

COMMUNITY ARTS CONFERENCE REPORT 1979



**COMMUNITY
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1979**

January 19th-21st
The Warehouse Newcastle upon Tyne

This conference was sponsored by the Association of Community Arts (North) and organized by Peter Thomson, Stan Gamester, Sally Madge and Paul Fahey. Funding for the conference, and this report, was provided by Northern Arts and the Gulbenkian Foundation, for which we are very grateful.

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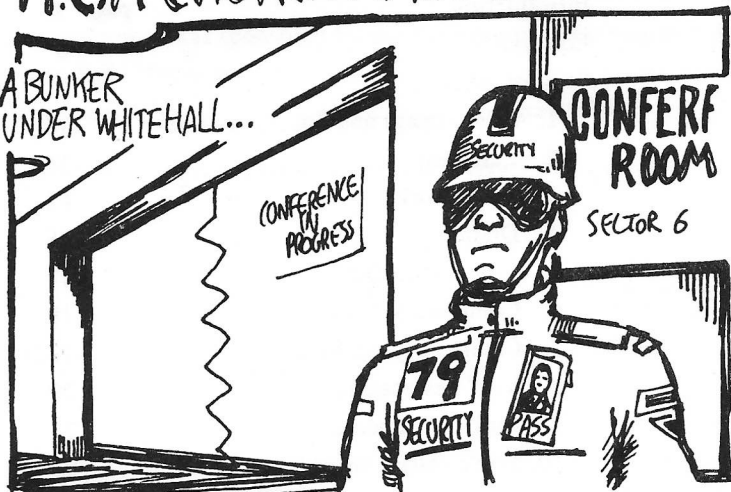
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A.C.A CHURCH HALL BLUES....

A BUNKER UNDER WHITEHALL...



GENTLEMEN YOUR REPORTS PLEASE!

THE PLAN FOR STABILISATION IS PROCEEDING PERFECTLY.



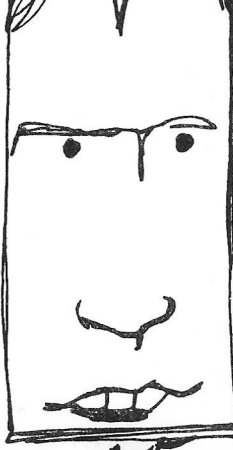
THE WORKING POPULATION IS TOTALLY DISTRACTED FROM THEIR MISERY..



COMMUNITY ARTS HAS STUCK UP COLOURFUL WALLPAPER....



SO PEOPLE NO LONGER SEE THE CRACKS!



AND THE JOY OF THE WHOLE OPERATION IS OUR AGENTS THINK THEY'RE ACTUALLY WORKING AGAINST US!



HA HA HA!!



Alan Gilbey 29.

INTRODUCTION

In the spirit of community arts, this conference engendered spontaneity. That is, while scheduled events proceeded on time, on topic, and in the right place the unplanned was happening everywhere, always.

Gripped by a need to tie knots in airy concepts, you could participate in ongoing discussion on A.C.A. structure and theory of revolution while the rugged-in-spirit were out in the garage building an oven out of found materials with Nigel and his band of merry pranksters from Bath, and the truly relaxed were at the Adelphi Pub with Joe, a community musician from Edinburgh, discussing Bach cantatas, punk precocity and the position of bassoonists in the ensuing social upheaval.

Pursuing further stimulation, you might have browsed at THAP's bookstall, caroused by Barking Iron, Hotpoints, Hepatitis or Ray Stubbs' R & B All-stars on Saturday night, been amused by clowning or enthused by Controlled Attack (apparently Ann Flatable was), jammed at midnight with your handmade musicmaker, stitched on Tree's collage, had a teshirt silkscreened by Barbara of Sunderland workshop, become involved with a hooky and proggy from Uncle Ernie's Community Arts, jived, gyrated, elucidated.

And, as always at these affairs, there's the feeling of almost missing the parade - that is, knowing that something great is going on somewhere if only you can get to it

After a delayed start due to hellish weather conditions, Friday's afternoon seminars, on the topics of community writing and publishing, drama in community arts, feminism, kids' newspapers, community arts' theory and development, got under way. That evening's entertainment was provided by Tower Hamlets Writers. Performance Group.

Saturday morning sessions focused on democratic/locally accountable structures using Merseyside as an example, rural work, theatre, and scratch musical instrument building; the afternoon covered inner-city partnerships, media image, community planning and development, video with kids, and several hours with the Scottish contingent. Southwark Theatre Arts performed during the evening, after which there was a party and informal ceilidh.

Sunday morning, reserved for a plenary session, evolved into a marathon discussion on funding structure and strategy. This topic requires a lengthy conference of its own, rather than being tacked on to the end of a generally informal conference of such vast scope.

Due to the timing, many participants leaving early to catch trains, etc., and the intensity and gravity of the subject, the general atmosphere was one of confusion. Although the session agreed strongly on a national course of action, it was difficult to reach a consensus of opinion on strategy.

Two reports on the plenary session, by Stan Gamester and Peter Thomson of North A.C.A., discuss the major points of the meeting and clarify many of the issues involved.

Given the number of people involved, (about 200), the scope of material covered, the diversity of activities, and the short length of the conference, it seemed improbable that any issue would be resolved.

It's a credit to the energy of the gathering, then,

that on Sunday morning two resolutions were made:

1. For a community arts' manifesto.
2. For a decision, by the community arts committee of ACGB, to refuse the community arts grant unless it was equal to the amount assessed.

The plenary session also forwarded a letter of support to the Animation Information Service, appointed two individuals to prepare a preliminary discussion paper on future funding strategy, and set up an investigation into Inner City Partnerships.

This report attempts to trace the flow of discussion throughout the conference as well as convey something of the atmosphere.

The editorial introduces a major concern at the Conference: defining the nature of community arts and developing ways of projecting this to non-community artists.

Following that are reports from seminars and workshops. All group leaders, and at least one other participant, were asked to submit written responses.

A section on local structures includes articles on Merseyside, Nottingham and Scotland and a short explanation on devolution.

And, for your reading pleasure, 'a doorman's ruminations' by Richard Blossie and a note from the kitchen staff on the possibilities of two loaves and five fishes.

I hope this report reflects your impressions of the conference. As conferences go it will be hard to match for the variety of exchanges and general enjoyment.

I would like to thank everyone who assisted in the process of this report: to those who submitted articles and artwork, or offered advice and suggestions, to Ev, our typist, for unwearied good humour, to the workers at Tyneside Free Press co-operative, for creative direction, and enjoyable diversions, and, especially, to Sally, Peter, Paul and Stan for everything materialising.

EDITORIAL

*'The open-ended nature of processes, the manipulability of objects, the re-activation of each individuals' creativity - even individual responsibility - symbolise the transformations contemporary culture is undergoing **

When the National Conference of Community Artists convened in Newcastle, it was with no more specific a purpose than to hobnob about work.

Through three days of seminars, workshops and activities, there was a general re-affirmation of the basic thrust of community arts work: to enable and encourage collective creative expression, directed towards greater awareness of the community, and necessitating 'The re-activation of each individuals' creativity'.

To be able to appreciate the poetry of that concept while realising how difficult it is to actualise, may be the particular distinction of the community artist.

With participants from a variety of working environments, it was difficult but necessary to find a general point of reference. Discussion around important issues seemed impossible unless we could agree on some simple, clear statements on 'who we are, what we do, why we do it'.

Although there was not a formal agreement on definitions, it was apparent that discussion around community arts theory, and particularly the idea of a declaration of belief, proceeded on the following assumptions:

1. The nature of a community artist lies in the desire to work with, and for, members of a community, on a continuing basis, to make their environment more imaginative, responsive and accessible.
2. A group of community artists realises, at some point, that it is capable of making their society more creatively productive, and may therefore be instrumental in effecting social-political change.

The purpose of community arts' work, then, is in helping each community discover how it can best express itself. The importance of this work in a society which celebrates popular culture, with its superficial and degrading role-models, cannot be overemphasised. Through providing skills and opportunities, community artists facilitate the processes whereby any community can explore its unique nature.

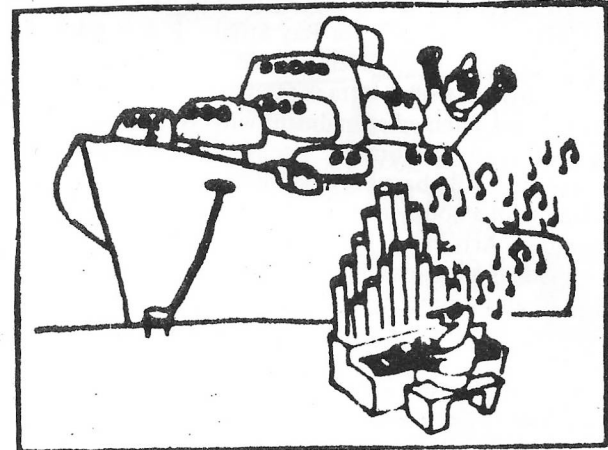
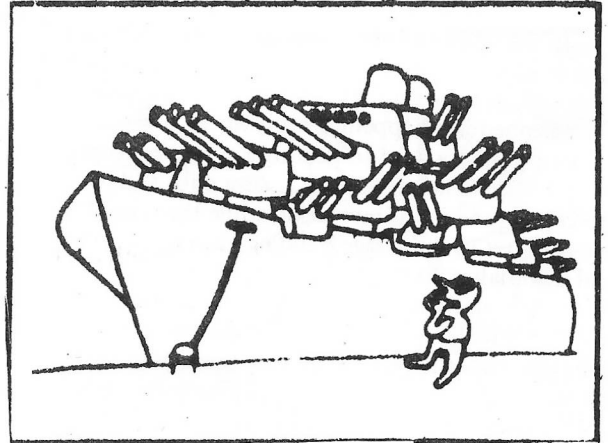
This necessitates that the community artists maintain a low profile - encourage rather than lead - and recognise that it is a slow process. As agents, community artists are seeking nothing less than to involve an entire local population in creative expression.

*'Community Artists set themselves to stimulate rather than to perform... their profession is to stimulate people of all ages and educational backgrounds to take part in arts activities of their own choice'. ***

Expressiveness is centred in the act of exploration. People meeting at a local arts and crafts centre, or over a silkscreen project, or at an outdoor festival, are always talking. Together, they realise that they can see more of their world in a larger context than before. That is, it is an expanding rather than a contracting activity. As expressed by one seminar participant, 'Our work can open the safety valve on society'.

* Kultermann, Udo, *Art-events & happenings*, London, Mathews, Miller & Dunbar '71, p.101

** Redcliffe-Maud, *Support for the Arts in England and Wales*, Gulbenkian p. 157.



Examples like Tower Hamlets Arts Projects, Merseyside and Craigmillar Festival Society most explicitly show the connection between the process of group creativity and an increased critical involvement in the community.

The experience of Craigmillar is inspiring in that, as a direct result of the setting-up of a local annual festival some fifteen years ago, and the ongoing activities resulting from that, the previously negative and disintegrating growth pattern of this 'poor' Edinburgh district has been completely reversed. The community has just written and published a comprehensive plan for action, a working document which outlines the community's aims and objectives for all areas of local life - arts, housing, environmental improvements, education, social welfare, etc. Craigmillar has shown how a local populace can effectively come to control its' environment with minimal help from outside professionals (only recently has Craigmillar created permanent positions for community artists), and also that it is a very slow and careful process. As personified in the community's 'gentle giant', friendly, albeit subversive, tactics generally work better than confrontation.

Through enabling more people to realise that the freedom of expression previously enjoyed only by artist, community art confronts the most entrenched social beliefs: have/havenots, creator/spectator, active/passive, work/play. The 'balance of wealth' is questioned and richness, in the form of expressed creativity, community spirit and sense of imagination is offered to everyone.

WHO WE WORK WITH

In this way, community arts provides a function intrinsically linked with the processes of expansion and change. Far from being any sort of an answer, of course, this just leads to more questions. A statement from Telford Community Arts on 'who we are working with' elaborates:

'We work in the community' - is this a confusing and meaningless assertion? More useful is the phrase used on Friday afternoon, 'we work with the potentially progressive elements of the community'. But how does the community arts movement identify these potentially progressive elements? Does it mean the younger generation? People say 'we're starting with the kids but hopefully we'll reach the adults through the kids'. Isn't this like the belief that you can start with the skills and techniques then add the political perspective?

Or - does it mean working with existing activists and groups that have already formed around an issue and therefore see a clear role for creative expression?

Why don't community artists work more with the adult population that hasn't identified a role for us? Is it too difficult? Too challenging? What's our credibility on the shop floors of Ford or GKN? Do they think we're just for the kids' or a 'bunch' of lefties'?

The greatest strength of community arts is the conviction, by its workers, that it is essential. The main struggle is in convincing local and national authorities of the same.

A seminar on documentation and media image focused on the frustration of dealing with assessing/funding bodies which frequently view community arts as, at best, area of entertainment or education for leisure, and at worst, auxiliary childminders or make-work schemes to shorten the dole queue.

IMAGE IN THE MEDIA

Consequently, the most damaging weakness of the community arts movement, at present, is the absence of a strong public relations structure which would interpret the joys and problems of the individual regional worker in terms of a coherent national picture.

This would involve doing more of our own research and documentation, submitting material to the media, and controlling how accessible we are to the media, particularly individual journalists and film-makers.

The objective would be for us to present our idea of what we do to the public, to show the link between community arts work and other social services, and yet to express how qualitatively different it is.

The question here is how did a gap develop between community arts and the media: shouldn't the work stand as its own advertisement? Fragments of an answer include: community arts is sometimes low-profile or sometimes highly controversial, and the media is not always accurate or kind.

At this time A.C.A. is awaiting approval for a grant which would fund the employment of four national office workers for research, documentation and field work. Part of their work would be to extend the services provided

by Anne Davies, with the Animation Information Service. This is an extensive information and resource service for every aspect of community arts, from specific project outlines and background material to information on government policies.

The necessity of enlarging such a vital exchange service is obvious: a statement from the Sunday plenary session supported a proposal that the service be given the necessary staff, finances and resources to expand.

