

Community

Community (kəmɪˈnɪti). [Late ME. *comunete*, see **COMMONTY**; later assim. to L. *communitas*, -*tat*-, f. *communis*; see **COMMON** *a.*, -*ITY*.]

I. 1. The quality of appertaining to all in common; common ownership, liability, etc. 1561. 2. Common character; agreement, identity 1587. 3. Social intercourse; communion 1570. 4. Society, the social state 1652. † 5. Commonness -1646.

1. Anabaptists, that hold c. of goods USSHER. 2. The points of c. in their nature WORDSW. 3. Men have a certain c. with God in this world 1570. 4. [Marriage] is the foundation of c. STEELE. 5. 1 *Hen. IV*, III. ii. 77.

Arts

Art (ɑːt), *sb.* ME. [- (O)Fr. *art* :- L. *ars*, *art*-, f. base **ar*- put together, join, fit.]

I. Skill. Sing. *art*; no pl. 1. *gen.* Skill as the result of knowledge and practice. 2. Human skill (opp. to *nature*) ME. 3. The learning of the schools; see **II.** 1. † *a. spec.* The *trivium*, or any of its subjects -1573. *b. gen.* Learning, science (*arch.*) 1588. † 4. *spec.* Technical or professional skill -1677. 5. The application of skill to subjects of taste, as poetry, music, etc.; *esp.* in mod. use: Perfection of workmanship or execution as an object in itself 1620. 6. Skill applied to the arts of imitation and design, *Painting*, *Architecture*, etc.; the cultivation of these in its principles, practice, and results. (The most usual mod. sense of *art* when used simply.) 1668.

Information

Information (ɪnfəˈmɛɪʃən). [- (O)Fr. *information* - L. *informatio*, f. *informat*-, pa. ppl. stem of *informare*; see **INFORM** *v.*, -*ION*.]

I. 1. The action of informing (in sense **III.** 1 of the vb.); training, instruction; communication of instructive knowledge. Now *rare* or *Obs.* † Also with *an* and *pl.* An instruction -1760. 2. The action of telling or fact of being told of something ME. 3. That of which one is apprised or told; intelligence, news 1450. † Also with *an* and *pl.* 1527. 4. The action of informing against, charging, or accusing (a person). Now *Obs.*, exc. as transf. from 5. 1480.

Pack

Pack (pæk), *sb.*¹ [ME. *packe* (XIII) - (M)Flem., (M)Du., (M)LG. *pak*, of unkn. origin.]

1. A bundle of things enclosed in a wrapping or tied together compactly; *spec.* a bundle of goods carried by a pedlar; a soldier's valise containing his kit and carried on the back. 2. As a measure of various commodities 1488. 3. *a.* A company or set of persons; often merely contemptuous; a 'gang', 'lot' ME. *b.* A large collection, or set (of things, esp. abstract); a 'heap', 'lot'. (Usu. depreciative.) 1591. † 4. Applied to a person of worthless character; almost always with *naughty* -1738. 5. A number of animals kept or naturally congregating together; *spec.* of hounds for hunting, or of wild beasts (esp. wolves), and of birds (e.g. grouse) 1648.

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Contacts

Arts Council of Great Britain

105 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AU Telephone 01 629 9495

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Eastern Arts Association

8-9 Bridge Street, Cambridge CB2 1UA Telephone 0223 67707

Contact: Jeremy Newton

East Midlands Arts

Mountfields House, Forest Rd., Loughborough, Leics., LE11 3HU Telephone 0509 218292

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Greater London Arts Association

25-31 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SF Telephone 01 388 2211

Contact: Carol Kenna

Lincolnshire & Humberside Arts

St Hugh's, Newport, Lincoln LN1 3DN Telephone 0522 33555

Contact: Chris Buckingham

Merseyside Arts Trust

Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool L1 3BX Telephone 051 709 0671

Contact: Edward Murphy

Northern Arts

10 Osborne Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 1NZ Telephone 0632 816334

Contact: Hugo Perks

North West Arts

12 Harter Street, Manchester M1 6HY Telephone 061 228 3062

Contact: Liz Mayne

South East Arts

9-10 Crescent Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2LU Telephone 0892 41666

Contact: Chris Bates

Southern Arts Association

19 Southgate Street, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 7EB Telephone 0962 55099

Contact: Michael Launchbury

South West Arts

23 Southernhay East, Exeter, Devon EX1 1QG Telephone 0392 38924

Contact: Roger Stennett or Stephen Wright

West Midlands Arts

Lloyds Bank Chambers, Market St., Stafford ST16 2AP Telephone 0785 59231

Contact: Stephen Trow

Yorkshire Arts Association

Glyde House, Glydegate, Bradford, West Yorks. BD5 0BQ Telephone 0274 23051

Contact: Nigel Leach

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

UK and Commonwealth Branch, 98 Portland Place, London W1 Telephone 01 626 5313/7

Contact: Ian Lancaster or

Community Communications Officer

5 Tavistock Place, London W1 Telephone 01 387 7719

Contact: Jean Munro

THE SHELTON TRUST is the national body established in 1980 to promote knowledge of and interest in community arts. It runs a major programme of conferences and meetings in association with a variety of groups and organisations and produces a wide range of publications (See **Bibliography**) including the bi-monthly newsletter *Another Standard*.

