer.
- Gives 'stamp of approval' to promoters/bookers about work coming out of established company's stable.

### **Threats**

- Are there enough companies with sufficient generosity and availability to offer this service to other companies/artists?
- It could make it harder for those artists/companies not supported by an established company to get tour bookings and support at venues
- Reduces availability of independent producers to support/produce other independent artists
- The company's own work might suffer or reduce in volume – or be perceived by promoters and funders to have been diluted – as a result of producing the work of other companies or artists.

## **Model C      A managed network of independent producing hubs**

### **Strengths**

- The creation of a company with learning at its heart which enables Scotland's producer to learn from each other in an organic and sustained way
- The model enables Scotland's leading producers to take on a vital new role for developing less experienced producers and for providing thoughtful and informed creative, production and strategic support for independent performing artists
- The company creates an infrastructure that can hold and manage the financial risk of independent performing artists
- A network of three producing hubs enables artists to be supported beyond the Central Belt and for producers to learn about and engage with issues facing regionally based venues/promoters and performing artists.
- The company provides a clear focus for Scotland's independent performing artists and for promoters and venues wishing to work with them
- Saves the overheads and administration costs incurred by individual artists and producers who currently work separately and duplicate services and resources
- A strong Board of directors drawn from producers and independent performing artists from Scotland, the UK and overseas brings advice, experience and contacts to the staff teams.
- The company would expand strategically and organically, learning from its experience and in response to artist and venue feedback

### **Weaknesses**

- The costs involved in setting up, managing and sustaining an independent company with up to 18 staff after two years may drain time, expertise and resource away from the core purpose of investing in performing artists
- The model presumes that artists are prepared to 'share' producers and administrative staff with other artists, which may not suit everyone and/or may raise issues of conflicts of interest if the producers work with artists from the same sector or who are touring at the same time.
- The model presumes the establishment of a new support organisation at a time when other cultural organisations are being cut and the sector is being encouraged to consolidate rather than expand.
- A company with staff operating in three locations would require effective and potentially time-consuming communications to ensure clear and consistently implemented corporate values. However, with only one hub, the company provides a service able to reach only a relatively small number of performing artists.

### **Opportunities**

- The scale of staff anticipated in the long-term allows for a potentially large group of artists to be supported and given opportunities to develop more secure careers within Scotland
- The model aims to produce a new generation of producers able to maximise their learning with the company and in due course able to support a wider spectrum of performing artists independent of the company.
- The model will be able to support a number of those established and mid-career performing artists previously supported through Flexible Funding
- The support and guidance of a Managing Producer to facilitate external training will ensure that learning is shared and that staff benefit from cpd that challenges thinking and develops skills through access to high level expertise from beyond Scotland.

- Performing artists would achieve a 'stamp of approval' if developed and promoted by a respected producing organisation
- The producers will quickly build up a wide network of contacts and opportunities of potential benefit to the company's portfolio of artists
- The involvement of the Managing Producer provides a unique model, that both provides vital strategic overview and could be attractive to external funders

### **Threats**

- The level of experience in Scotland's independent producers may not prove sufficient to staff the company with producers of a higher enough calibre.
- The initial level of investment required is unrealistic in the current financial climate
- The need to research and secure funding on an ongoing basis to support up to 18 staff is unrealistic in the current financial climate and will become an overwhelming challenge for the Senior Producer and Board.
- The model will reduce the number of producers working independently who are available to work with those artists not supported through this company
- The potential for some producer/artist relationships to flounder, giving the company a bad reputation
- The potential for the company to bear a significant financial loss on behalf of an independent company which jeopardises the finances of its own operation and that of other artists.

## **Model D      Extended Bursary opportunities for producers**

### **strengths**

- The benefits of a longer-term placement would be to ensure that the time spent by the host producer is 'time well spent' and that benefits accrue both to the host and to the producer.
- Enables the trainee producer to gain real hands-on experience in a supportive learning environment
- Enables the placement producer to work on a project through genesis, delivery and evaluation
- Provides a good solution for producers currently working independently and looking for more secure employment
- Requires the host organisation to make a financial commitment to supporting the cost of the placement – generating a commitment to ensuring positive outcomes for both parties
- The placements would be overseen by the Managing Producer and would become part of the network of producers facilitated and developed through this role

### **weaknesses**

- in order to participate in such a placement, a producer would need to have sufficient time to dedicate to the project and therefore may not retain existing employment
- Additional cost required to sustain a placement over 6 month period
- Time involved by host company to train and oversee placement, but if it works well host company then gets used to 'extra pair of hands' which will leave a gap when placement concludes.