This is the statement passed at the conference:

At a three day meeting held in Newcastle in January 1979, about 200 representatives of community arts projects from throughout the U.K. discussed, among many other issues, the question of the gathering and dissemination of information related to the general field of community arts. These discussions covered two major information needs:-

- (i) the exchange of information between people who are at present working in community arts or who wish to develop community arts work,*
- (ii) the importance of crossing the somewhat artificial barriers that exist between community arts, community development, community education etc., by both distributing information across these barriers and by identifying concerns and issues that affect all these areas of work.*

The Conference is aware of the work done so far by the Animation Information Service which as a national agency attempts to facilitate the above exchanges of information. We realise though that the lack of staff, finances and other resources prevent the Service from adequately meeting the needs expressed. We fully support the proposal to establish the Animation Information Service as an independent, permanent, well staffed and well equipped information agency.

COMMUNITY ARTS MANIFESTO

A suggestion for a manifesto was developed during a seminar on community arts theory and development. A strong and imaginative statement would define community arts work and provide the necessary philosophical framework for future growth.

The seminar was on Friday afternoon. For the rest of the conference, a paper-covered wall, with the heading premise:

The primary function of the community artist is the effecting of social change within the community in which he/she works.

elicited responses, such as:

** Community arts have to include the community so wholly into its process that it includes and even encourages the possibility of the artists becoming redundant.*

**To encourage and develop a popular culture that contains elements of various ethnic minorities.*

**Community arts is above all people, taking responsibility for their own lives, culture and environment through the process of art.*

**Community arts is about art-making. The community artist must be primarily concerned with the virtually unlimited implications of what it is to operate as an artist... and to want to make people understand and want to operate that way, too.*

**An artist is not apolitical*

**Spell out the direction of 'social change': a society where people have control over their produce and other essential aspects of life. Equally important is to have control over the decision-making process. (omitting the idle banter and Controlled Attack's plug for their Christmas show).*

In composing a manifesto it is important to balance the quotable philosophical passages - ie. everyone is creative, the process of art-making is more important than the product - with principles of action.

It is desirable that a document which supposes to provide a focus for such a large and diversified group should develop in an organic manner out of that group, and is not the work of a few individuals with strong ideas.

What is most important, however, is that we as community artists do not lose contact with the work we are doing in an effort to externalise our ideas in a manifesto.

Several conference participants were alienated by the idea of a manifesto at this time, believing that it would institutionalise community arts and thus, separate it further from the communities we are working with. One statement on the wall expressed: *'Please don't limit the incredible potential of community arts by reducing it to a vehicle for specific social/political aims. As a result of community arts activities, it is probable that social and political change will come about but that is not for the community artist to impose.'*

A statement from the seminar on rural community arts comments: 'when national and regional policy is being formed, it is important that the loud and coherent voices.... should not drown out other thought and opinions....'

STATEMENT OF CLEAR AIMS

Community arts was originally an artists' movement begun in the sixties. It has had a difficult and colourful history (one which hopefully, will be written up by some of the older community artists); presumably the idea of a manifesto has arisen before this. The reason why there isn't a manifesto to date might be an indication as to the nature of community arts work being non-elitist and linked, inextricably, to the community. Can there be a manifesto which would include the community as strongly as it would the community artists?

Most art movements have enjoyed the intensity of a high-minded statement of belief, from the Chicago muralists' group:

People are now realising for the first that public art is essential because it is relevant to each of them, Art is a universal language - destroying the barriers which stand so firm before us... (Walker & others, Artists statement)

to Joseph Beuys' explosive conceptualists' statement:
*Never vote again for a party! All of you! Any of you!
 Vote for art, that is to say, for yourselves! All of you!
 Any of you! Organise yourselves as non-voters in a genuine opposition! All of you! Use your powers, which you possess, through right of self-determination! All of you!
 Any one of you!*

to the Russian constructivists, unmatched in their fervour to demystify art and the romantic view of creativity:

1. *Down with art*
2. *Religion is a lie, art is a lie*

3. *Destroy the last lies of human thought with art*
4. *Down with the cultivation of artistic traditions. Long live the constructivist technicians.*
5. *Down with the kind of art that obscures human incapacity.*

6. *Collective art of the present is constructive life.*
 These examples are included because they are stimulating, their sense of spiritual anarchy is personally appealing and they deal, generally, with some community artists' ideas of community arts.

We also, are interested in demystifying 'Art', in the authenticity of working together in creative ways, and in bringing our skills and resources to the people who have most traditionally been denied those opportunities, in the hope that it will effect a new restructuring of society.

That is to say, community arts maintains a basic idealistic confrontation with society.

Whether the impetus for a statement of belief is mainly a dramatic response to this realisation, or stems from a strong sense within the community arts movement that this is the right time to produce a statement of clear aims will be determined if the A.C.A., as our professional organisation, endorses the idea of a manifesto, and work on it is begun.

UNITY AND STRATEGY

The only realistic conclusion to this report is no conclusion. The absence of a conclusiveness to the conference itself is not discrediting.

The community arts movement is in the midst of many changes, and this open conference permitted a scope of dialogue and involvement which would not have been possible at a meeting centering around a specific issue.

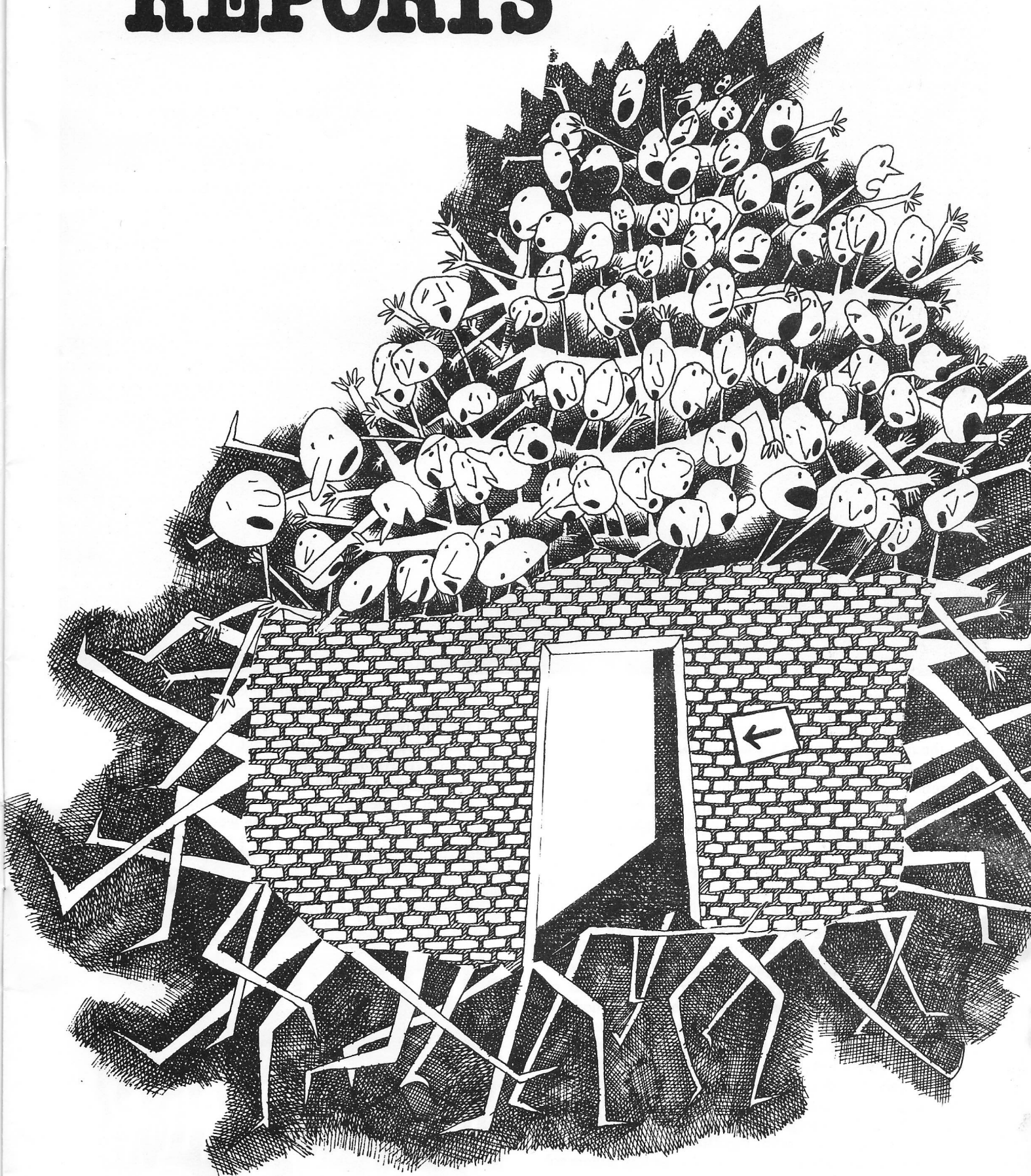
Important topics of discussion at the conference not covered in this section of the report include:

1. Funding situation: how can we continue on, in some cases, abysmally low wages? Annual funding means that it is impossible to make long-term work plans and that we have no real job security. One person at the Sunday plenary voiced, 'I'd like to be a community artist at 65 but does that mean I'll have to forfeit basic personal desires, like a family, a home'
2. Discussing the advantages and disadvantages of devolution, locally accountable assessing and funding structures, inner-city partnerships.
3. Maintaining standards of work and encouraging diversification by assessing and helping each other.

In short, there is probably no aspect of community arts work which was not examined over the conference weekend. The enduring results of these explorations will become evident throughout the coming year, at other meetings, through exchanges and other follow-ups.

The success of this conference is manifested in a general strong conviction that we can and will continue to work together to ensure the future growth and development of community arts.

SEMINAR REPORTS



CENTRAL STATION Notice Board			
NO. IS 26262			
11-1230	LUNCH	2-3	3-30-6
Video W'shp 1st Floor		COMMUNITY WRITING	PERFORMANCE TOP FLOOR
THE PICNIC + COLLAGE			TOP FLOOR
COMMUNITY ARCHITECTURE TOP FLOOR		KIDS NEWSPAPERS 1st Floor	JUNK INSTRUMENTS (GALLERY)
RURAL WORK (OUTSIDE)		WOMEN'S COMMUNITY ARTS 2nd Floor	DRAMA (GALLERY)
DONT FORGET TO FILL IN SEMINAR REPORT FORMS			
WHERE IS PETER THOMPSON?			
			FOOD 6.30 - 7.30

An early stumbling block in organizing the conference was the question of which topics and issues it should discuss. We thought of dividing the conference up in different ways, or choosing a theme. Finally it was agreed that we should encourage the creativity of the participants themselves by asking them to decide on what was discussed.

We laid out a simple structure which, we hoped, would successfully contain the varying types of seminars being run. The third day of the conference, Sunday morning, was left free to discuss national issues.

So the end result was a fairly chaotic timetable. The preliminary scheduling meant that two or three seminars were running simultaneously almost all weekend. Add to this the odd session being cancelled and the odd one or two being spontaneously arranged and some picture of the frenetic pace of the weekend emerges.

This section of the report too was put together by relying on participants and organisers of seminars to contribute reports. So some seminars are missed out all together whilst others are quite comprehensively covered.

1. MEDIA IMAGE

This seminar was lead by Cathy Mackerras and Graham Woodruff of Telford Community Arts.

The main topics of concern were:-

1. How do community arts groups present their own image to local people, to funding bodies, and to the public at large?
2. How do we want others to document or present us?

Some of the problems of presentation in the media were explored: the false emphasis that community arts is primarily for kids, community arts work portrayed as an 'enjoyable leisure activity', and the view that it is a non-directive passive resource with no political or ideological community message.

The group felt the need for a manifesto of the principle aims of community arts.

Discussion centred on the issue of community arts being a part of a wide and continuous process of education. As such, it often has results that are not necessarily of an obvious political nature but have to do with people's lifestyles and changes in them. Consequently, there is frequent misunderstanding by the media and in the way they present our work.

There was also discussion around the issue of training. Now that several colleges have begun 'community arts' programmes, there will presumably be more pressure in hiring practice. The absurdity here is that of all professions, community arts relies the least heavily on official qualifications, and more on personality, adaptability, innovation. Several years ago, communications arts was seen as the field which would develop the fastest and the furthest, and due to the over-enrollment in this field, there are now many communications graduates without jobs. Is community arts the field they will enter, and does that pose a threat to present community arts workers who don't have such a background?

Recommendations from this seminar included:

1. The need for community artists to document their own work through producing clear aims and descriptions of their projects and plans.
2. The need for the community arts movement to document its history, conferences and processes to enable an ongoing 'dialogue' and greater dissemination of information.
3. More dialogue and investigation into training.



2. WOMEN IN COMMUNITY ARTS

There were two seminars on this topic: the first on Friday afternoon was restricted to women, and the second, on the following day, was open to everyone.

The decision for this arrangement was somewhat ratified, as one participant observed, by a general feeling that discussions in the rest of the conference were:

- a) becoming increasingly male-dominated and
- b) are moving in a direction which many women find alienating and which, politically, do not take into account concerns and directions which are important to us as women.

In particular, a discussion at a previous seminar, around the point that community arts was aimed toward 'the industrial worker' was felt to be a narrow definition of community arts, and without reference to women.

Although both seminars touched on the same topics - sexism within our working lives: with group and project matters, with the public, with children, - the mixed session was more disappointing as there was no leader (Brenda Lipson of Walworth and Aylesbury had chaired the first meeting) and no specified topic, or objective. Thus, separate issues were superficially explored and there was no real focus to the discussion. It was impossible, then, to determine whether the presence of men made a difference to the texture of the session. The mixed session consisted of 20 women and 7 men.

Major discussion points included:

1. Identifying sexist attitudes within our own groups and with the other agencies we work closely with; attempting to break down sex stereotyping when making policy and planning projects.
2. All-women community arts groups; participants who were from this environment preferred working with other women as it is 'supportive, and we feel it is important to show that women can do all the jobs and be self-sufficient'. It was seen that this sort of working structure is escapist in that it avoids the 'natural' tensions of the constant challenge of working with men. It was pointed out that the two women-only groups were touring groups and that it was more important for a community-based group to be equally balanced.
3. Working with children; discussion around experiences with mixed groups in which girls were less likely to initiate action than boys, and then might step in 'once the boys had made a mess of things, or else got bored and gone off'. When is it feasible to create an all-girls or all-boys group?