The Trust is run by a national elected board of regional directors. Its membership is open to all working in or for community arts.

The Shelton Trust, The Old Tin School, Collyhurst Road, Manchester M10 7RQ

THE ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY ARTS

is a federation of regional groups, each of which operates to promote the interests of community arts in the area. For details of regional secretaries, contact Ros Rigby (See **Bibliography** *Another Standard*)

Council of Regional Arts Associations (CORAA)

59 St James's Street, London SW1

Telephone 01 629 9586

Contact: Philip Bomford

Training

In community arts there is no training like experience — the best way to learn the job is in the field. However, as more people become involved professionally, in order to raise standards, much more attention is now being paid to training. RAAs, AFCA groups and individual projects are all making a contribution in small scale ways. There is little full-time training, though a number of creative and recreational arts courses do have a strong community arts bias — for example:

'Arts in Social Contexts' **Dartington College of Arts**, Totnes, Devon

'Recreational Arts' **The Edgar Wood Centre, City of Manchester College of Education**, Manchester

'Community Arts' **Bradford College of Art**, Bradford, W Yorks.

'Creative and Performing Arts' **Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic**, Lipman Building, Sandyford Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8ST

'Dance in the Community' **Laban Centre, Goldsmiths College**, New Cross, London SE14 6NW

Courses

IN-SERVICE TRAINING — Short Courses

Several Regional Arts Associations have regular training programmes for those interested in community arts skills. Details from the appropriate officer.

Many individual projects run training courses of one kind or another. Four major projects which do are:

INTER ACTION run a number of short courses on specific aspects of community arts and related topics, such as fund-raising, publicity etc.

They also run an 'advisory service' whereby they will for a reasonable fee provide specialised advice, particularly for groups starting up, on such matters as registering as a charity, how to draw up budgets etc. **For details: the Training Officer, Inter Action**, 15 Wilkin Street, London NW5 01 267 9421

WELFARE STATE INTERNATIONAL have run a number of Summer Schools on the mounting of large scale outdoor celebratory events, which have been of value to community artists. Similar schemes may be organised in the future, plus other training opportunities from time to time. **For details: Howard Steel, Welfare State International**, 1 Croxteth Road, Liverpool L8 3SE 051 727 6847

FREE FORM also run short courses on specific skills in community arts work from time to time. **For details: Sarah Mudd, Free Form**, 38 Dalston Lane, London E8 3AZ 01 249 3394

THE SOCIAL ARTS TRUST is an independent training agency specialising in running courses in community arts skills for community artists, local groups and professionals, such as community workers, social workers etc. **For details: Bernard Ross, Sue Kennedy, The Social Arts Trust**, Room 20, Exchange Buildings, Quayside, Newcastle upon Tyne 0632 616581

Bibliography

A wide range of material on community arts, community development and related topics is listed in *CETU's List of Information on Community Arts, Community Development and Non-Formal Education*, compiled by Anne Davies; available price £2 from: **Mary Emery, Publications Unit, Department of Adult Education, University of Nottingham**, 14-22 Shakespeare Street, Nottingham NG1 4FJ 0602 43022

Many projects publish annual reports on their work; for details contact projects direct.

Other relevant publications:

The Art Britain Ignores Naseem Khan (Gulbenkian Foundation 1976)

Artists and People Su Braden. (Routledge and Kegan Paul 1978)

Community Arts The Report of the Community Arts Working Party (ACGB 1974)

Community Arts A report by the ACGB Community Arts Evaluation working group (ACGB 1977)

A Case for the Arts Harold Baldry (Secker and Warburg 1981; £7.95 hardback, £2.95 paperback)

Community Arts — principles and practices (The Shelton Trust 1980; £1.75 inc. pp)

Rural Community Arts (The Shelton Trust 1982; £1.75 inc. pp)

Community Arts and YOP (NCVO/Shelton Trust 1982; £1.00 inc. pp)

Another Standard (community arts newsletter published bi-monthly by the Shelton Trust. Annual subscription £3)

Shelton Trust publications from Ros Rigby, 48 Grange Terrace, Pelton Fell, Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham DH2 2DP.