### **Opportunities**

- Strengthens the skills base and experience of Scotland's producers adding to the pool of freelance producers available to work with those artists not supported by host producers in venues or companies
- Also strengthens employment prospects of those producers who may wish to work in a venue or organisation in future
- Ensures that producers have wider set of contacts and venue networks to take to the independent sector.
- Provides an excellent training for entry as a producer into a hosted position within a venue or producing organisation

### **Threats**

- Will this be setting up expectations of opportunities for work which may not be met in Scotland if not enough funded opportunities to support artists?
- A six month leave of absence may unsettle organisations from which placements come – possibly may need to offer the placement part-time over a year, and to provide cover for originating organisation.
- Venues or organisations may lack physical space and/or IT resources to accommodate another member of staff

## **Model E      Expanded/developed and co-ordinated advisory service to independent performing artists**

This model is not fully developed as more research is needed to identify the exact nature of the need and the appropriate solution. However, initial thinking might suggest the following assessment of opportunity and risk:

### **Strengths**

- The provision of coaching is powerful tool for self-development and evaluation
- A resource website collates all relevant information into one place
- Appropriate levels and kinds of Information can be accessed by different artists at different stages of career and project/business development
- It could also serve producers and promoters with relevant information, policies, opportunities and advice
- Well managed and updated, it can take the pressure off the producers by signposting artists to available resources and information and FAQs
- It provides access to information for all artists, regardless of location

### **Weaknesses**

- It could duplicate existing websites in Scotland and the UK offering similar information already available to artists and producers
- A lot of work is required to create and update a fully comprehensive sector-wide resource-based website
- Not all artists will be comfortable accessing information on-line

### **Opportunities**

- There are opportunities to partner with existing service providers elsewhere in the UK to maximise investment, create partnerships, learn from existing models and reduce expenditure
- There are opportunities to expand the offering strategically in response to the needs identified through feedback from the sector

### **Threat**

- The website loses its impact if it is not kept up to date, either by artists themselves (losing interest/not having the time) or by a dedicated staff member (not having funding for a salaried web-editor)
- It may not be used enough to justify continued investment
- Its purpose is diluted if it sits in a crowded market alongside other websites servicing specific artforms or sectors

## Appendix 5 - Examples from beyond Scotland

### **Independent Producing organisation: The Empty Space, Newcastle** <sup>xxiv</sup>

- The Empty Space was developed by individual producers, formerly working at Battersea Arts Centre, recognising that there was little work of interest being generated in the north east of England. They achieved funding to research the reasons for this, and identified that there was no infrastructure to support artists to work in this region, and that artists were either giving up or leaving the area.
- Based on these research findings, ACE invested funds in two producers to create an entity which initially provided an advisory service to local artists and which has grown to provide wide ranging advisory, producing and management support to a portfolio of independent performing artists in the region.
- The producers work closely with venues and promoters in their region and the work they produce is curated by the producers in direct response to the needs of the venues.
- They are funded by ACE to provide a core service to artists. They are not funded as producers.
- Both the producers are engaged on a freelance basis as the funding available is not enough to sustain them full time.
- They were in receipt of a DCMS Jerwood bursary which provided an additional trainee producer. This funding has now come to an end and the trainee has graduated to become an independent producer working in the region for her own portfolio of independent artists.
- The support offered by the Empty Space gives a 'weight of endorsement' to artists, particularly at early stages of their careers. They provide a valuable brokering relationship between artists and venues, offering venues support with programming. They have helped to create communities of artists around particular venues, i.e. Live and Northern Stage in Newcastle and the Arc in Stockton.
- The mechanism works because they are independent but they need investment to be sustainable.
- The scope of their offering is changing with the changing landscape for artists and venues, but the core of their programme is:
  - General practical and advisory support to artists – mostly for help with funding applications. They encourage artists to write them and they give feedback.
  - Running networking events
  - Running training events – presenting honest and practical talks by local venues and funders
  - Presenting masterclasses with artists touring into the region
- They programme work into the region to enable local artists to see work that may inspire their own work. They give free tickets to artists to see work locally and raise funds to offer bursaries for artists to travel to see work elsewhere.
- When producing an artist directly they are required to fundraise for production funds and charge a management fee to generate income which can cover the cost of their other activities.