It was agreed that girls needed a lot of encouragement and that it was important to find what activities they responded to. We discussed ways in which it was possible to help girls assert themselves in mixed groups - not to confront them directly but to listen carefully for the quiet female voice among the more confident boys. We agreed that it was important to have an aware, feminist approach to storybuilding and drama, not to rely on the old stereotypes but to find new games and stories. Not only is this more timeconsuming but it means being tactful about blatantly sexist (or racist) suggestions from the kids themselves. This is a difficult thing to deal with especially for mobile groups who have little time to spend counter-acting these set ideas as they might not see the kids again for a long while.

Other issues on this topic included: how far are we aiming to break down traditional activities according to sex? (eg. boys making sets, girls doing costumes).

4. Working with mothers' groups and other women's groups: how and 'why' do these groups set up, to begin with? If it is ostensibly because of the children -eg. organising playschemes - does it change and grow in other directions? Is it the community artists' position to steer? What is the place of such activities as keep-fit, disco dancing, sewing and traditional domestic and crafts and social activities within women's groups? Although there were no formal seminar recommendations, several participants itemised the general intentions of the sessions:

1. It is important to fight sexism in relationships within our own groups and to be aware of the group image we present to others, eg. the community, funding bodies, etc.
2. It is important to fight sexism in the content of our work.
3. We must make more effort to identify the needs of women and girls we work with, considering the passive roles often assigned to them.

Responses to the seminars ranged from enthusiasm: 'a very positive seminar - free exchange of women's experiences - some major problems were pointed out but not enough time to follow these up. It was a start however, and we all felt a strong sense of support', to one participants' discomfort at the fact that 'two such long sessions were necessary on this subject - particularly where it reflected the attitudes of the workers themselves! I can see the validity of debate on how we treat the sexism we meet in the community...'

Perhaps the central and universal thought arising from these seminars is that there are several issues of particular concern to women community arts workers which will have to be discussed and documented further, sometimes with and sometimes without men.

As a step to realising a framework for future exchanges, several women are hoping to contact other community arts workers who are interested in the area of working with women.

The following is their statement:

The seminar was useful in that during the discussion several women were able to identify each other as having

a common concern - the relevance of community arts work with women's groups and the setting up of women's groups. Several of us then got together and discussed this issue and from these discussions we wrote down several ideas which will be used as part of an article for SPARE RIB.

We would like to explore the potential of community arts work with groups of women, to break down isolation, particularly in the case of single parent families, and find a group strength, voice and means of expression. Sharing and learning skills, taking part in group activities and initiatives, social contact and shared experience can increase confidence to an extent where as a group or as individuals, women are able to find a voice, express their concerns, take initiatives on their own behalf, and ultimately become more effective in what happens to them.

A community artist, as someone with useful skills and access to resources could be a significant worker in women's aid - refuges, advice centres, gingerbread groups etc., and a practical proposal was that we should contact other workers involved with women's issues, notably women's aid, to discuss ways of working, perhaps aiming to contribute community arts skills, resources and ideas. We feel that there could be useful points to contact to be made where similar aims exist. We'd also like to find out what's going on in other community arts groups or equivalent.. We'd like to compile some information as to what's already happening, and look at the potential significance and development of community arts work in this area.

Anyone interested should contact:

Philippa Warin
Trinity Arts Association
17 Grange Road
Small Heath
Birmingham.
Tel: 774 7510

(Thanks to Philippa Warin, Felicity Harvest (Freeform), Sally Walker (Kids Mobile Workshop), Peggy Ralph (Community Arts Workshop) and Ellen Phephean (Major Diversion), who submitted material for this section.

3. RURAL WORK

In this seminar we felt that there was a need to bring to the attention of Government, national organisations, and funding bodies, the very real problems of rural areas - problems which tend to be, at present, ignored or trivialised. The effect on rural communities of, for example, the closure of focal points, such as shops, pubs and schools, the siting of new employment opportunities and amenities in larger centres of population, the lack of satisfactory transport facilities, the imbalance created by the influx of tourists, second-home buyers and retired people, into the area and the exodus of local people in search of employment, needs to be highlighted. In cities, the index of decay and frustration manifests itself in obvious ways - smashed windows, graffiti on the walls, street violence. In rural areas the decline in rural life is slower and more insidious - as is well described in the following analysis of the state of English country music.

'Country Pubs have been the focal point of village social life with their pumpkin clubs, slate clubs, darts teams, and all other manner of activities. Saturday night might find a sing-song under-way with a melodian player or two, couples waltzing and some of the finest step-dancing to be found outside the West of Ireland. The carnage of the two World Wars, the shift of population from the country to the town, and the influence of the mass media, have all contributed to the decline of country music, but perhaps the saddest blow has been the ruthless face-lift given to the country pubs by the combine breweries. You can't step dance on a fitted carpet, and anyway the passing vodka and orange trade makes more profit than the locals could ever provide'.

Obviously to present such a case, it is necessary to know what community arts groups are doing to respond to these needs. During the course of the seminar, it became clear that we were badly in need of information about each other's work (indeed, this seemed to be a general feeling at the conference). Such knowledge would obviously give us strength when dealing with outside agencies, but also, community arts groups working in isolated areas should not have to make decisions in a vacuum, unaware of past history and experience. To take a small example, Magic Lantern (Suffolk) made a decision *'to base the work in Leiston, a small town, with one heavy industry, and a nuclear power station, and work out in the surrounding villages. Storage and office space was available; the aim was to use the existing halls for rehearsals, show and workshops. In the light of transport facilities, especially for the villages, it was decided that the large van, bought for touring, should be converted into a mobile centre. This could be used for performances, workshop and an information point.* The same essential pattern of work has been adopted by the Beaford Centre Community Project in North Devon, and by Medium Fair in South Devon. If three groups come independently to such a decision, then it must be important for new projects to be aware of this fact.

It was also apparent during the seminar, that

workers from rural areas felt (rightly or wrongly) that fellow community artists were not as well informed as they should be, and were occasionally dismissive of the 'Slow processes' which are necessary for any-one who wishes to gain trust and respect in rural areas. For example, there is the touring performer (not always, but sometimes a community artist) who, through an insensitive approach to the audience, damages a relationship that has taken years to build up. And again when national and regional policy is being formed, it is important that the loud and coherent voice of city groups, who meet more often, and have more access to information, should not drown other thoughts and opinions.

We hope that this report will be seen as opening rather than closing the debate on rural community arts. Information about how you work comments on the ideas expressed here, and suggestions for further action are welcome. Please write to:
The Beaford Centre Community Project,
1, Alexandra Road, Barnstaple,
North Devon. Tel: Barnstaple 75285. or Magic Lantern,
13(a) High Street, Leiston, Suffolk. Tel: Leiston 830930.

Beaford Centre

This paper is based on the experience of the Beaford Centre Community Project, a small community arts group (two full-time workers and unpaid friends) based in Barnstaple, in North Devon, and having worked in the area for about 5 years. We believe, having talked to other groups working in rural areas, that they have similar problems. This paper isn't offering any easy answers, but we hope it may be useful as a starting point to anyone thinking of setting up a project, or going to work in an already established group - pointing out some of the pitfalls.

GEOGRAPHY OF AREA

One of our biggest problems is the sheer size of the area we are theoretically supposed to cover. North Devon stretches from Lynton to Holsworthy (about 40 miles, as the crow flies!) and from Ilfracombe to North Tawton (about 35 miles). This national area of responsibility is widened because of the scarcity of other community arts groups - we've had requests for help from Minehead, Bude, and Lydford. The roads, are in general, not very good. This means that it is impossible to employ any-one who cannot drive, and that good reliable transport and a high budget allocation for petrol and for vehicle maintenance are necessary. Because the workers cannot be in close daily contact with all the communities in which they work, they have to work out efficient methods of getting useful background information, of making contact with the community, of ensuring follow-up work gets done. At some stage a list of priorities has to be drawn up - can we set up a kids workshop in Bude when we haven't really got the Ilfracombe sessions sorted out yet?

Leading on from the fact that our group has to work in more than one town, the communities differ greatly in size and type, and each poses a different problem. To simplify - most rural areas have one large market town (in our case, Barnstaple), which is regarded as the centre

of the area, and which depends largely on its shops, small businesses and light industries. It is the most likely place for the project to find premises, is the easiest central point for people to travel to, has the best ancillary facilities (from an off-set litho in the Community College to the only shop in the area which sells letaset!). But, the project, by settling there is in danger of :-

1. actually only working in that town, where there is easily enough work to occupy them full-time or
2. having the reputation of only working in the town. Either you don't move into the town or you consider those dangers when planning your workload.

There are then several small towns/big villages (in North Devon, Lynton, Combe Martin, Ilfracombe etc). The greatest danger here is adopting a general approach - for each town has its own character, its own social structure. To give simple examples Lynton, which is crowded with holiday makers in summers, and virtually cut off from North Devon in Winter, differs from Ilfracombe another holiday resort, but with high unemployment and a high average age of population. Torrington with thriving small industries and agricultural connections is a different kettle of fish again. Something which succeeds in one town falls flat in another.

Lastly, there are literally hundreds of small villages - again, each with different problems, different levels of community involvement. It's obviously physically impossible for us to work in all of them. How do you choose which? How can we make sure that follow-up work gets done? And can we think of other ways of helping villages?

The local population in a rural area is not stupid (far from it) but from long experience they are cautious of new developments and suspicious of overnight successes. Failures are remembered for a very long time, and there are often ritualistic ways of 'getting things done' which you ignore at your peril. These attitudes can really be of positive benefit to a project; new ventures need detailed planning, involve consulting as many people as possible, demand total integrity etc. In other words the ideal aspirations of community arts need constant practical application. We should also add that, in our experience, once trust is established, the work rate really speeds up!

We also think, having visited urban projects, that the 'mix' of people we work with is often greater. For example, we have had the local magistrate and a bunch of kids on Intermediate Treatment orders in printing posters - or a group of women making a feminist video tape might use the equipment after the Christian Youth Club, or the college punk rock band.

THE ONLY COMMUNITY ARTS GROUP FOR MILES!

In a city it's obviously feasible for a group to concentrate on one activity - eg. a printshop, a community publishing venture, because other groups are doing other things. A rural community arts group must find this more difficult. Our project covers dance, drama, puppets, kites, video, photography, silk-screen printing, playschemes, festivals other sorts of printing, but what about pottery, music, publishing etc. We're often in real danger of overstretching, of neglecting one area to concentrate on another.

Because, in a rural area, there are few community workers or community lawyers, other pressures arise. As community arts workers we would want to be involved in setting up a Womens Aid refuge, or a fight for tenants rights on a council estate; but we do tend to end up with work, which although essential to the fight, does not make use of our particular skills, and really would be better done by some-one else.

Because you are the only group in the area, you've always got to remember that what's old hat to you may be completely new to the group you're working with. For example, most kids in a city know what an inflatable is, and have played on one - but this isn't necessarily true in a small village, and will affect the way you approach your work.

There could be a temptation to lower the standards of your work because neither you nor the community have anything to compare it to. Also the problem of whether to initiate things yourself or wait for people to approach you is intensified. Just because no-one's beating a path to your door demanding to paint a mural doesn't mean they wouldn't like to - they may never have seen one, let alone seen one done by the people living in an area.

The worst problem we feel, facing rural community arts groups is that of isolation. There's always a point where you feel you're cut off from what's happening nationally, or that you need fresh inspiration (!!). It's important to develop links with supportive and sympathetic local people, and to have regular meetings with and visits to other community arts groups. There is also a need to create opportunities for members of a team to take short sabbaticals to learn new skills and visit other projects.

FINANCE

Generally speaking, money is harder to come by. Local authorities tend to be rather conservative, there is no Urban Aid, industries tend to be offshoots of parent-companies (unwilling to give grants and needing to get permission from 'above') and few big trusts. We've found possible funding sources in Education, Social Services, Parish Councils, Community Councils, and getting firms and local authority to offer facilities rather than money. It's also worth looking for obscure trusts (which no-one has ever applied to because they didn't know they existed).

We would like to finish by asking some questions that seem important to us

1. If money continues to be spent on urban development will it be at the expense of rural areas? Do we need a pressure group?
2. How can we develop regional contacts between groups.
3. How can we help new groups to survive? What should we do if anything, in areas which don't even seem to have embryo groups?
4. Can we pool ideas on making equipment more mobile, maximising contact with villages etc?

4. DRAMA



Free Form and Community Arts Workshop are both touring community arts companies who use drama as an integral part of their work, and as such share many areas of discussion and problems concerning the use of drama in a touring capacity. We isolated a number of key questions that we have found central to our discussions and used them as the basis for the workshop in Newcastle.