Inter Action have published a range of books on community arts (Video, Community Print, Community Newspapers etc.), for a complete book list contact **Inter-Action Imprint**, 15 Wilkin Street, London NW5 3NX 01 267 9421/3

The Directory of Social Change publishes books and information packs on various aspects of community and voluntary work; of particular relevance to community artists is their Murals Kit, and Slide Tape Kit. For details contact: **The Directory of Social Change**, 9 Mansfield Place, London NW3 01 431 1412.

Films

The Arts Council have sponsored the production of a number of films on community arts; for catalogue and details contact Film Department, Arts Council of Great Britain, 105 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AU. They can be booked from **Concord Films**, 201 Felixstowe Road, Ipswich, Suffolk 0473 76012.

Projects

Projects mentioned in this pack

Arts and Action, 292 Knowsley Road, Bootle, Liverpool 20
051 933 5168

Arts Development Northampton, Cliftonville House, Northampton
0604 27158

Community Arts Workshop, the Old Tin School, Collyhurst Road,
Manchester M10 7RQ 061 202 2037

Corby Community Arts, Lincoln Square, Corby, Northants
0536 743731

Fair Exchange Community Arts, Marlborough Hall, Kimberley Road,
Exeter EX2 4JG 0392 32617

Free Form, 8 Dalston Lane, London E8 3AZ 01 249 5394

Greenwich Mural Workshop, 13 Coltman House, Thames Street,
London SE10 01 858 3988

Hangleton and Knoll Community Festival, 112 Hardwick Road, Hove,
Sussex 0273 728839

High Peaks Community Arts, Adult Education Centre, Long Lane,
Chapel en le Frith, Derbyshire 029 881 2968

Jubilee Community Arts, Jubilee Arts Centre, Greets Green, West
Bromwich, W. Midlands 021 557 1569

Junction 28 Community Arts, Community Centre, Mansfield Road,
S. Normanton, Derbyshire 0773 812323

Manchester Hospital Arts, St Mary's Hospital, Whitworth Park, Man-
chester 16

Mara ya Pili, 234 Kirkstall Road, Leeds 6, Yorks 0532 741203

Mediumwave, 3-4 Oval Mansions, Kennington oval, London SE11
01 582 3779

Medium Fair Charitable Trust, Marlborough Hall, Kimberley Road,
Exeter, Devon EX2 4JG 0392 32617

Northumberland Community Arts, 34 Green Batt, Alnwick, North-
umberland 0665 603069

Nottingham Community Arts and Crafts Centre, Gregory Boulevard,
Hyson Green, Nottingham 0602 782463

Pentabus, Whitehill House, Weobley, Herefordshire 054 45 8161

Peterlee Community Arts, Peterlee Community Association, Eden
Lane, Peterlee, Co Durham 0783 860497

St Edmunds Arts Centre, Bedwin Street, Salisbury, Wilts. 0722 4299

SHAPE, 9 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 6AE 01 388 9622/9744
(for information on regional services contact appropriate Regional
Arts Association)

Sunderland Change of Life Support Group, Carley Hill Tenants' Rights
Centre, Carley Hill, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear 0783 58423

Sunderland Musicians Collective, Green Terrace School, Green Terrace,
Sunderland, Tyne and Wear

Tara Arts Group, 62 Collingwood Road, Sutton, Surrey 01 642 5038

Telford Community Arts, 72 Southgate, Sutton Hill, Telford, Salop
0952 581927

The Social Arts Trust, First Floor, Exchange Buildings, Quayside,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 3AQ 0632 616581

Town and Country Inter-Action, the Old Rectory, Woughton on the
Green, Milton Keynes, Bucks 0908 678514

Trinbago Carnival Club, 62 Park Grove Road, Leytonstone, London
E11 4PU 01 539 1978

WACAT, Shop 8, Taplow, Aylesbury Estate, London SE17
01 701 9010

Acknowledgements

Researched and Compiled by **ROS RIGBY**

Published by **THE SHELTON TRUST and CORAA,
THE COUNCIL OF REGIONAL ARTS
ASSOCIATIONS**

With financial assistance from:

The Arts Council of Great Britain

**The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, United Kingdom and
Commonwealth Branch**

The Royal Jubilee Trusts



The British Petroleum Company Limited

and the following Regional Arts Associations:

Eastern Arts Association

East Midlands Arts

Greater London Arts Association

Lincolnshire & Humberside Arts Association

Northern Arts

North West Arts

South East Arts Association

South East Wales Arts Association

South West Arts

West Midlands Arts

Yorkshire Arts Association

Typesetting by **Marjorie Stephen** 0783 47060

Design by **Richard Padwick and Susan Jones** 0783 73589

Printed by **Mayfair Printers**, Unit 3, Sans Street South, Sunderland

Published 1982 by **The Shelton Trust**, The Old Tin School, Collyhurst Road,
Manchester M10 7RQ and **CORAA**, 59 St James's Street, London SW1

ISBN 0 907242 01 4

INTRODUCTION

This Pack....