- They are based at Dance City in Newcastle where they pay a subsidised rent and have occasional access to studios, as available.
- There are some examples of artists relocating to the region because of the increased opportunities available, and some artists have decided to stay rather than move away.
- The key challenge now is that having created demand from artists, there are few opportunities for artists to get support from other independent producers in the area.
- They are keen to create opportunities for trainee producers to work with other producers around the country to gain a range of experience.
- They believe that the level of investment needs to be in the region of £80,000 per annum to provide salaried posts which can deliver a core programme of advice and producing as well as provide a budget for events, networking, seed-funding and training.

### **Independent Producing Organisation: Artsadmin, London<sup>xxv</sup>**

- Artsadmin was started by Judith Knight in response to the need she saw for artists to be sustained whilst receiving project-based funding. She wanted to provide a 'mattress' for these artists and to keep their ideas and relationships moving between projects.
- The organisation has undergone many changes since it was originally established in the 1980s. Since moving to Toynbee Hall in East London in 1994/5, they have developed a range of new services for artists in addition to producing work.
- They now had two dedicated part-time Artist Advisor posts who offer mentoring and networking and provide sharings of work as well as responding to general artists' enquiries, providing basic information about funding and venues etc. They also give bursaries to emergent artists.
- They currently award bursaries of between £500 and £5000 to 10 artists over an 18 month period. These posts and the bursary programme are funded by Esmee Fairbairn, Paul Hamlyn and Jerwood Foundations.
- In addition to the two Directors, there are currently five producers working on a project basis with a portfolio of twelve core artists. Some producers always work with the same artists, and some work with different artists. They also have Associate Artists who benefit from a profile through Artsadmin but who are not directly managed by them.
- They do not operate around a fixed business plan or company structure. They have picked up and grown projects and ideas fluidly over the years. All their artists are different but are all working between artform disciplines. The key thing for them is working with artists whose work they love, not those who can afford to pay them. They have turned down work, and offers of fees, from artists who could pay them but whose work does not fit with their ethos. Working with a clear brand of work has given them their identity. This work is increasingly participatory and site specific and less about traditional theatre based touring. Their artists tend to work on solo or duos and some are companies, but all are project funded.
- All their artists and producers know each other very well having developed long-term relationships. It can be hard to manage the 'work-flow' of producers, trying to manage everyone's time and to be able to respond to projects as they emerge for artists.

- They have a finance team to manage the finances of all the projects and of the overall organisation. They also employ a part-time education manager and a building manager.
- Their artists like the model, although they would all like to have more funding....This is outweighed on the whole by being free of the 'hassle' of running their own companies.
- Most artists are sole traders but some are established as limited companies. Artsadmin provides bank accounts through a separate, subsidiary company and takes a fee of up to 12% from all the artists they work with and who receive funding. They fundraise through this subsidiary company, which is a charity, on behalf of their artists. To date, there has never been a clash or conflict in fundraising for projects either between artists or between an artist's project and an overarching Artsadmin project.
- They currently have a turnover of £1m, of which 50% has been core funded through ACE and the raised in fundraising and studio hires.
- Artists have to buy into the need for producers to be working for more than one company. Artists need to trust that the producer will prioritise their work when they need to. It doesn't work if the artists wants a one-to-one relationship with a producer.
- Artsadmin artists are not in competition with each other for contacts and venue relationships. Their producers share their experience and support their colleagues.
- They have been able to train up young producers with funds from DCMS/Jerwood Foundation. A trainee needs to be in post for at least 6 months to be mutually useful. The younger generation of artists and producers know that they have to be more independent and self-contained if they are going to make a career in this area. They are more articulate about their work and more aware of the need to self-produce and promote.
- The space at Toynbee Hall came to them 'by chance'. It has given them status and gravitas with funders and allowed them to grow in new ways, but it wasn't a planned development.