The questions are as follows:

1. If community arts' primary concern is with the 'process' and not product how does drama relate to this?
2. Is it valid/useful to use drama as a means to relate to other media: eg introducing a project by performance and participatory drama workshops as a stimulus for devising and making activities.
3. a) Is it useful for community arts to use drama/performance as a vehicle for campaigns?
4. b) Should the content of workshops/performances be political? Is there any place for performance pieces with repeatable texts etc. within a community arts context used in either a touring or residential capacity

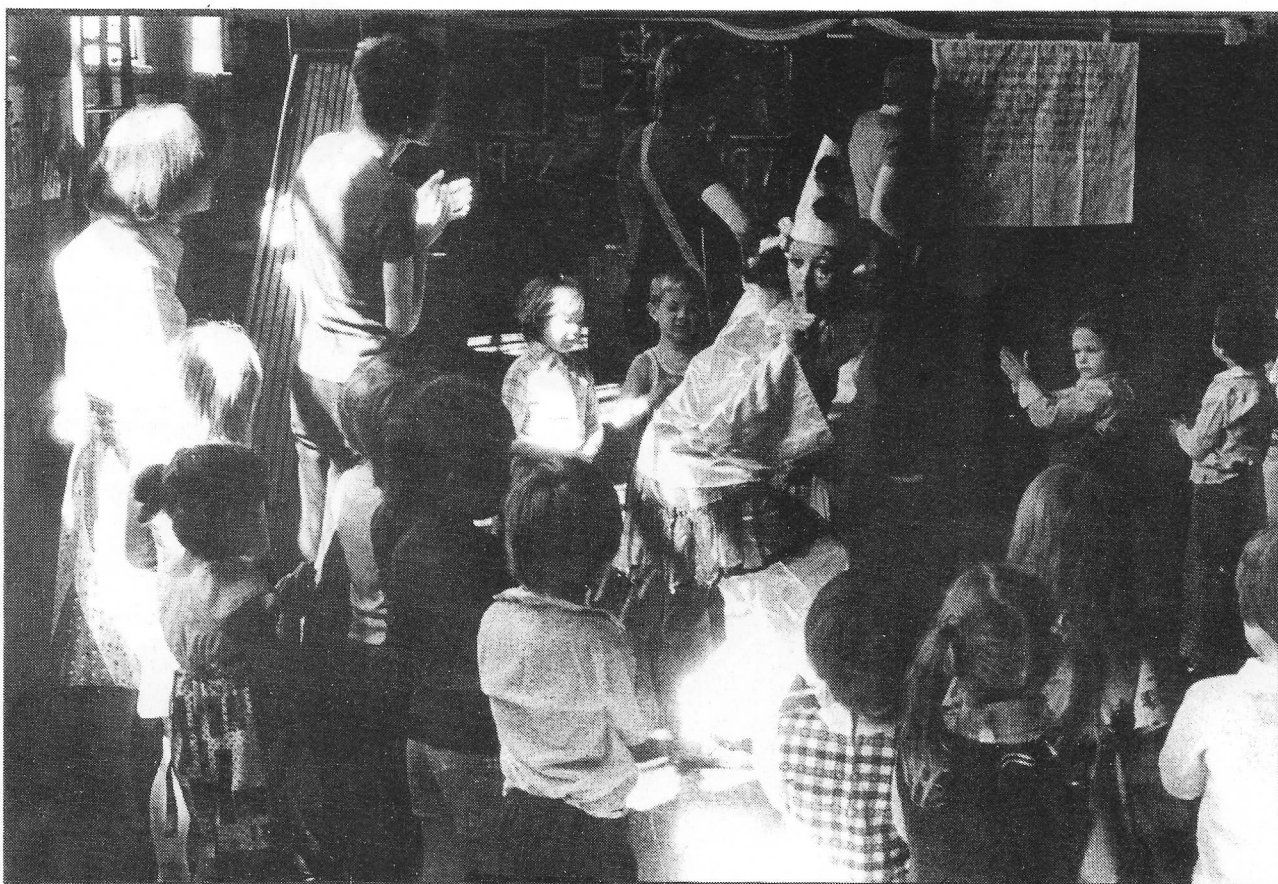
The seminar was structured so that the first two questions were introduced by a practical workshop followed by a brief discussion and the last two by open discussion. We also aimed to illustrate in a very concise way some of the methods used by our companies. From these questions, discussion centred around three major points:

POLITICAL CONTEXT VERSE VERSUS CONTENT

Several members of theatre companies, not community artists, attended the seminar and discussion on this point grew from their particular perspective. The distinction between the 'definitely political' 'context' of community arts and the often unpolitical 'content' was recognised. The need for community artists to influence a community through the methods of the work ie. context, and not solely by providing a dramatic framework for specific political issues ie. content, was supported. Several people however, did feel that in the past, their own views on issues had been erased in the need to make their work accessible and were now finding their current position a strain. The problem could be illustrated by an example which was brought up at the seminar in which someone was faced with the difficulty of eliminating sexist/racist material in a drama project and ran the risk of destroying the confidence of the dramatists and indeed the basis of her work.

PROCESS AND PRODUCT

Discussion concerned the relative importance of these two concepts - whether drama workshops had more validity than a final dramatic presentation. Opinion varied and it became apparent that those representing touring groups laid more emphasis on the product than did community based groups. 'Product' to the latter is more the long term 'process' of their work whereas for a touring company with a fixed time limit in any one venue, the necessity to achieve something definite becomes far more important, and gives meaning to the process of drama sessions.



NEED FOR FORMAL SKILLS

Was formal training an invaluable asset in terms of the acquisition of practical techniques and methods used for drama in community arts? Were such techniques and methods essential for the transference of skills through drama workshops? These questions formed the basis of talk on this point. There was some debate about whether performing ability was a gift given to a few and not acquirable, or that such techniques were able to be developed while working. More importantly it was felt that there was confusion about the standard of drama ability (in many areas - writing - performing-directing) required to do the work properly some people feeling that too much stress on accepted 'standards' hampered the overall work and others who felt the need for community arts to attract more 'skilled' people into the field.

There were a number of points that we feel need to be made on the facilities and organisation of the seminar and which may help in the planning of next year's conference:

1. Seminars that are likely to involve a practical element such as drama need the room in which to allow this.
2. The lack of other seminars at the time meant that a number of people who came were not really that interested in the topic and were there because of the lack of alternative interests.

3. The reporting back during the plenary session was an unsatisfactory way of assessing the workshops, reports such as this are more valid given the time and discussion necessary to arrive at a reasonable perspective of the points raised.

4. Perhaps an overall theme for the conference would have helped to focus discussion towards a more relevant conclusion which could have started a further debate between various areas of the work such as the different experiences of visual and environmental artists and those of performers.

5. VIDEO WITH KIDS

This session was lead by the Albany Video Project and focused on working with kids through all stages of film-making.

The main problem was in dealing with kid's disappointment at seeing their own films, feeling that the 'acting' is poor, and generally, comparing their efforts unfavourably with the mass media programmes they are familiar with.

Maggie Pinhorn showed a super-8 film of approximately 40 minutes, made by a group of male youths on a 2-term project with Tower Hamlets Arts Project. The group had developed the story of the film and had made all the decisions about the filming and editing and were currently working on the soundtrack. Maggie had been present at all stages of the film, and answered questions about the process.

Should the community artist play a more active role than being a purely technical adviser?

Discussion which began with teaching filming and

editing skills to kids lead to the idea of demystifying mass media through increased and general knowledge of the processes of these media.

Learning about editing can go a long way in helping one to question the 'truths' expounded in the media. Increased access to the media is necessary; through teaching people the specifics of film-making, it would enable them to be more critical in assessing the media presentations available to them.

Generally, the problems of film and video workers do not increase with time (except for the ever-renewing questions of money and equipment) and so what was discussed at this seminar was basically what has been being discussed for several years. A view of the seminar participants is that direction and interest in this area of community arts is needed, and might come from increased accessibility and co-ordination of finished tapes and films.



6. Community Writing

Tower Hamlets Arts Project helped to start a community writers group in the east end of London a few years ago. This group has gained strength as a 'forerunner' in the workers writers movement and has branched out into community publishing - many of the participants have had poetry or fiction printed - and now run a bookshop at 59 Watney Street. This shop carries the publications of the local people plus political and related materials; as an 'alternative' bookstore, it shows the community the possibilities of expressing their lives, and histories and experiences through writing.

Roger Mills of THAP lead this seminar, and the following is from his report:

I started the workshop by giving a quick blurb about my personal idea of community writing. For me, community writing is really 'working class' writing. Writer's groups should be specifically local to one area to build up a strong forum for written work on shared experiences. Already, however, (and it should be encouraged), writers groups from all over Britain have formed the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers. Realisation occurs that working people's lives are formed by pressures whether they are from London or Newcastle, etc., and that struggles are the same.

At this workshop, three others and myself, from the east end, read examples of our own work, and those of writers who could not come. We talked about important publications in the field of working class literature: 'Stepney Words', 'The Gates', etc, and the growth of groups publishing their own work. The Basement Writers in Stepney were leaders in this particular field.

Many people had questions about starting a writers group from scratch. I wish I had answers. It's not easy but letters to local papers and posters can help. Word of mouth is very important. Some people had the idea that community writers groups meant that 15 people sat down and wrote a poem together. I don't think that that is a very good idea.

Most people have been working in isolation for a long time before they can get the confidence to read it to someone. It's not the 'done' thing for working people to write poetry, therefore many people are very good before they get to a group. Groups are used as a forum for reading, criticism and discussion. Groups (hopefully) should develop consciousness that will be reflected in realist writing: writing which should be understandable to most people. Purposely obscure poetry in the classic mould (although it may be good) won't help groups identify much and denies everyday language a place in 'literature'.

Workshop participants talked about particular problems in setting up workshops in their area, and lack of confidence in that they may not personally be into creative writing of their own.

I put forward to the workshop the idea that the 'community arts' approach to local and working class writing could be very harmful in that it could be shunted into some sub-category, ie. 'writing that doesn't have much connection with literature, but that as long as it's by the 'locals', it's okay, anything



goes'. Quality is essential, and it has been my experience that touring a writer's group can increase peoples' capability in writing.

Writers' groups work best when spontaneous. Don't try to make people write who don't want to. People can be moved to writing sometimes when they discover books by people who may live on the same street. They realise that their history and life experiences are important and their rightful place in society. History and stories of the working class have rarely been recorded by the people it's about.

We touched briefly on the technical side of things: the problems of printing and distribution. At the moment this is very unsussed by most groups; it is too difficult and time-consuming for anyone who is not a printer. Similarly, distribution proves something of a problem as people who work during the day have little time and energy left for hustling a bagload of books around in their off hours.

7. COMMUNITY ARCHITECTURE

by Covent Gardens Architects

It seems a very obvious statement but it is important to remember that architecture and the building of buildings is expensive. Traditionally the number of people or organisations that can pay for this are limited and represent a minority group, be them private or public. Because the architect is commissioned to provide a service by this minority he tends to favour their interests, otherwise he very quickly finds himself unemployed.

The client is predominately seen as the financier, whether he be a private individual or the public authorities, rather than the users and communities physically affected by the environment created.

Within this context architects and their architecture most certainly have a tendency to be aloof, both in the process and the realisation, from the general community they affect. As a result, all too often an insensitive solution of little account to the surrounding communities' requirements or aspirations, is proposed, even if it is ultimately intended for them. Increasingly also, because of the lack of a users client, this is also bland, boring and so lacking in imagination that it becomes a stereo-type. Neither is this situation improved by most of those 'public consultation exercises' from the local council. The council has generally by this point made up its mind what it wants to do and is intending to obtain the support of the public and allow minor 'cosmetic' changes only. Try and change the fundamentals and the exercise rapidly changes from one of participation to that of confrontation.

How to change

Both architecture and art need to re-examine their roles in the context of the community they serve, and in particular to make both more relevant and sympathetic to the population at large. This implies that the imagination and professional skills of an architect be used to complement the local knowledge and commitment of the community

not as an outside consultant but as an emotively involved participant.

It is important that architects are not placed as individuals in isolation, but always with a complimentary team acting within the community that would be capable of giving personal support and professional back-up to any scheme initiated. These teams could be allied to existing community groups where there is already an established dialogue, but where additional expertise is required to extend the capabilities of those groups involved.

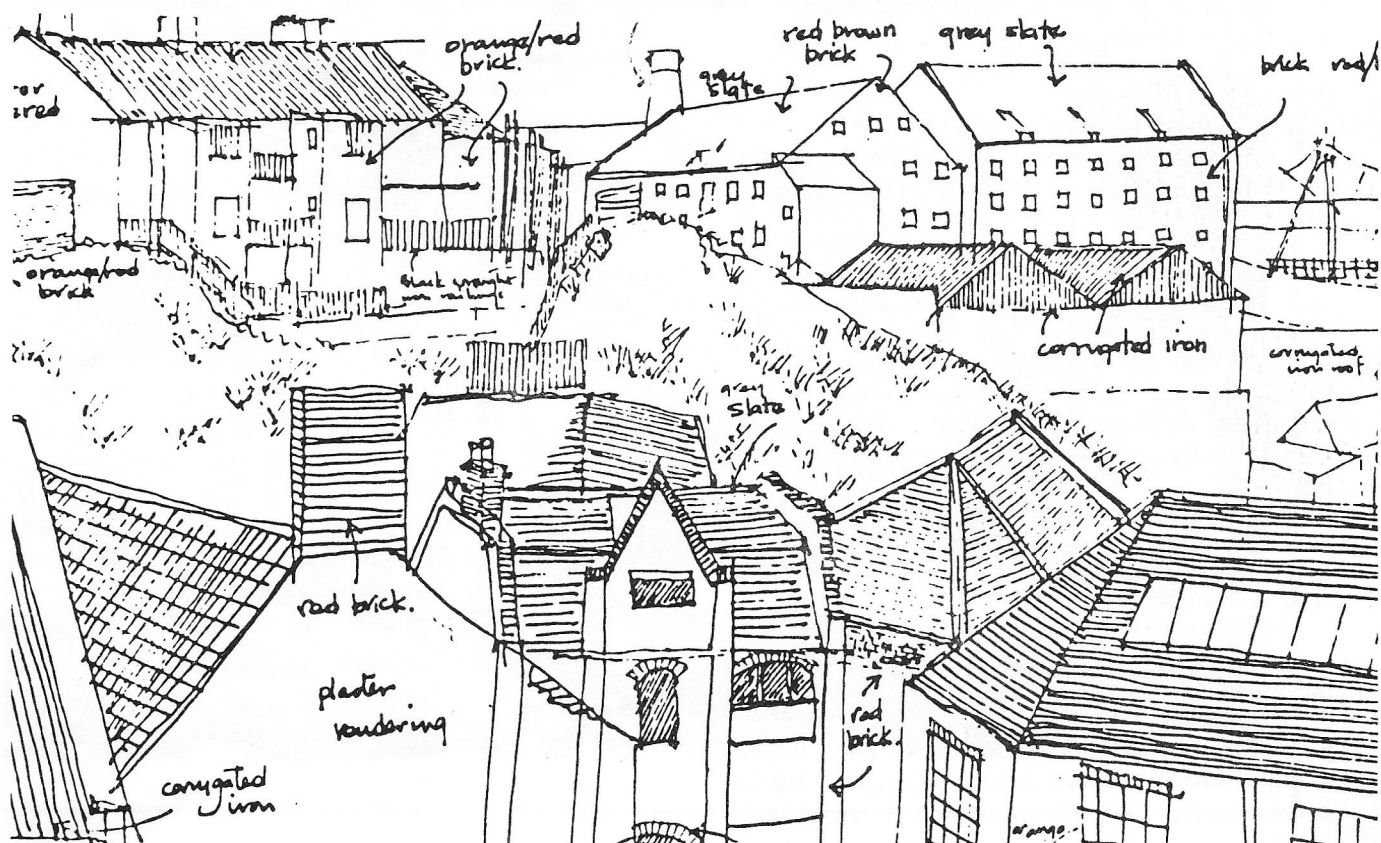
Community Arts groups could play a valuable role in this proposal as their activities have already created a context for art in the community. Similarly Community Associations and Tenant Associations have often identified their problems but are incapable of changing them through their own action.