MEDIUMWAVE

FAIR EXCHANGE

Geef!
THE EAST END FESTIVAL

SOCIAL ARTS TRUST



JUNCTION 28

The main purpose of this pack is to give practical examples of exciting community arts in progress — in a variety of settings throughout England, using a wide range of media and employing many different methods of operation and organisation. It is not an attempt to present 'the twenty best community arts projects in England'. There are many other groups doing excellent work which are not included here.

Those new to community arts may well turn first to descriptions of activities in their own, or a similar type of region. We would however urge readers to look at all the sections — they may well find relevant material in the most unlikely places! We hope also that readers may be sufficiently encouraged by the examples given to think about the potential for community arts where they live or work. One point must be stressed — the strength of this work is its diversity of approach, and the freedom enjoyed by most projects to develop their own locally accountable structures, and through these to discuss and develop their work as is appropriate. A format that works well in one place may not 'transplant' to another apparently similar setting. Anyone keen to develop community arts in his or her area should look first to what is already there, even if resources seem very thin on the ground — voluntary groups, local traditions and festivals, artists interested in working with the community, whatever facilities are available — and build from there. The best in community arts, and in community work of any kind, involves gradual growth and sensitivity to local needs, though that in no way should rule out energy, imagination and excitement.

*Finally, it is not possible in the space available to give more than a superficial picture of the projects described. We would refer readers to the **Contacts** section for details of how they can acquire further information.*

Ros Rigby

Principles

"Community Arts is the activity of artists in various art forms working in a particular community and involving the participation of members of that community".

Sir Roy Shaw, ACGB Annual Report 1977

Where?

- ◆ Community Arts often takes place in areas without any other arts resources or provision.
- ◆ Community Arts projects operate almost inevitably in areas of deprivation — cultural, financial, social or environmental.
- ◆ Community artists work by getting people involved in artistic activity in their own neighbourhoods.

What?

- ◆ Community Arts is a way of working, not a particular artform.
- ◆ Community Arts workers use the whole range of media from folk lore to video, from fireshows to puppetry.
- ◆ Community Arts does not aim to build up audiences for traditional art forms like the theatre, though this may be a spin-off.
- ◆ Community Arts encourages active participation by ordinary people rejecting the trend towards passive consumption in all other areas of life.
- ◆ Community Arts aims at being closely relevant to the communities in which it happens, enabling people to express local feeling and experience.

Why?

- ◆ Community Arts aims to restore people's confidence in their ability to take an active part in the life of their community.
- ◆ Community artists regret the limited appeal of conventional art provision, and seek ways of creating art that means something to people.

How?

- ◆ Community Arts projects develop from many different initiatives — by creative artists, by community groups or through outside influence for example from Regional Arts Associations.
- ◆ Community Arts projects usually have advisory or management groups drawn directly from their area of operation.
- ◆ Community artists may work on a full-time or part-time basis, sometimes voluntary, on long-term contracts or for short-term assignments.
- ◆ Community Arts projects normally have some kind of building to call their own, often with space to run activities in, sometimes only serving as a base to move out from.

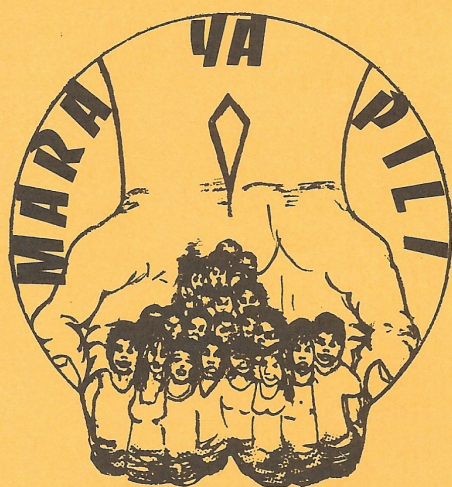
Links?

- ◆ Community Arts, though far less formal, has strong affinities with progressive adult education.
- ◆ Community Arts workers have always offered their skills to work closely with youth work and play organisations.
- ◆ Community Arts work, though clearly aimed at creative aspects of personality, has clear links with various styles of community development work.
- ◆ Community Arts is not 'social services' — but its techniques have been eagerly seized by the Probation Services and various social services departments.
- ◆ Community Arts, while much more developmental than traditional 'amateur arts', has considerable overlaps with some amateur arts activity.