### **Strategic funding body support for Independent producers:**

#### **London Arts Board support for dance producers**

- Gwen Van Spyk, an experienced independent dance producer, benefitted from the visionary and tailored investment in independent dance producers made by London Arts Board in the late 1990s.
- As well as providing a salary for a number of producers to support the work of a portfolio of dance artists for up to two years, the scheme allocated funds to bring in a trainee producer to work alongside each producer. The scheme required the producers to work with proven dance artists and choreographers.
- As well as supporting salaries, LAB facilitated seminars and meetings for these independent producers, supported by a paid administrator, helping to create a network of producers who could learn from each other and from esteemed visiting speakers and workshop leaders.
- The producers did not receive support with production funds and had to fundraise to realise the vision of their portfolio of choreographers. As ever, this was not always

an easy task but the producers remained motivated knowing that their time spent seeking ways to make projects happen was paid for and secure for two years.

- The scheme helped to make independent producing a viable career for a generation of arts managers. It also helped to stabilise and promote the careers of many of our leading contemporary dancers and dance companies.
- The scheme ended with the dissolution of London Arts Board in 2002/3. It left a tangible legacy in the Independent Dance Managers Network which grew from the original LAB programme of seminars and meetings. The network now numbers over 40 members. It aims to provide continued cpd and peer support to London's independent dance producers, but struggles to do this with no administrative support and no funds available to pay for external trainers. ([www.idmn.co.uk](http://www.idmn.co.uk))

### **The venue based approach:**

#### **Shared Experience at Oxford Playhouse<sup>xxvi</sup>**

- Michelle Knight was employed 6 months ago to be the producer, both for Oxford Playhouse and for Shared Experience. The decision to bring Shared Experience into the Playhouse as a Resident Company stemmed from the excellent and long-standing relationship between the two organisations and the mutual benefit identified that each organisation would gain from a closer collaboration: OP was looking to develop its scope as a producing house and SE was needing more experienced and strategic management, as well as the opportunity to get artistic support and feedback in a trusted environment.
- The aim of the project is for SE to benefit from both a dedicated part-time producer and the expertise of the OP staff across departments to support and deliver its artistic projects; and for OP to benefit from a dedicated part-time producer who can initiate and develop four own productions a year for in-house and touring presentation.
- In reality, managing these two roles is quite a challenge for one person.
- At the same time that ACE awarded OP £93,000 to develop its role as a producing theatre from 2011/12, SE lost all its £600,000 annual funding from ACE. This has meant that a lot of the focus for Michelle has been on planning ways in which SE can operate as a project based company and detracting from her ability to work as a dedicated producing for OP.
- It is also quite a challenge for the staff at the theatre who directly provide financial, education, marketing, administration and governance support to SE. Michelle identified the difference in the 'singular focus' of SE who aim to produce one or two projects per year and the 'broader focus' of OP who are presenting one or two projects per week. There is a lot of adjustment to be done both in terms of managing workload and expectations across both organisations.
- Michelle also recognises that the work she undertakes is different for both organisations.
  - For SE she is the 'Administrative Producer' – 'servicing' and realising the Artistic Director's artistic ideas.
  - For OP she is the 'Creative Producer' – initiating and instigating projects to develop with and through OP.

Michelle is officially employed by SE on a full-time basis and OP pay SE for half of her salary, as a management fee, as well as covering all her office and overhead costs. Michelle is line-managed by the Director of OP. SE can currently contribute to Michelle's salary through the receipt of a project grant for 2011/12. However, there is

no guarantee that project funding will always be available. Michelle will only be able to support and develop SE in the future with the financial and practical staffing support of OP.

The two organisations remain separate legal entities. Both have their own artistic vision and there is no obligation for SE work to be programmed at OP, although there needs to remain sufficient points of crossover to justify the 'residency' status.