Sympathetic architects placed within some of these groups would find themselves working in a situation that would release the potentials of the area, extend their own abilities and encourage the community to respond.

As an integrated team of artists, architects and community workers, the relationship between art and architecture would be improved, both to each other and the community. The team would not be working in isolation, from each other nor from the recipients.

By having these skills publicly available within the community, the mystique of the process is unravelled; greater numbers of people must in time be more capable of making an increasingly significant contribution. By increasing the awareness of the public to both the opportunities and the restraints, fundamental conceptual mistakes as seen in the past are less likely to occur.

Art and architecture will begin to relate more clearly to the needs of the community, by their participating in the actual process. A more exciting and imaginative environment will be created.



MAD

8. KIDS' NEWSPAPERS



This workshop dealt with the practical issues of setting up a newspaper project with kids, and maintaining it on a continuing basis. Several participants who had been through these particular struggles, mostly willingly, shared their views, and papers, with the seminar. We read Mad Dog 'The magazine that bites', POP (Pav's own Paper) and several others.... were subjected to bad jokes about ghoulish breakfasts (dreaded wheat) and impressed by Digby the Dog, poetry and photography.

Discussion on the problems and solutions of kids newspapers centred around:

- a) the role of community artist: teacher/director/co-worker? The issue of starting the paper while maintaining as low a profile as possible.
- b) adult reactions, particularly negative.
- c) kids fears.... the 'can't draw' syndrome. How to encourage non-print orientated kids to participate?
- d) short-term use. Long-term objectives
- e) dynamics of group development/control... criticism and pressure
- f) content/style/presentation/selling

An issue requiring discussion was the problem of pressuring the kids to come up with material for the paper. It seemed incorrect, and unworkable, to threaten the kids with 'no paper' if they didn't produce. Owen Kelly's (South Island Trust, Lambeth) solution was to maintain a store of material which could always be used. The importance of the paper

coming out on time regardless of the kids' occasional uneven productiveness was agreed upon.

In this area, further discussion centred on that old, agreed-upon premise of the community artist - to give good examples to kids, not to allow them to follow and be unduly influenced by dangerous and untruthful examples portrayed in mass media

Follow-up and regular meetings of the youth club or group making the paper was important to tie the paper into what else was going on, to enable kids to associate their creativity or the paper with their daily lives, perhaps leading to a more representative paper, not merely copies of superman drawings or Saturday Night Fevered cartoons.

And of course, there's that welcome moment of surprise when you can overwhelm a parent by showing just how creative their kid can be.

The idea arose of making up 'Newspaper Kits' which could be used in tenants associations, youth clubs, community homes and etc. These are now being compiled in Newcastle, and deal with all practical (machinery, printing processes, resources) and theoretical (who is the paper for, organization, how to find your group) areas of the venture. For further information contact Richard Blossie at Byker Community Arts in Newcastle.

9. Junk Instruments

A very informal session, of little talking and a lot of practical experimentation. Peter and I briefly showed the outlines and principles of the five basic instrument types we tried that day, and people set to on their own in small groups. About 30 people passed through the seminar, with a hard core of about 15 who stayed right through.

Pete and I offered practical help when people needed it, but avoided setting out any hard and fast rules or methods. Junk materials are pretty inconsistent, and trial and error seems to enable people to foresee what problems are likely to arise for children or less able people when they come to pass the information on to them.

Nonetheless, a lot of good instruments were made, several good flutes, some drums and tin fiddles, a set of chimes and a bizarre hybrid of drum and thumb piano.

Failures, where they occurred, were largely due to inconsistent materials or inappropriate tools, except with flutes, which are just awkward.

We didn't have time to get any playing done during the workshop, but a lot of instruments got broken in (and some destroyed) during the early hours of the morning at the warehouse after the evening party. We had an hour's elating rhythm and blues played on bought (some call them 'real') instruments and their junk alternatives, so it wasn't an academic exercise after all.

Keith Morris

10. 'Tree's' Collage Workshop

Here is the short report on the Newcastle ACA Conference after a week of reflection:-

We were pleased at the response of a fairly large number of persons to the sensuous invitation of the material. Here there was Colour, Texture and Storytelling to be fixed to the cloth.

Here there was Peace around the security of The Table, and conversation flourished.

The brief contribution of one of the largest community art groups was only notable for its irrelevance, but many individuals made more than a mark. We have happy memories of persons - community artists in Manchester, Walsall, Bonnie Scotland and London, and Abrar Shan, working for the Asian Youth in Southall.

We shall continue and extend the PEACE collage at other conferences of A.C.A.

We are Elaine Smalley, Community Arts Trainee, Marjorie Graham, ex. Wallsend Arts Centre Movement Tutor, and Mother Edith Carey herself.

Peter Carey is the co-ordinator of St. Peter's Rock based in Belsize, and of national projects



TWO PERSPECTIVES PLENARY SESSION REPORTS

1. *by Peter Thomson*

The main section of Sunday's plenary session discussed the tortuous question of united action over increased funding. This is not a new question, but it was, perhaps, a new attempt to roll the ball - I hope the momentum continues. The discussion swayed from frustrated anger and frustrated resignation whilst fighting continually to maintain awareness of the real situation we all face now. The meeting made itself clear on the range and degrees of diversity between the participants and this was its potential strength. With the awareness of dissimilarities came the agreement of similarities and a start was made.

We must not kid ourselves about differences within the umbrella of Community Arts. Rural workers felt a strong identity from their seminar and their situation differs so enormously from Urban workers. The situation of the advanced democracy in Merseyside creates very different problems in its highly concentrated area of jurisdiction to those affecting the Open Panel of Northern Arts, covering 5 counties. At times there emerged during the debate a sense of frustration over the seeming impossibility of achieving a working unity for all our benefits. Yet hand in hand was the very strong desire to unify that finally found its expression in the motion passed.

So the result of the discussions was a motion which is significant in its process of production rather than in its wording and implied meaning. That is, its real value lies in the movement towards national organisation, agreement and unity to demand as a right sufficient funding for community arts, not just from arts funding bodies but from Local Authorities as well. It is because action must be taken on a national scale that the motion passed was absolutely correct; but it is not, in isolation enough. It is not for individual groups, regions, ACA or anyone to take an isolated stand; what is needed is unity between every grouping concerned - Assemblies and panels of devolved regions (perhaps even their officers), ACA both regionally and nationally, groups and individuals, not otherwise represented all lining up behind the community arts committee of ACGB, and calling on them to fight for adequate funds. By proving to them that there is widespread back-up and support right 'down the line' we display a powerful weapon. I do not believe this unity exists and to attempt to force it now would cause irreparable damage. But by making the call on the committee not to distribute inadequate funds we are advocating a principled correct stand and at the same time serving notice that we mean business.

Two points arise:

1. By serving notice that we mean business we indicate to the committee that though they may not feel they have the necessary 'clout' to carry non-distribution through now: we are making absolutely sure they have the backing and support to carry it through in the future.
2. We must be aware that despite our brave talk the ACGB has the power to divide and disrupt us at the moment. To push too far too soon is an 'ultra-leftist' recipe for disaster. Every year the cry goes up 'We should have done this months ago' and 'It's really too late now'; and they're quite right, campaigns must be built on a longer term basis than before and now is the time to start building for 1980 the solid foundations we will need to engage in the fight.

It should be absolutely clear that nothing in these objectives should prevent us fighting for every last penny we can screw of the ACGB, RAA's and local Authorities this year. But of necessity the alliances we form and the unity we achieve will be of a temporary nature. The devolved RAA officers pact firstly sets the devolved regions up quite unfairly against non-devolved ones and anyway is so rife with difficulties that it will soon disintegrate under the momentum of its own contradictions. ACA can only really be said to have achieved partial unity. The ACGB community arts panel cannot even choose its own chair. These are facts rather than opinions and it would be foolish to invest too much hope in this year's action. I am still suggesting that we should fight tooth and nail to maintain and distribute every single advance we can, using whatever methods we feel are likely to succeed in the various different circumstances we find ourselves in.

Only by approaching this question from the attitude of building constructive unity can we hope to achieve our aim of sufficient funding as a right.

Not just our right, but the right of the people we work with and for. At the meeting of the Merseyside Assembly over 2 hours was devoted to discussing the motion brought from the conference. The Merseyside assembly is very suspicious of ACA, having developed very nicely without it.

It was clear that their view of the national situation was not in agreement of ACA and that there was no way their attitudes would shift in order to endorse the conference action. Nevertheless over 2 hours was spent discussing the question. ACA was seen - I believe for the first time - as an organisation which could be useful; and most important, it was agreed by the assembly that united national action would be for the benefit of all and they were behind that principle. This is an indication of the readiness of the community arts movement to identify common interests and unite to achieve them. If it is taken up and debated throughout the country it could change our lives.

2. *by Stan Gamester*

The Sunday plenary session was to be The Big Debate. It was planned that conference business would be summarised, and in the wake of the good feeling generated by the workshops and seminars, an informal discussion about funding would take place, with people at least a little in touch with each others' opinions, before it began.

Work began early in the morning to make the top floor ready. Lights were improvised and chairs quickly arranged. Rocket-like space heaters made the room warm in minutes. 100 people assembled, everything was ready. The half-gutted interior provided a strange background; was this a guerilla meeting place or just an image of poverty? There we were, hidden away in the dim Warehouse, pigeons cooing outside.

The meeting began with a light hearted attempt to begin a discussion about the conference itself. of the seminars had pinned a blank sheet of paper to a wall with the heading 'Towards a Manifesto for Community Arts'. Some of the comments written on this sheet were read out by the conference co-ordinator Paul Fahey. Most of it read like graffiti and it was difficult to get any response to it. Seeing this problem Graham Woodruff of Telford Community Arts proposed that the Manifesto idea should be taken up by W.M.A. with statements carefully compiled and composed over a longer period of time. This was agreed.

People were waiting for something else to happen. Owen Kelly of Walworth and Aylesbury Community Arts had run a seminar on the Inner City Partnership Scheme.

He wanted the meeting to affirm that research and involvement by community artists was going to take place. He felt that a committee of representatives from Inner City projects throughout England should monitor the scheme. It would also make recommendations to the Home Office when Urban Aid (to which the Inner City Scheme is annexed) is restructured in 10 years time.

The meeting delegated Owen to develop his investigations and to organise the committee of Inner City representatives.

Still people were waiting for something else to happen. By now even the back of the room was filled with people standing, waiting. The discussion about seminars and workshops had obviously failed. If every seminar group had been asked to prepare a motion about their debates, Sunday's talk would have begun with vigour. As it was, every attempt to start a discussion about conference seminars was just a pale reflection of the thing itself.

After one hour, a quick break: time to restructure the meeting and reheat the room with those roaring space heaters.

It was apparent that a great deal of importance had been attached to this Sunday meeting. People had turned up especially for this day: RAA officers from the devolved regions in particular. The issue had been raised by a paper and questionnaire prepared by ACA London

In it, the ACA National opinion towards the state of community arts funding in the U.K. was stated: that for too long the ACGB had underfunded community arts. For five years ACA had been

recommending a £2,000,000 injection to get community arts started and still only one and a quarter million pounds in the present financial year had been allocated. Was now the time to take action, and if so what strategy should be used?

The debate began with wage levels. Peter Thomson, of ACA North, chaired the meeting. The attitudes towards an ACA recommended minimum of £80 per week for the financial year 1979/80 were quickly established. The bigger projects and most of those from devolved regions were adamant about the £80 recommendation. Rod Books of London based Free Form expressed the reasoning behind his support for this figure. First of all, he wished to be a community artist for the rest of his working life. He might be able to raise children on that wage, but wanted to feel that on retirement he would have a pension to rely on and not have to resort to selling brown rice when the going got tough. Secondly he belonged to a group that because of its size (20 plus members) and nationwide operation had developed long term programming.

How could such programming be entered into when grants were so poor and (annually) unpredictable? How could they be sure that experienced workers would stay to realise their programmes when wages were so low?

This line of argument remained a strong feature of the debate, but those who argued against an £80 basic wage had justifiable concerns. For instance, some groups felt that their management structure would not be able to support a plea for £80 basic wage. Some groups operated under contracts which could not be re-defined by outside recommendations. Others were funded by various sources and would find great difficulty in negotiating between these sources for an increase in wage.

Others simply felt that the attitude of their RAA was so negative towards community arts that to ask for a pay increase would be a waste of time, and in one case would create excuses for an RAA to withdraw funding altogether.

It did not seem possible to conclude this discussion with much sense of unity. Some of the RAA officers contributed information about the funding scene, but unfortunately their comments tended to encourage dissention rather than unity.

The meeting turned to the question that everyone seemed to want an answer to: regardless of wages policy, would we, the national open conference, representing most of the community arts projects throughout England, Ulster and Scotland, accept what was given by the Arts Councils in the next financial year? If not what were we going to do about it?

Would we operate on our assessed needs level of funding until we ran out of money?

Would we determine a percentage (say 90%) at which all groups would refuse to administer funds unless this percentage was reached?

Should English projects strike if the money from ACGB was inadequate?

Should we have a strike fund?

All of these suggestions depended on total unity between projects for any of them to succeed.

Given the enormous differences in management structure and regional differences of funding policy, unity could not be achieved. We would have put the whole community arts movement in danger to adopt any of those suggestions. Perhaps unionisation could implement a unilateral policy amongst community arts workers against underfunding. A collection of cultural democrats, cultural bureaucrats, amateurs, community workers and interested parties could not. The windows rattled and the pigeons kept on cooing.

A motion from Cathy Mackerras of Telford Community Arts provided the best strategy. The proposal recommended that the RAA's and Arts Council Community Arts Committees should themselves refuse to administer funds in 1979/80 if inadequate:

'The A.C.A. National Open Conference of January 21st 1979 demands that the Community Arts Committee of ACGB refuses to administer the allocated money for community arts if it is below the amount needed for 1979/80, as assessed by the Committee'.

A very similar motion was submitted by Maggie Pinhorn of ACA National. The two motions were discussed, revised and re-submitted by Kathy as above. The motion was passed, 83 for, 1 against with 7 abstentions.