Such links are obviously important, but highlight the uniqueness of community arts rather than cloud its identity. The central philosophy remains — that skilled and sensitive artists working alongside other members of a community can help to unlock the wealth of creative energy latent in any group of people, and can help channel that energy into constructive and confident revitalisation of such communities.

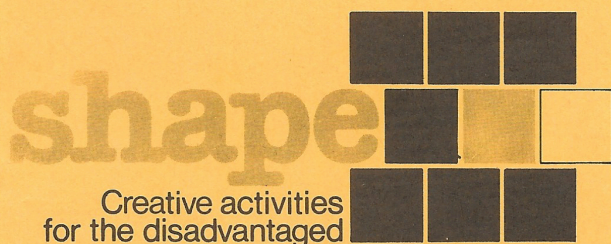
Past, Present and Future

Telford Community Arts



Greenwich Mural Workshop

HANGLETON AND KNOLLS FESTIVAL



Community Arts has changed, developed, put down roots and grown steadily in strength since it began to emerge recognizably in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Of course its origins actually go back much further — there are clear and strong links with many strands of community-based cultural activity going back for hundreds of years through broadsheets, folk song, music hall and community celebration — but it only began to be defined and shaped into what is now known as community arts twelve years or so ago.

The late sixties and early seventies saw a flood of fringe, multi-media and experimental arts activity, a tide of creative energy which began to split into several distinct channels — 'public art', 'art *in* the community', the growth of arts centres and ideas about accessibility, and community arts, which began to stress *participation*, rather than consumption, local *accountability*, and *relevance* to the neighbourhoods in which it took place.

The early days were marked by exuberant experiment. The touring approach was common, and work was often dominated by large scale celebratory events, inflatables and performances. It was exciting, sometimes transient, hit-and-miss, but from it came much clearer directions.

By the late 1970's community arts was steadily establishing itself, building up links with other kinds of community work, losing some of its flamboyance, certainly, but concentrating on generating long term relationships within neighbourhoods, on offering a wide range of skills and on establishing clear policies for development. Hand in hand with these changes of style has come change in organisation — fewer touring groups and more sense of continuity, in particular. Almost all projects have local advisory committees and most projects are legally managed by groups of local participants.

Another vital change in the last few years has come in the way that community arts measures its own success. In the early stages of the movement there was often a cheerful assumption that the actual standard of the product didn't matter too much as long as plenty of people enjoyed the process. More recently, however, higher standards of product have been stressed — for the simple reason that any participant in a creative activity will get far more sense of achievement from high quality results than from mediocrity.

The last ten years have obviously seen rapid progress and development — but what of the future? Community arts is clearly and firmly established, has adapted itself to meet new circumstances and demands and is very obviously producing constructive and creative results. It will certainly go on growing, though the rate at which it does so will depend on each individual project and initiative proving its own strength and value as much as on questions of national economics.

In his book *A Case For The Arts*, Sir Harold Baldry,⁽¹⁾ reflecting on the future of community arts, comments:

'First, although the question of support for community arts came to a head at national and even international level, it is not there that the future of the movement will be decided, but at the grass roots level where it belongs . . . The decisive role will be played by the local community itself, and the wise



Trinbago Carnival Club



High Peaks Community Arts

community artist will do his utmost to ensure that the community, not he, is in control.'

The underlying need for community arts can only go on growing:

'But in my view the second certainty where so much is uncertain is that funds provided for the continuation of the community arts experiment are money well spent. Faced with a future where one of our greatest problems is likely to be how people, especially young people, use their time, warned already by daily experience of the anti-social consequences which enforced leisure can have when there is no opportunity or inspiration to make better use of it, we should be fools indeed to halt now a development which may have so much to offer.'

He goes on to quote an Arts Council working party's report⁽²⁾ to stress the future need for community arts:

'In the cities, central and local government are becoming increasingly aware of the need to find a solution to the problems of Inner City decay, and the ugliness and isolation of the wastelands of much post war planning. We have seen something of the unique and often unrecognized contribution which community arts is already making to this question and we have no doubt that the potential for further development is considerable.'

The re-creation of a sense of community, of a sense of belonging, of communication and consultation, of self confidence and of achievement, may well spring from the skilled development of arts-based creative activity within a community.'