In practice, SE rehearses in London and there is little space for SE to have a presence at OP beyond that of Michelle, who travels up and down to London most weeks.

OP has experience of providing other local artists with producing support and has a number of Associate Artists. This has tended to start from work that has gone well in the Studio theatre and there has been a mutual benefit in helping to develop a company's work further. For example, Idle Motion were given direct 'hands-on' producing support in their early days and OP staff now act as occasional advisors and mentors as the company require.

### **The Maltings, Farnham<sup>xxvii</sup>**

- Until Gavin Stride was appointed there was no history at The Maltings of supporting artists through the venue. He started by bringing artists into residence at the theatre – giving them space and advice - but he is increasingly more interested in producing companies directly and 'purposefully', particularly in relation to venues and audiences. He recognises that it is difficult for a company to move forward without a producer

The theatre now employs a Tour Booker (Mark Makin), who is their 'most precious resource'. They have established a programme called House ([www.housetheatre.org.uk](http://www.housetheatre.org.uk)) which gathers and distributes information about venues and companies in the East and South East of England and helps to broker conversations between venues and companies. They encourage venues to work together to commission an artist or company to tour to the region. Their aim is to get artists to think more strategically about who they are trying to connect to, and to get venues to listen more to 'the ambition of artists'.

Whilst they believe in providing producing support to artists, they also try to help artists manage the wider domestic and personal issues which can become obstacles to them making work – providing costs of childcare or sourcing accommodation, for example. Freeing the artists up to be able to focus on making their best work.

Part of this process is investing in providing coaching for artists and companies. They pay for a consultant (Gary Hills) to work with 10 companies per year, providing 3 days of coaching to each company. The consultant helps these artists set targets and supports them to work towards achieving them. They work with Gary by Skype, phone or in person.

They continue to commit to offering one hour's advice or conversation to any company or artist based in the South East of England. Part of that process for The Maltings is discovering which artists are living in the region. They see an average of 40 artists/companies per year.

There are six members of staff involved in the artist support programmes, who are also running the venue.

They currently have 6 companies based at the theatre and are directly producing three companies. The tour booker promotes an average of 10 shows per year.

They are funded by ACE to provide support to artists and although they charge a management fee within budgets that they submit for funding they will usually pay this back to the company. They wish to support the cultural ecology of, and to bring social capital into, the area.

### **Project Catalysts, Dublin<sup>xxviii</sup>**

The **Project Catalysts** programme at Project Arts Centre has developed in direct response to the dismantling of fixed-term funding to Irish based performing artists and companies. Aside from a handful of larger producing companies, theatre and dance artists and musicians in Ireland are now funded on a project basis - and at €1 million per year, the pot for project funding is greatly reduced.

- Starting with providing cash-flow support to one dance company, Project now supports 38 independent performing artists working in theatre, live art, dance and music.
- Project offers support to artists in three ways:
  - As line-producer of projects (making funding applications, managing awarded funds, tour booking, casting, contracting, marketing, technical support etc)
  - Providing financial services to artists/companies working with their own producers (advising on budget preparation, providing a bank account, managing and subsidising cash-flow, preparing end of project accounts)
  - Providing the services of their theatre building to artists who need a postal address, wi-fi, meeting space, free coffee and access to theatre spaces when they are empty
- All the Catalyst artists make work that has an affinity with Project's artistic ethos.
- The intention of the project is to free artists up to spend more of their funding and time on artistic rather than administrative activity.
- Project receives €20,000 a year from the Irish Arts Council's newly created 'Resource Sharing' fund to support a part-time General Manager/Executive Producer who manages the programme for artists. She is supported by a Finance Officer who manages the financial services for artists. Both post-holders undertake their roles alongside their core roles for Project Arts Centre.
- Catalyst is now a core programme of Project and a small team of staff for the venue (technical, marketing, PR, administration) provide advice or direct services to the Catalyst artists, depending on need and availability. The staff are hugely committed and equally over-stretched.
- Project takes the financial risk for independent artists. It is committed to bear the cost of a financial loss within its own organisational structure, agreeing a staged repayment system where required. Despite its own tight finances, Project recognises that it is better able to bear this risk than the individual artist who would otherwise be personally liable for any loss. Project also provides payroll services for independent artists.
- The Catalyst programme now represents 1/3 of Project's annual turnover.
- The Artistic Director provides artists with creative support and feedback, as required, as well as with vital moral support – particularly to mid-career artists who are adjusting to a major change in the trajectory of their careers - and is seeking ways to help move artists towards working with their own producers as well as bringing more artists into the fold.