In the couple of weeks that have elapsed since the conference, ACA alone has taken up the initiative to utilise this resolution. ACA is staging a series of meetings at National level to develop a strong negotiating position, allied hopefully with the Regional Arts Officers of the devolved regions. Northern Arts at least have indicated in favour of a strategy to secure adequate funding for the financial year 1979/80.

State Patronage is the name of the game. Unlike the shop floor, it's not clear who the boss is. With State Patronage the workers are sometimes the bosses: They sit in the boardroom and become the bureaucrats that decide the worker's (hence their own) fate.

In this socialist-bureaucratic-meritocracy, it is very easy to lose the way. If we, the workers, are to become involved in the decision-making process of arts funding, then we are bound to feel very responsible for the decisions we make, and the (our) jobs that we cut. If State Patrons make use of our expertise on their panels, (note: on a voluntary basis!) then it is quite right that we should expect them to listen very hard to our recommendations. I hope they listen in 1979.

CONSERVATIVE CLUB (Non-Political)



DEVOLUTION OF FUNDING

When the A.C.G.B. set up the community arts committee (C.A.C.) all community arts clients were assessed and awarded from the Arts Council in London.

After a few years operation it was decided that some of the Regional Arts Associations (R.A.A.'s) should be given a sum of money from the ACGB CAC direct (a block allocation) for them to assess and award their own clients. The giving of block allocations to RAA's is the policy of devolution.

At the time of writing four RAA's receive devolved money: Merseyside Arts Association, West Midlands Arts, North West Arts and Northern Arts.

The advantages of devolution include:-

1. The involvement of local politicians and authorities in community arts.
2. The attraction of additional funding to community arts from local funding authorities (incl. the RAA's themselves).
3. An increase in the overall development of community arts in devolved areas, including the respective ACA branches.

To ensure that the right conditions for proper assessment and funding are maintained in devolved areas, the following guidelines have been specified by ACGB:-

Devolution in its final stages should be a two year process

YEAR ONE

Appointment of Community Arts Officer

- Establishment of specialist committee with separate budget for community arts
- Research into areas of need and development of community arts within the region
- Establishment of agreed assessment procedures and criteria
- Full responsibility given to relevant RAA Committee for a small development fund.
- Relevant RAA Committee makes detailed assessment and funding recommendations for old clients.

These guidelines laid down by the committee, were made in close consultation with ACA National. In November 1978, a devolution policy was passed by ACA which tightened up the criteria laid down by ACGB.

One of the biggest problems with devolution is that clients who belong to undeveloped areas become increasingly in danger of receiving the 'remains' of the cake, since devolved areas receive a considerable priority when block allocations are made. London clients are very conscious of this. They are the largest of the undeveloped areas, as well as being probably the longest established areas of community arts activities.

At a recent meeting between the community arts committee and ACA, this imbalance was pointed out. The committee recognised this and decided to delay block allocations until assessment of non-devolved clients had been carried out.

Devolution is applauded in principle as a policy which will ensure the decentralisation of community arts: a bureaucratic equivalent to the demystifying process of community arts itself. It is important that this policy continues to be implemented with the greatest possible consideration given by devolved RAA's to all clients. It seems particularly important that devolved RAA officers and ACA National work in close co-operation to achieve the highest possible ACGB allocation before block allocations are made.

Stan Gamester.

SCOTLAND

RESOURCE SERVICE

In Scotland there are no Regional Arts Associations and funding meets with the Scottish Arts Council, National and Local Government Trusts and fund raising. The Association of Community Artists has no Scottish base and there is no central focus. Two years ago David Harding (Glenrothes Town Artist) and Neil Cameron (CFS Arts Director) got together to discuss what could be done about this. Gradually the group expanded and the idea of a service agency (a sort of Automobile Association for Community Arts!) was born. The idea of an association was rejected by this group because it felt to form an association was to exclude 'non members' especially the communities themselves. The group did not want to set themselves up as a 'representative' body either so they plumped for the idea of a couple of people who would help community and Public Arts but not in any way stand for them.

It would:

1. Help with advice and information.
2. Act as a 'clearing house' for enquiries.
3. Issue newsheets
4. Advise on finance.
5. Documentation.

It was also felt that the workers should be involved with the Arts in a practical way and should not be pressed into a purely administrative post.

The present situation is that the SAC have been approached and their decision will be made at the end of February.

CRAIGMILLAR

Altho' Craigmillar Festival Society organised a large local festival, it was not until the EEC funded them with a large grant in 1975, that they were able to extend their arts activities into a year round programme. Local people expanded the monthly Arts Workshop Meeting and determined priorities for the community as a whole. An Arts Director was appointed by the community and an Arts Budget allocated.

The first priority was to find a home and so a disused church was converted into an Arts Centre by a Jobs Creation Team of local people and is now running as an Arts Resource Centre for the area. The team that had converted the church then went out into the community and set up an environmental improvements team, which has now converted a large public area into a children's playground and 18 murals have now been completed. Children's Play being a top priority of the Festival Society, work began in an enormous giant playsculpture (half the size of a football field/3,000 tons of material) which was designed by the Scottish Sculptor Jimmy Boyle and was named *Gulliver*. The sculpture was designed as a man lying on his back and the children playing on it, Lilliputians. It was opened, this summer, by Billy Connolly.

Two full-time local photographers now work photographing projects and a video programme has been developed by local people

Last year a complete Print Shop was equipped and set up to service the community and is part of a two-part training workshop, now financed under Manpower Services Commission along with an arts and crafts unit.

Theatre, which has always been strong in Craigmillar, has gone from strength to strength and

produced eight shows last year including one which went to Holland with a cast of 45 local people.

The Festival Society has now applied for a permanent theatre group, a video team, permanent funding for its community musician and an extension to the Arts Resource Centre.

The Festival, which, has been the centre of the community's activities, has also expanded over the past few years and is now running for two weeks with well over 40 events.

SCOTTISH SEMINAR

Unfortunately, few Scottish Groups were invited to the Conference. It was only several days beforehand that we knew we had to prepare a 'Scottish Afternoon'. We did, however, manage to get together some slides representing Scottish community arts but it was by no means comprehensive and tended only to show the visual arts development in Scotland.

After the presentation, Craigmillar Festival Society (Craigmillar is a poor housing estate in Edinburgh which has built up one of the largest self-help and community arts programmes in Britain) showed a film, which had been made many years ago by the BBC about Craigmillar's first big festival. Although people commented that the film was very patronising, at the time it proved a major breakthrough in revising the bad image of Craigmillar and attracting public attention to the positive aspects of the community.

There were many questions asked not only about Craigmillar's programme, but the role of artists in such a programme. Easterhouse Festival was also represented. Easterhouse being a very poor Glasgow housing estate of 60,000 inhabitants, which by using the Craigmillar model is now in the process of developing its own self-help and community arts programme.

The last hour was run by The Workshop (Edinburgh) who after warming up a cold audience with some farces, showed a film made by independent community arts film-makers (Edinburgh Film Trust) about the Suitcase Circus project which travels throughout Britain organising community circuses for children.

There was the short talk given by the Workshop, which described their activities in the Lothians, which includes running a large community arts centre and theatre community arts projects of all sorts for children and training programmes for adults, running a multi-arts Theatre group and intensive work with handicapped children.

The afternoon was finished off by a brief description of a community arts project which has started on the Isle of Arran and which is involving local children and adults in murals, theatre, printing etc.

GROUPS ATTENDING

Craigmillar Festival Society,
63, Niddrie Mains Terrace,
Edinburgh.
Tel. No. 661-5877

The Workshop,
34, Hamilton Place,
Edinburgh,
Tel. No. 225-7942

Steve Lacey,
Lecturer in Community Drama,
Queen Margaret College,
Edinburgh.
Tel. 552-2263

Easterhouse Festival,
Room 104, Woodside Secondary School,
Glasgow.
Tel.No. 041-771/0693

Arran Community Arts Project,
Drumla Far,
Kildonan,
Isle of Arran,
Tel. No. 077082-638

Edinburgh Film Trust,
34, Hamilton Place,
Edinburgh.
Tel. No. 225-7942

Suitcase Circus,
3, Long Green,
Dalmeny Park,
Edinburgh.
Tel. No. 031-331-2552

Scottish Community Arts Resource Service,
Flat 2/2,
217, St. Andrews Road,
Pollockshields,
Glasgow.
Tel. No. 041-429-4026



MERSEYSIDE: LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

by Chris Elphick.

A locally accountable structure is primarily concerned with enabling more people to be involved in and have control over ways in which resources (ie. funds, materials, skills etc) are used and developed in a given area. The people concerned are those using or being affected by the use of the resources.

Such a structure would generally have no control over the initial resources allocated to it by local, regional or national governments although as Jim Simpson said in 'Towards Cultural Democracy',

'A suitable climate for cultural democracy can only be produced if members of governments make special effort to solicit and welcome the critical participation of the populace in plans and decisions, and to take it seriously', He went on to say that *'The de-centralisation of the power of decision among cultural agencies, even into neighbourhood level, will assist this process.'*

In Merseyside financial resources have been made available by the ACGB., and the Regional Arts Association for the development of community arts in the region. These resources, although still the ultimate responsibility of the regional arts association executive committee, are administered by a locally accountable structure - the Merseyside Community Arts Assembly. This assembly has come about at the wish of those involved locally in community art but with the agreement and support of those who traditionally control resources i.e. Arts Associations, Local Government, etc.

The assembly is open to all people in the region with an interest in community arts - anyone may attend and participate fully with the only exception being grant aid recommendations - these are elected democratically by the much wider assembly and all its decisions and discussions are held in public.

The assembly works together not only to distribute funds but to mutually support each other, to search out other resources, to exchange ideas and to share equipment and skills. It is a forum for discussion of National and Regional developments and policies; it enables all types of people to come together in a convivial atmosphere to talk about mutual problems, to help solve each others problems and to talk about future plans. Obviously the assembly has had to produce its own criteria relating to such matters as who can vote, how many votes can one organisation have, what constitutes community art activity as opposed to any other creative activity, how to distribute limited resources, etc. But whatever the issue is, or whatever decision has to be made, there is total openness in all discussion and debates - this means more information is available to more people, a greater variety of ideas and proposed solutions are presented, the experiences of many people can be called upon, etc, with the result that in such an honest, easy understood, informed structure, final decisions, although obviously not always agreed

by everyone present, reflect the depth and quality of discussion that had previously taken place.

The Merseyside Community Arts Assembly has opened up the development of cultural activities in the region to many more people; it has proved to the authorities that local community can control resources in a responsible way; it has demonstrated the value of people actively working together for a common goal and, above all, it has shown that the organisation of a locally accountable structure is far more effective, for all concerned (consumers, resource providers, politicians, etc) than any that went before it. There is a long way to go; many people are still suspicious of the implications of such a structure; many people are blind to its benefits; many are openly hostile to sharing power at local neighbourhood level; many would like to see a watered down version of the assembly, because they cannot cope with its open, frank approach; some believe it should deal with everything except money. These criticisms and hostilities have to be faced and dealt with - *'Cultural policies will be trivial and marginal unless they help the working class to regain control of their own culture - and help them to develop a critical spirit, and create for themselves significant styles of life.'*

NOTTINGHAM CRAFTS CENTRE

Nottingham, the newest member of A.C.A., joined a week before this conference. The unique aspect of their community arts set-up is its arts and crafts centre which offers studio space at low rents to craftspeople in exchange for free lessons for the local community.

The following is from an article written by Glen Broughton and is reprinted from *Artifact*, a publication of East Midlands Arts Association.

In many towns and cities in Britain there is a need for a centre which will encourage, develop and cater for people's creative talents. In most towns and cities such a centre does not exist.

This situation has been rectified in Nottingham with the opening of a Community Arts and Crafts Centre.

This is a new concept for the Nottingham area and it has gained the backing of the City Council in the form of leasing a building to the trust for this purpose. Considerable enthusiasm has also been generated in people who see the centre as a way of developing their own skills and as a valuable resource to the community in providing training for people of all ages and space for crafts-people to work and teach in.

The Centre, which has charitable status, has three main functions:

1. to allow a number of craftspeople to earn a livelihood for themselves in order to develop their abilities, to be available to teach and to produce work for exhibitions.
2. to provide low cost tuition in a wide range of skills and techniques for people of all ages and to make resources available to those who are able to do crafts without tuition.
3. to provide a nucleus from which other related activities can develop eg. links with schools, community groups, industry etc.

Workshop space is available for crafts-people who are trying to earn a living from their craftwork.

Workshop rent is low to compensate for the free tuition all crafts-people are required to give. This, we feel is important to link the individual crafts-workers with the community aspect of the Centre. No workshops are 'lock-up' workshops solely for use by one person. All personal tools, equipment and materials can be secured but workshops themselves become community resources when personal work is not in progress.

In addition to the tuition provided by resident crafts-workers, we have over a dozen people who have arranged to take classes at the centre, again without fee. This generosity and concerned involvement by skilled people means that we are able to offer tuition, courses, and facilities at costs which are not prohibitive to any income groups. This emphasis on the sharing of skills, knowledge and resource makes the Centre a unique project.

Links with schools, other community groups, industry, craft centres and various other bodies have already been started and these will be extended wherever possible. The Centre is located in an area which is very much in the melting pot as far as provision of social and community facilities are concerned. Co-operation with other groups will become an integral part of the working of the Centre as it develops according to the emergent needs of the users.

The Centre is now ready for use and classes are starting in January in pottery, printing, weaving, painting, drawing, macrame, woodwork, wood turning, drama, Indian dance, batik, jewellery making, bobbin lace, basketry and calligraphy.

To date the Centre still has no assured source of finance and so the future is uncertain. However, the first year of operation of this innovative centre will be an exciting one. It will become an invaluable resource for many and varied people given the life-blood of sufficient finance to be able to grow healthily towards a very promising future.



FUNDING PERSPECTIVE

by Corby Community Arts

Q: What (plus £90,000) equals the Arts Council's community arts budget?

A: A Braque painting measuring 31X 23 inches!

Many Community Artists and certainly last year's ACGB Community Arts Committee know to their cost how seriously underfunded their work is by the Arts Council.

In particular, the Committee's own Finance Working Party found itself more than £300,000 short of its recommended figure at the beginning of the 1978/79 financial year: despite the Arts Council's apparently enthusiastic endorsement of Community Arts to be funded with public cash the sum available for that work in the current year is £715,000 - a derisory sum in view of the demonstrably vast cultural needs of the working people of this country.