Certainly its emergence as a mature and positive movement involving a high proportion of experienced professional workers, with a well-documented history of success, suggests that there is a considerable future for community arts. It isn't just a short term cosmetic for brightening up unhappy neighbourhoods. It implies a long term commitment to helping ordinary people to realise their own creative potential and to take a proper share in organising their own lives. Community arts has proved that it has a vital place in the pattern of the arts and of society as a whole.

1 *A Case for the Arts* by Professor Harold Baldry, Secker and Warburg 1981

2 Report of the Arts Council Community Arts Evaluation Working Group, 1977

URBAN 1

General Projects

There are areas in most of our cities suffering from all kinds of deprivation, much of it going back years, and most of it getting worse as solutions to the decay fail one after another. The flashpoints of the summer of 1981 suggest what the consequences of this multiple deprivation may be. It is not surprising that community arts projects have found extensive support, financial and otherwise, in these inner areas. Virtually every city in England has some sort of community arts work in progress — London alone has over 130 organisations. Some of the city projects have been established for ten years or so and have achieved notable long-term success, while the energy of the cities throws up new initiatives constantly.

An important feature of inner city work is that there is often a variety of funding sources which can be tapped. *Urban Aid* provides substantial finance for many city projects, providing a degree of security in a world of annual cutbacks. *Inner City Partnership* funding is a second major source, again sometimes providing reasonable medium term security. Not so secure but nonetheless vital is *Manpower Services Commission* funding, often reasonably available in the cities but not flexible enough to allow continuity and forward planning.



Jubilee Community Arts

THE STORY SO FAR

1974 *Jubilee Theatre Co.* formed. Over the next two years, community shows performed in play-centres, pubs, OAP clubs, and in the street, supported by Sandwell Recreation and Amenities, and Mitchells and Butlers. Film, video and craft skills also used on playschemes, in libraries, teachers' centres and in parks.

1976 *Jubilee Theatre and Community arts* received its first revenue grant of £9000 from ACGB and West Midlands Arts, enabling a team of five to work full-time. Theatre work continued and extended to work with local residents groups on playschemes and festivals. Money for a minibus given by the *Gulbenkian Foundation*.

1978 Grant increased to £20,000. Work expanding to include video, inflatable building and work with mothers and toddlers. £15,000 *Urban Aid* grant approved — workforce increased to six, and a double-decker bus acquired, to be equipped for playschemes, photography, printing, and meetings.

1979 Bus completed in January and on the road, attracting a large number of new people to community arts in Sandwell.

1980 Environmental arts and mural painting a major new development.

1981 Environmental arts now well established; considerable efforts this year into work with the unemployed.

Sandwell is the sixth largest Metropolitan Borough; to the west of Birmingham, it has a population of over 300,000, 57,000 council tenancies and a large ethnic minority community. *Jubilee Community Arts* have been working throughout Sandwell, and been based in West Bromwich, since 1974 . . .

In response to the size of Sandwell, the Jubilee workers have developed a particular approach, based on travelling to where groups meet, rather than expecting groups to come to them. The Bus has been an enormous help in providing a meeting place where no community facilities exist.

'Other urban projects' writes founder member Steve Trow, 'have been able to provide a focal point of contact with the community by building up their base as a resource facility, or by attaching to community education projects, advice or law centres. Jubilee . . . have had to develop other contact mechanisms, primarily responsive to the groups and issues which continually emerge from the community itself.'

One project leads to another

The work done by Jubilee on the Bermuda Mansions estate shows how an initial contact, involving one area of work, can develop into others. *'Our first contacts developed out of a Damp Campaign organised by the tenants; Jubilee's video equipment was used to document local cases, to record the campaign's progress and for playback at public meetings . . . from the informal contacts made at the time of the Damp Campaign, the idea developed to extend Jubilee's involvement into work with both parents and kids.'*

1979/80 Annual Report

This led to the joint organisation of a one-week summer playscheme, and murals project in 1978, and the successful outcome aroused interest in mounting something even more ambitious the following year. Jubilee encouraged the *Tenant's Association* itself to apply to *Urban Aid* for funds to run a five week playscheme, and to build a small adventure playground. The grant was awarded, and two Jubilee workers assisted the tenants at the design and planning stages of the playground, helped with the arts based play activities, and worked on some more murals. These summer activities in 1979 drew many more people into the T.A.:

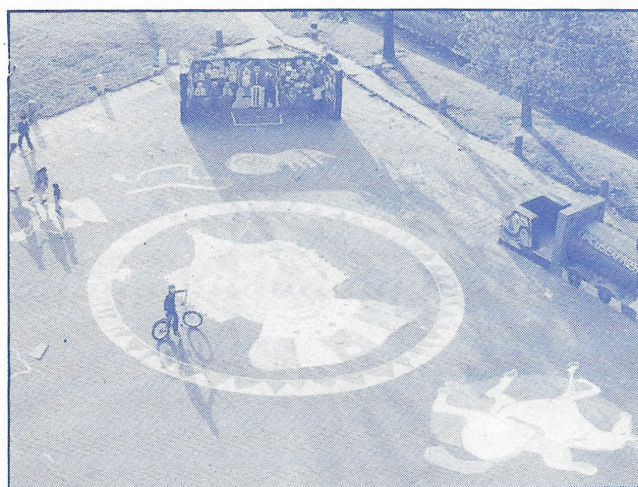
'We have had people from the estate coming forward for the first time to get involved working with the play structures, helping with materials. Some have joined the committee and have begun to take part in the other activities of the T.A. It is a great way to bring people together and of helping them appreciate each others' skills.'

Geoff Hunt; Bermuda Mansions TA

The Bus

The bus has been an invaluable asset, in providing meeting space, facilities, and in publicising Jubilee around Sandwell, though sometimes this has led to certain problems: *'It arouses a lot of expectations in people. They see this brightly coloured vehicle turning up and expect everything to be laid on. It takes them a while to realise that they need to come up with new ideas for how the Bus can be used in their own situation.'*

Steve Trow





'BEAT THE BOREDOM' PLANS TO AID JOBLESS

by LOUISA PARTON
A £34,000 cash injection for Sandwell community projects will be channelled into the recreation services for the borough's swelling number of unemployed.

Jubilee Community Arts have pledged to use the grant from West Midlands Arts Council to help the jobless fill their spare time.

To find out what activities the unemployed want, Jubilee have launched a series of open meetings.

The public will not only be invited to discuss their own needs, but also to discuss the needs of others.

Jubilee Community Arts was set up five years ago to fund and work with local groups on projects ranging from film making to playgroups.

Their cash and guidance have been used to fund youth clubs, organised community festivals, and all ages from pre-school toddlers to pensioners can join in their schemes.

The response to the aid has been so good that Jubilee have now got a waiting list.

Slice

Sandwell Council makes a £100,000 grant to West Midlands Arts, but over £20,000 must be paid into the borough in the form of grant aid to local organisations.

Allocating a slice of the aid this year will mean West Midlands Arts Council and West Midlands Community Arts Association.

Local people know best about what is needed in their own areas, and

Focus on dole queue life — by jobless

Unemployed youngsters who were hanging aimlessly around the Sandwell shopping centre just four weeks' ago, are now set to stage a home-made exhibition.

Using equipment provided by the Sandwell Jubilee Community Arts Group, a dozen youngsters

Mail Reporter

... Peter and Kate realised that two workers would never be adequate when dealing with the enormous amount of excitement and interest that the bus aroused in children...

... Wednesbury Mothers' Group and Friar Park Festival Committee also made good use of the print facilities for leaflets, posters, and T-shirts. These activities often necessitated a creche being organised on the top deck at the same time...

... The darkroom on the bus has been used, not only by children at the playscheme, but also by Tolunka in preparing a tape/slide show; by Friar Park Mothers and Toddlers Club and by the Detached Youth Service for an information project...

... At the Tipton Carnival it proved an invaluable facility for drying off wet and shivering entrants in the Fancy Dress section...

78/9 Annual report

'We have five years of confidence behind us now'

In 1981, like many other projects, Jubilee has devoted a great deal of attention to the problems of unemployment. They were heavily involved in preparations for a 'People's Festival' weekend coinciding with the passing of the *People's March for Jobs* through Birmingham, working with local groups on banners, newsletters and posters, and organising video projects with unemployed youngsters and a series of public meetings to discuss unemployment. Plans are now advanced for a Centre for the Unemployed in Sandwell, and Jubilee are considering the possibility of shifting some of their resources and personnel into such a Centre.

Steve Trow considers the future:

'Our Urban Aid grant runs out next year, and I am not at all sure that it will be renewed at its present level; local government cutbacks have meant that Urban Aid funds are being used much more by local authorities for their own projects, particularly for capital purchases. So this may force us to look hard at our priorities. We have five years of confidence about our work behind us now, and for the company to grow we need to accept that things go in cycles, and it may be time to make some changes.'

Nottingham Arts & Crafts

THE STORY SO FAR

1978 Community arts and crafts centre opened; with strong crafts bias.

1979 *MSC* funded *STEP* team of twelve provide an arts team working in the immediate area — doing puppetry, street theatre, playscheme work and murals.