- All this is taking place in the context of an Irish theatre environment with few opportunities for freelance theatre/dance-makers, no history of freelance producers, and a large network of rural venues with small populations and small or non-existent programming funds.

### **The web-based approach:**

#### **PANDA, Manchester<sup>xxix</sup>**

The PANDA website and service was developed as a pilot project in response to research which identified that there was a lot of performing artists working in the Greater Manchester area but little business support tailored for their needs.

The first service offered was for three or four artists and companies to get management and mentoring advice, and has grown to provide on-line resources, information, listings and advice.

The project received funding from Arts Council England and has expanded to cover more of the north west of England. As the scale of their reach has expanded their role has become more about advising and making connections for people and less about direct producing.

The service provides a valuable, quick and easy 'one-stop-shop' for artists and producers. For most performing artists and organisations, the project helps them to feel connected and a sense of belonging to a wider community.

They initially facilitated a producers' hub, but this was not sustainable as the artists did not have enough funding to bring the producers and the producers were not sufficiently experienced.

They have introduced coaching as a service available to performing artists, and have trained fourteen practitioners to act as coaches to their peers in the sector. This provides artists with valuable additional skills and helps to sustain the service.

There are approximately 1200 people actively calling on the service each year.

The project previously operated with 2 full-time staff: one dedicated to updating and managing the website and one focussing on development opportunities for performing artists. They have recently lost funding and have only one staff member to do everything, which isn't sustainable. They introduced a membership fee for performing artists, but it is pitched too low to make any tangible difference to their operating costs.

They no longer have a budget to pay for events, having previously had £40,000 in core funding and £40,000 in project support for events.

In response to reduced funds they are adjusting their services to equip artists with their own resources, facilitating action or peer-to-peer learning, bringing small groups of artists and producers together to discuss and debate subjects and to network. They have a two-tier programme: one aimed at artists and those who need to know how to self-promote and one aimed at producers who are working to support artists. They have introduced life-coaching as a key part of their service.

Key learning for them has been realising that the on-line provision of advice and resources is not enough and that there needs to be a personal meeting/exchange too. They are now looking at linking their networks with other networks to maximise learning and share information.

They work with a network of programmers from local venues, helping venues to connect with artists who can create a community of activity around their buildings.

### **Theatre Bristol<sup>xxx</sup>**

The organisation grew in response to a need in the city to provide information to performing artists that was not available in any effective or streamlined way. The aim of the organisation is to create the conditions in the City for performing artists to make their best work. They encourage and support performing artists' ambition and act as advocates for their work.

The project started with ACE funding through Grants for the Arts and from April 2012 will become a national Portfolio Organisation with secure funding for 3 years.

They offer web-based resources, information, listings, job vacancies and contacts as well as face-to-face advisory sessions and consultancy. The advice they offer is in response to the needs of artists, and is provided by a team of 5 producers who between them cover a wide range of expertise and sector specific knowledge and contacts.

The Theatre Bristol website is part of a wider network of websites across the south west of England. The producers share knowledge and information across this network and help to support touring opportunities for artists across the region.

The majority of their contact time is with emerging or young artists but they also provide valuable support to established artists or companies who may be looking for specific advice, i.e. about how to develop international touring.

The organisation has a budget to produce events which they develop in response to artists' needs. They curate a residency programme at the Tobacco Factory and have produced a show which developed through this programme. They have presented development platforms for artists and have held Open Space events to address specific issues.

They currently have between 600 – 800 hits per day on their website. Between October 2007 and March 2009 122 artists were supported by the service, either in person or by email<sup>xxxi</sup>.

## **Appendix 6**

**Financial models – see attached sheet for full budgets for each Model**

## **Appendix 7:**

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