Derisory also in relation to some of the arts expenditure in other areas of work. And when £715,000 is compared to figures quoted in the press cuttings below then the significance is ominous. Surprise, surprise then to read that the Government is able to find an extra £318,000 to help the Tate to buy a Braque for a mere £625,000 and which was sold four years ago for £240,000! The Braque measures some 31 x 23 inches.

Surprise and yet more surprise to read of Sir Peter Hall's (as it is affectionately now known National Theatre running a bill of £1,000,000 (yes, folks, one million pounds) for maintenance. And this on a new building. Geddit? And so, like the Tate, the National Theatre is making a special application to the Government - just as the Community Arts Committee did for its £300,000 shortfall. Did we get it? Did we hell!

Add to this the shenanigans of the Pension Funds which can spend £550,000 on the bases of candlesticks and you begin to get the drift. What the

State Arts Establishment is saying here, in paraphrase of Joe Stalin's famous remark, is 'When we hear the word Culture we reach for someone else's purse'. And the purse is that of the working people who are made to cough up at every turn.

Ah! but what about Devolution? we can just hear you saying. What indeed? What about that panacea for all of the problems of the Community Arts movement? To find the answer one must, as usual, turn to that fountain-head of arts-wisdom, the ACGB's Annual Report. And in it the Secretary-General tells all, well, nearly all.

'They (Community Arts) are essentially of local relevance' says Roy Shaw. 'Councillors should find it less difficult to get popular support for expenditure on Community Arts than for some other art forms'. As usual the Secretary General gets it wrong again - on both counts. For, while the Arts Council would like to imagine that Community Arts are merely a local significance they are in fact a symptom of the fact that, at last, many people are waking up to see that our Society breeds a cultural imbalance of massive proportions. Whilst the cultural establishment has no shame in converting huge sums of public money to the ends of the controlling class in this Society the majority - the working class - are left to the tender mercies of the manipulative Media of the Corporate State, TV, the 'free' Press, pop 'culture' and the vicious inanities of the advertising industry selling culture like deodorants, washing machines and beans.

Well, if you want to be relegated by the ACGB to being of local relevance, depend on the patronage of local Councillors and mess around with face painting, inflatables and clowning, that's your affair. But don't mistake the advent of Phase 3 of community arts development! Fun Art (Phase 1) and the Liberal Party's Community but (Phase 2) are over. Though, if that's what you want - stick with the Arts Council's devolution! It'll keep you right where you are. On the bottom!

Unit chief enters pension funds' art controversies

By Michael Baws.
TOP UNIT trust man, Mr Edgar Palamontain yesterday stepped into the controversy over pension funds buying works of art.
"Traditionally, at purely pension funds, it is hardly surprising to find that the Chairman, to the City's Pension Committee, come three months after questions were raised about how £15 million bronze of the sea-god Poseidon, believed to belong to the British Rail Pension Fund, came into this country.
British Rail Pension Fund is understood to have bought some £25 millions worth of art treasures in recent years but has stated that its policy is not to sell such treasures before 20 years at the ear-

ments for allowing pension funds to develop traditional investments, but have been unable to obtain a special return in relation to the Tate.
"One of the problems with these investments is that they are hardly ever sold, and some pension funds are from gobbling up ordinary shares in the ordinary share in should have been extended their scope to include assets of a less traditional type. It is not surprising, but it remains deplorable," he said.
The British Rail Fund is said to have bought around 1,400 works of art, including works by such artists as Titian, Cezanne and Picasso. In June it paid £550,000 in the Von Hirsch sale for the base of a 12th-century candlestick.

National Theatre appeals for special maintenance grant

By Donald Wintersgill, Art Sales Correspondent
SPECIAL government help has been given to the Tate Gallery to buy a painting by Georges Braque, entitled 'Clarinet and Bottle of Rum on a Mantelpiece'.
The price was £625,000. The Painting, 31 inches by

Tight money

of the National Theatre, a body responsible for its decision, aimed - to the Chancellor, a special grant to building commission by Waterloo, distinct from the inside of the National Theatre. The National Theatre, certainly been a special letter to Denis, copies to Shirin and Lord. The (club) will point out that about £1,000,000 of the National's £2,770,593 grant in 1977-78 went on upkeep of the buildings. There is an argument, winning some sup-

Animation Information Service

This free enquiry and document loan service provides information on community arts projects, environmental projects, carnivals, community broadcasting, video, information centres, photography, writing workshops, community publishing, community newspapers, training, government policy and programmes, fundraising and administrative practice. The data bank is constantly being upgraded and material from groups is always welcome.

The service acts as an information resource for those who wish to initiate their own projects and for those who would like to learn about the experience of others. A bulletin and bibliography on community arts are now being planned.

The Information Service is at present housed by the National Youth Bureau, but preparations are being made to move very shortly to the same premises as the Community Education Training Unit in Oldham, where it will be a separate, autonomous agency.

Further information from:-

Anne Davies,
Animation Information Service,
National Youth Bureau,
1723, Albion Street,
Leicester. LE1 6GD.

For the past two years I have been involved part-time in setting up a fairly basic national community arts information service. During this time, through dialogue and experience, I have become concerned about the difficulties of information exchange and of access to information.

Furthermore, there appear to be various debates concerning the community arts field going on round the country which never reach the ears of a good many workers.

At the same time, I am also aware that numerous community groups are generating material without it becoming widely known to others. Community resource centres, neighborhood information centres, community newspapers are establishing themselves all over the country and are providing valuable help and information to individuals and community groups. Additionally, national agencies concerned with the community development field are providing a wide range of information services.

Yet large numbers of people aren't obtaining the information they require at the right time. How can the communication gap be closed? How can people learn about existing access to information? And how can other information resources be released?

Over the past year I have been co-operating with a number of agencies in the community development field in an attempt to improve information exchange. A conference on people's information will be held in late October this year, but detailed planning of the conference has not yet begun. We would very much welcome community arts workers to contribute to the debate.

Anne Davies.



NEWCASTLE KIDS MOBILE WORKSHOP

JUDY SEYMOUR who contributed this article for *Play Times* is a member of Kids Mobile Workshop. It is her view of how a very relevant project developed.

It's just over a year since we first started talking about a mobile workshop project. What amazes me now is that somehow we managed to take ourselves seriously enough to persevere.

There are three of us working on the project at the moment, and what follows is one person's feelings about it. However, as we all spend a lot of time in each other's company, I think we also share a similar view of things. First this is not a job. It's quite definitely a way of life. The three of us socialise and work together, a positive way of looking at things would be to say that work and play are the same thing.

When Newcastle Play Council offered me a job under the Job Creation Programme as a playleader with a voluntary play committee I was happy to accept.

I didn't take long, however, to form a picture of a day in the life of a voluntarily-run youth club. A diet of table tennis, darts, and discos, inadequate premises, insufficient support from local residents, adults harassed by other adults, adults harassed by kids, kids harassed by adults, police, other kids - things moved seemingly from one crisis to another in varying degrees of seriousness. So much for being usefully artistic! My major concern was, would the hut still be standing when I arrived. Every day it seemed less likely.

Another question we all asked ourselves was, would the Play Council itself survive another crisis. Here we were working for a voluntary organisation which aimed to help smaller voluntary organisations. Our project would finish in seven months, due to lack of alternative funding. With only seven full-time adventure playgrounds in Newcastle, voluntary initiative is vital. It must not only be sustained - it must also grow. Any project which aims to support these initiatives must, unlike our playworker project, concentrate on self help. The paid workers must work to increase volunteers' confidence and skill and ultimately to make themselves dispensable. Down with the mystification of skills and the Expert Elite!

Everywhere we go we find women who have raised families, survived catastrophes, struggled and persevered all their lives. They get the play committees together, harass councillors, open the youth clubs - and then, cook the chips, sweep up the crisp packets, empty the bins, mop up the paint, wash graffiti off the walls, and organise the men to act as heavies. Sometimes they get grants to employ playleaders because you need to have someone qualified to do the real work - you have to be arty, don't you, for all that?

We reckon everyone has the right to explore their own creativity at their own level, and, since in our society this cannot be for its own sake it seems ideal that one of the opportunities for

creating this sort of situation, should revolve around children. The act of doing something together - building, cooking, sewing, painting, clowning, overcoming alienation, rejecting habitual role playing and discovering discovery.

Although we started off to work with children we now see ourselves working more with adults. We happen to be an all-women team, and as such are very conscious of the role women have always played in the past - domestic and largely unrewarding. Kids often ask us where the man is - 'well, you must have a man to drive the van - do the real work etc'. Kids unconsciously devalue themselves: 'Do you get paid to do this then?' Why not, people get paid to build motorways don't they?

Our project is responsible to a steering group which consists of the chairman and one other member of the executive committee of the Play Council, and two representatives from local play committees who are, therefore also members of the Play Council. The steering group is the main decision-making body of the workshop, and reports back to the Play Council Executive Committee on our progress.

Money! Our money comes from many different sources - local authority, charities, arts associations. We tried every likely avenue, with varying degrees of success. We are lucky in that we are about the first project of this type in the North-east. Where we were successful with charities, we received money in a spirit of complete trust - no complicated system of accountability, and very sincere people administering the funds.

Money from the local authorities is a more tricky one to handle and, of course, more money is at stake. Play is politics, and our links with the Play Council have affected our applications to local authority.

The application itself also requires careful individual thought - a charities application turned about, will not do. Every single penny must be accounted for in advance and there is no margin for error.

There are many small and trying ways in which this system works against community arts, which leave us to feel our next appointment should be as an accountant rather than as another community artist. Criteria which often seem to rest on statistics, and a basic misconception about priorities. Like - what proportion of your money will you spend here? (Councillor from one local area); how many kids will you get round? - a very short term way of thinking. Questions which leave you reeling. Money can come with so many strings attached, which inevitably affected the way we worked and we often wondered if it was really worth it.

We continue to spend a regrettable amount of time raising money, justifying the way we spend it, and trying to raise more. We spent several months adopting wrong approaches, and we feel we gained invaluable experience in dealing with these people, which we hope to pass on.

Time is an even bigger problem than money - it's a very rare commodity! Because of our long-term objectives, we seem to move very slowly. Maybe, we spend too much time in meetings, and



maybe this is just a stage in our development, but we spend a long time in planning projects. This can involve us in finding premises in the area where we want to work; attending meetings to explain to everyone what we have in mind: trying to work for the fullest possible participation by everyone concerned; trying to push back the boundaries beyond the committed few who always volunteer themselves. We have an idea of efficiency which is unlike most people's - we certainly don't aim to do things in the quickest possible way.

SHARING OUR SKILLS

We aren't there to keep the kids, off the streets or off (other) people's hands. We're there to share our skills, so that kids and adults alike can have meaningful relationships with each other. It takes a long time to bridge the gaps!

It's hard to envisage the growth of the workshop. We hope to number four full-time paid workers from March. We work as a collective, so that at the moment we all know pretty well as much as each other about the different aspects of the project - grant applications, maintenance of vehicle (Leyland Sherpa R reg.) administration of wages, tax and insurance, keeping the books straight, ordering of materials, initiating projects etc.

Ours is a community arts project, and as such is only truly successful when it belongs to the people for whom it was set up. Our conscious contribution is to act as catalysts; to enable people to do better what they are doing already, and in so doing, to find the fulfillment which they deserve.

CONTROLLED ATTACK

Controlled Attack is a writers performance group of young people from the East End of London. We have all been involved with the growth and development of the worker writers movement and the growth of community publishing, both of which give ordinary working class people the chance of expressing themselves and are working towards the defining of a working class culture for today: expression as a movement with energy and purpose.

We wanted to turn a little of the work we had done into a different field and work with theatre, gain experience, and experiment with our own personal statements. Not 'fringe' or 'agit prop' but something that was us and lots of other people who had never had the chances to express ourselves.

All members of Controlled Attack are now employees of the Tower Hamlets Arts Project and as well as working on this show help run and organise a bookshop, a publishing project and work in youth clubs and schools.

Controlled Attack is Alan Gilby, 20, Harvey Mild 23, and Lesley Mildiner 20.

If you want to know more or enjoyed the show drop us a note at

THAP Bookshop,
59, Warney Streety,
Lodnon. E2.
Tel: 01-790-6256.

REVIEW:

Controlled Attack was on Friday night. The sound recording studio was packed with a happy throng clutching their lp raffle tickets they had been forced to buy at the door where two shady characters from the Arts Council explained the plans for the new northern National Theatre (The Royal Peter Hall) to be built in Newcastle. They said they also planned to educate the workers by posting miniature Mona Lisa's to every household in the country. The audience dug deep into their pockets and were unusually enthusiastic for the scheme.

The first items in the evening were readings by Roger Mills and Gladys McGee both members of the federation of workers writers groups and both involved in the very successful workshop on writing and publishing earlier in the day. They were both well received and were followed by a slightly dull slide-show shown on the work of Tower Hamlets Arts Project which the projectionist and commentator claim was a parody. This reviewer remains unconvinced. Controlled Attack then finally took to the stage and delivered one hour and fifteen minutes of poetry, songs without music and theatre, sending up subjects as divine and diverse as left theatre (Sledge Hammer Mobile workers' theatre) and the Careers Advisory Service. The three-man act performed with enthusiasm and more nerves than the present Labour government and the audience warmed particularly to their folk music and health food section.

All in all, a good show and one which can clearly only get better. I look forward to next year's conference.

*Ann Flatable
(ACA drama critic)*

AFTER SHOW BLUES:

'Well, we kept falling over and there wasn't the same space to change in and the entrance points we wanted - and we kept tripping over those quadrophonic mike stands complained Lez. 'It was like performing in a cross between a sauna bath and a padded cell', replied Alan, sipping the remains of someone's bitter. 'Did they like it', he asked, looking around for another glass of dregs. Harvey rubbed his stomach, 'of course they did God, that curry was horrible'.

FOOD!

.... for thought

The position from which I viewed the A.C.A. Conference was that highly revered, much sought after and implicitly essential one of kitchen assistant with a smattering of dishwasher and chef de partie thrown in. Along with Vronny my partner in grime, I was part of a team involved in feeding and nurturing the ravenous mass of community artists.

From Bath, there was Nigel and Dick who ran the show along with four young gentlemen from a truant school of high repute. We were eight, with a transient body of fifty or so volunteers.

'La cuisine, namely The Garage, throbbed with varying activities ranging from wood chopping to garlic and finger chopping

The food was all vegetarian - not an oxo cube in sight. It was cooked in boilers on the pavement outside and a wood fired oven in the car-park. Considering that it was freezing cold and snowing, the whole thing came together remarkably well. People worked extremely hard against tough odds, but the atmosphere was warm and friendly and very relaxed. There's no doubt that it was very important to the conference to have this unifying activity, as it created the opportunity for informal and congenial gatherings throughout the three days of the conference. Also, everyone worked together as a whole, which is what it's all about anyway.

Annie

Nigel adds:

My thoughts about the conference came under two headings:

1. **THE FOOD** As usual, it was just fun doing it and really nice to have so much help from so many people. If we had been a bit better organised, then the food could have been served on time and we could have produced the flans and crumble that we had intended.

2. **THE CONFERENCE** . It was really nice to have an opportunity to meet and talk with a lot of people with whom I don't usually get the chance to chat. I spent most of my time cooking and serving but the highlight of the conference for me was the 'rural' seminar as I think much attention is given to urban areas, often at the expense of other areas.

I feel that valuable as the conference was, it really will be quite important that it becomes an annual event, perhaps with a different region as hosts each time.

In conclusion, thank you Northern A.C.A. for one to remember.

*Nigel Leach
(Bath Printshop, Bath City
Civil Aid).*



DOORMAN'S REPORT

The reception area was crowded, with a lot of people arriving at the same time, waving cheques and fivers as they paid their registration fees, and collected their red conference badges. Outside, snow was falling and the front door kept sticking; you had to kick it to keep it closed and kick it to open it again.

The whole afternoon was bedlam, lapsing into quiet moments (apart from the roar of the space heater) which was regularly followed by further explosions of chaos. Nigel Leach and entourage arrived late, having had to dig themselves out of snowdrifts in the Pennines and seminars were delayed or rearranged according to who arrived on time.

A girl came to the desk reporting her bag lost, or stolen, casting a sour note on the exact motives of someone already at the conference. Confusion arose over the whereabouts of the seminars, which was remedied later by a mysterious and magnificent numbering system for the rooms which I was only able to decode three weeks later ...

Later on, things were organised quite well, people knew where the seminars were, or what time it was, or where the nearest greasy spoon cafe was, or pub, without having to ask on the door; having someone on the door all the time proved quite invaluable, for people to leave messages, or belongings or requiring information as well as being the focal point of registering themselves and paying their fee.

There were occasionally long boring times when nobody was around, when the front door kept being left open (no joke sitting in a cold draught watching the snow fall outside) but sustenance and a space heater was always at hand.

The printed t-shirts were looked after at the desk awaiting their owners - it seems that the t-shirts were printed to order, (and some of them badly printed - not all customers were satisfied), perhaps it would have been a good idea to have printed a hundred off on spec, as quite a few people who hadn't known about placing orders for them were asking for t-shirts.

Nigel Leach held a seminar on Soap 'n' Suds after lunch, the outcome unknown.

One thing that would have been useful would have been an arrivals board, indicating groups and individuals who were attending the conference, so that we could have seen who was present at the conference.

Conference stewards were conspicuous by their absence, as quite a few things needed co-ordinating, such as a spring on the front door.... Nigel, where's the anvil?

ROOM SERVICE

Accommodation for those attending the conference had been quite well organised in advance. A number of people in Newcastle had offered spare rooms, spare mattresses or spare floorspace in their homes for those who needed it, and for the rest we had the use of a church hall not ten minutes' walk from the warehouse. We had hired 45 camp beds from the local YHA, and

bought forty large pieces of foam rubber, which, as it turned out, was quite sufficient.

About thirty people managed to find their way to the church hall on Friday night, with two exceptions - one of us got lost on the way, marvelling, I think, at the metro works at Manors Station; the other, Bernard Glazier, had travelled up from Brighton, arrived in Newcastle at midnight, found his way to the warehouse, saw the note pinned on the door giving directions to the church hall, found his way there only to find that his constant bangings and hammerings on the door elicited no reply despite the lights being on inside - he had to spend the night at the Station Hotel... the reason why he wasn't heard was probably to do with the people in the church hall being totally engrossed in a number of experiences - eating their curries from the excellent Indian take-away on Chillingham Road; looking aghast at the plaster madonnas and kings on the shelves in the kitchen; doing exercises on the climbing frames in the gymnasium; or enjoying the musical abilities displayed by Joe McGinlay, the virtuoso Edinburgh community musician, on the piano in the church hall - who launched into 'music while you work' while camp beds and lumps of foam were being sorted out and who later into the small hours was playing some quite delightful Bach. His performance the following evening was even better, as he launched into some jaw-crunching jazz and blues, briefly lapsing into what could only be described as the Pastoral Symphony leading into more early morning improvised material.

Despite loud snoring and other strange sounds in the night, we can state quite categorically that the church hall is not haunted!

Sunday morning in the church hall was bizarre - the bells calling the faithful to prayer and worship starting ringing at nine o'clock, and two figures in black robes were seen wandering among the sleeping bodies, one drinking a cup of tea, the other smoking a cigarette, one of them muttering something about 'glazed looks' as he walked past me. In the kitchen were some children and an adult doing something with prayer books, possibly a confirmation class - the children seemed to be more interested in the spectacle of the room full of sleeping bodies than what was being said to them by their elder.

Meanwhile, back on the door, things were a lot quieter, no more chaotic happenings, and long boring periods sitting in the cold staring at the door.

Thank you those who got me cups of tea, plates of food and not asking too many impossible questions! See you next year.....

Richard Blosse



FINANCIAL REPORT

Conference

Expenditure		Income	
Accommodation	153.50	Fees	945.00
Leating	135.08	Northern Arts Grant	585.00
Warehouse Expenditure	38.85	Sale of Materials	24.00
Seminar Expenditure	10.50	Food Charges	19.68
Food Subsidy	352.90		
Travel Subsidy	178.00		
Hire of Premises	107.40		
Transport	36.35		
Stationery, Postage, Telephone	80.24		
Stand Fees	69.44		
Miscellaneous	9.95		
	<u>1172.21</u>		
Balance	401.47		
	<u><u>£1573.68</u></u>		<u><u>£1573.68</u></u>

Conference Report – Interim Statement

Expenditure		Income	
Production Costs	256.00	Gulbenkian Foundation	365.00
Editorial Fees	320.00	Transfer from Conference A/C balance	200.00
Typing Fees	78.00	Deficit	89.00
	<u>£654.00</u>		<u>£654.00</u>

DIRECTORY OF PARTICIPANTS

Abrah Shah,
Director of Community Arts,
National Association of Asian Youth,
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Middlesex.
01 574 1325.

Albany Video Project,
Creed Road,
Deptford,
London. SE.8

Anne-Marie Quigg,
93, Eglantine Avenue,
Belfast 9.

Animation Information Service,
c/o National Youth Bureau,
17-23 Albion Street,
Leicester,
0533 531881/6

Arran Community Arts Project,
Drumla Cottage,
Kildonan,
Isle of Arran,
Scotland.

Art and Research Exchange,
22, Lombard Street,
Belfast 1.

Bath Place Community Venture,
Bath Place,
Leamington Spa,
Warwickshire.

Bath Printshop,
Longacre Hall,
2, Longacre,
London Road,
Bath,
Avon.

Beaford Community Centre,
1, Alexandra Road
Barnstaple,
Devon.

Bernard Glazier,
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St. Anne's Hall,
St. Georges Road,
Brighton,
Sussex
0273 697493

Bloomin Arts,
East Oxford Community Centre,
Princes Street,
Oxford,
Oxfordshire.

Bradford Alternative,
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Bradford,
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24, Shields Road,
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Newcastle upon Tyne.

Byker Community Arts,
Byker C.D.P.
Priory Green Church,
Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne.6.
0632 650649

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Inter Action,
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C.E.T.U.
17-21 Mumps,
Oldham,
Lancashire.
061 624 6048/9

Children's Art Gallery,
The Warehouse,
Bells Court,
Newcastle upon Tyne.

Chris Taylor,
Dartington Community Arts Project,
The Elmthirst Centre,
Dartington Hall,
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S. Devon.
TQ9 6EL

Clare Higney,
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Northampton Development Corpn.,
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01 692 0756

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BT9 5DU.

Community Arts Officer,
Merseyside Arts Association,
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Community Arts Officer,
Northern Arts,
31, New Bridge Street,
Newcastle upon Tyne.1.

Community Arts Officer,
North West Arts,
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Manchester.

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Corby,
Northants,
NN18 9HW.

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39, Aberdare Gardens,
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NW6 3AJ
01 328 1653

Elaine Smalley,
13, MacDonald Road,
Friern Barnet,
London. N.11.

Elizabeth Allen,
Artist in Residence,
80, High Street,
South Normanton,
Derbyshire.

Fantasy Factory Video Ltd.,
42, Theobalds Road,
London.
WC1X 8NW.

Free Form Arts Trust Ltd.,
38, Dalston Lane,
London.
01 249 3394

Forum YPT Company, Forum Theatre,
Billingham,
Cleveland,
Stockton 562236.

Gasp Community Arts,
Saltley Action Centre,
2, Alum Rock Road,
Saltley,
Birmingham.
B9 1JB.

Glen Broughton,
Nottingham Community Arts & Crafts Centre,
Gregory Boulevard,
Nottingham.
782463 or 701344.

Greenwich Mural Workshop,
78, Kinveachy Gardens,
London. S.E.2.

(Martin Bould)
Hall Lane Community Centre,
85, Hall Lane,
Leeds 12.
0532 634380.

Home/School Links,
Leasowes J + I School,
Nine Leasowes,
Smethwick,
West Midlands.
021 558 7289.

Hulme Community Arts,
Hulme Library,
Hulme Walk,
Manchester 15.
061 226 1005

Interplay Trust,
65, Hall Lane,
Leeds 12.
0532 634380.

Jubilee Community Arts Co. Ltd.,
Whitehall Road,
Greets Green,
West Bromwich,
West Midlands.
021 557 1569

Kate Kelly,
Community Printer,
c/o 149 Graham Road,
London. E.8.
01 254 7556

Kids Mobile Workshop,
387 Westgate Road,
Newcastle upon Tyne.
NE2 2DT

Knotty Arts,
The Resource Centre,
4, Mollart Street,
Hanley
Stoke on Trent,
Staffordshire.
Stoke 266009

Leo Pike,
Bolton Social Services,
Marsden House,
Deansgate,
Bolton.

Live Theatre Col,
1-3 Side,
Newcastle upon Tyne.
NE1 3JE

Maggie Pinhorn,
Association of Community Artists,
1, Shelton Street,
London.

Magic Lantern,
23, Crown Street,
Leiston,
Suffolk
Leiston 830930 (daytime)

Major Diversion,
13, Swinbourne Street,
Gateshead,
Tyne and Wear.
0632 775615/6

Meanwhile Gardens Community Assoc.
Elkstone Road
London W10.
01 960 4600

Medium Fair Community Arts,
Marlborough Hall,
Kimberley Road,
Exeter.

MidNag,
1, Wansbeck Square,
Ashington,
Northumberland.
Ashington 814444

Newcastle Playleaders,
Recreation Department,
7, Saville Place,
Newcastle upon Tyne

Ordsall Community Arts,
c/o 8, Regent Square,
Salford 5,
Greater Manchester.

Outreach from the Dovecot,
Dovecot Arts Centre,
Dovecot Street,
Stockton on Tees,
Cleveland.

Paddington Printshop,
1, Elgin Avenue,
London W9.

The Pavillion Project,
Esk Street,
North Ormsby,
Middlesbrough.

Ros Birks,
Peterlee Youth Drama Workshop,
c/o Social Development Office,
14, Upper Yoden Way,
Peterlee,
Co. Durham.

Play on Wheels,
The Warehouse,
Bells Court,
109, Pilgrim Street,
Newcastle upon Tyne.

Scottish Community Arts Resource Service,
9, Promenade Terrace,
Portobello
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031 669 8285

South Island Trust,
157, South Lambeth Road,
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South Normanton,
Derbyshire.
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Marble Factory Project,
32-34 Camberwell Road,
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01 701 2611

Split Image,
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Sunderland Community Arts,
27, Stockton Road,
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43979

Swindon Viewpoint Ltd.,
14, Victoria Road,
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SN1 3AL
0793 24648
24634

Telford Community Arts,
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Sutton Hill,
Telford,
Salop,
0952 592484/503020/585567.

Tower Hamlets Arts Project,
59, Watney Street,
London. E1.

Town and Country Inter Action,
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Peartree Lane,
Woughton on the Green,
Milton Keynes,
Buckinghamshire
0908 678514

Tree/St. Peter's Rock,
17, Lambolle Road,
London.
NW3 4HS

Trinity Arts Association,
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Small Heath,
Birmingham.
B10 9QF
021 773 7047

Two Borough Film & Video,
Oval House,
52-54 Kennington Oval,
London SE.11.
01 735 2786

Tyneside Free Press,
5, Charlotte Square,
Newcastle upon Tyne.
0632 20403.

Uncle Ernies Community Arts,
104, North Road,
Wallsend,
Tyne and Wear.
0632 632267.

Valley Road Family Centre,
Valley Road,
Stoke Heath,
Coventry.
45549

Wallsend Arts Centre,
(Community Arts),
104, North Road,
Wallsend,
Tyne and Wear.
0632 624276.

Walworth & Aylesbury Community Arts Trust,
Shop Unit 8,
Taplow,
Aylesbury Estate,
London SE.17.

Weld,
New Trinity,
Wilson Road,
Handsworth,
Birmingham B9.
021 554 5068

West London Media Workshop,
St. Thomas Church Hall,
East Row,
London W.10.
01 969 1020

Word and Action (Dorset) Ltd.,
3, Frederick Street,
Weymouth,
Dorset.

The Workshop,
34, Hamilton Place,
Edinburgh,
031 225 7942

THE COMMUNITY ARTS MOVEMENT IS IN THE MIDST OF MANY CHANGES, AND THIS OPEN CONFERENCE, SPONSORED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY ART (NORTH), ENCOURAGED A SCOPE OF DIALOGUE AND INVOLVEMENT WHICH WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE AT A CONFERENCE CENTERING ON A SPECIFIC ISSUE. THIS REPORT EXPLORES THE IDEAS AND CONCERNS AT THE CONFERENCE.