1980 *MSC* scheme cut. *Inner City Partnership* funds granted for purchase of substantial amounts of photographic, printing, woodwork, pottery and audio visual equipment, as well as a minibus — but not for staff. *East Midlands Arts* grant funds one full-time and one part-time worker. *MSC STEP*

scheme provides three more workers. Project switches to a city-wide resource role — some local contacts lost.

1981 *Inner City Partnership* funds granted for staff — with increased *EMA* funds this allows more permanent appointments. Second *STEP* scheme comes to an end. Decision to create six part-time posts, including a local resources worker to ensure links are maintained in Hyson Green, and to balance the neighbourhood interests with those of the city as a whole.

1982 *MSC CEP* scheme for five workers begins.

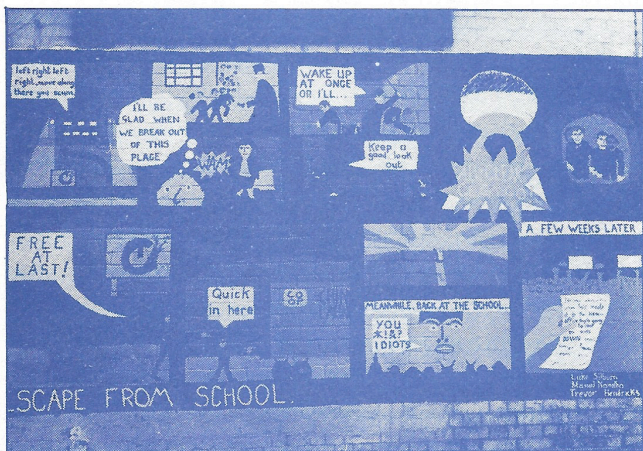
Some community arts projects develop and grow in a straightforward way; others change direction, sometimes several times, until they find the right path. *Nottingham Community Arts and Crafts Centre*, based in the Hyson Green area of the city, began life as a completely voluntary organisation — a fact which has undoubtedly helped in maintaining a strong voluntary commitment to the project through the various changes that have taken place since the Centre opened in 1978. This was the culmination of a year of work by the committee formed at a public meeting in 1977. They persuaded Nottingham City Council to hand over the existing lease on a vacant old dispensary building, and then set up a *YOP* scheme to convert it. The original aim for the building was that it should offer local craftspeople the facilities to earn a living in return for giving free tuition. However, over the next few years new aims evolved.

MSC Funding 'extremely valuable . . . in the right context'

Many of the developments at the *Arts and Crafts Centre* have resulted from the availability of *MSC* funds and personnel. The Centre has run two *STEP* schemes and has *CEP* funding for five workers for 1982. How does Dave Blatchford, originally a *STEP* worker himself and now one of the six part-time staff, feel about *MSC* funding?

'The first twelve-worker project was far too big, and not properly sorted out. We were much more careful the second time around, and it was successful — there were only three MSC workers, and also by then we had other full and part-time staff funded by EMA. The main problem with MSC schemes is lack of continuity; it is essential for all concerned that MSC workers are only part of a team, which is well organised and can give strong direction to the work. Overall I would say that MSC funding has been extremely valuable for us, but it has to be in the right context. Other sources of funds, and permanent workers to provide continuity, are vital.'

Dave Blatchford



'Part-time working has its problems, but I'd be loath to change . . .'

The decision to use their resources to create six part-time, and no full-time posts, must have involved a lot of heart searching for the staff concerned, who then had to find additional part-time work in order to support themselves. This arrangement, however, enables them to give the project a much wider base — providing two print workers, a photographer, two development and administrative workers and one local liaison worker who works mainly with children. With this range of workers the project runs an extensive programme of activities, though the early emphasis on crafts has shrunk. The most recent new development is *The Green Circus*. The *CEP* scheme will allow development of this and other performance and drama work, as well as strengthening the print and photography provision. The Centre team feel they have now achieved the right balance between city-wide and local provision, and are building the project from this firm foundation.

URBAN 2

Specialist Projects

Not all community arts projects attempt to offer a range of media — a number concentrate on a particular art form — photography, murals, drama, dance, music, writing, print — often developing work in the particular field to a very high standard. This is more often true of city projects with wide catchment areas.

Greenwich Mural Workshop



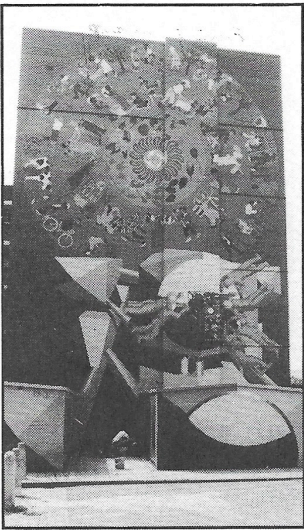
'There is a need to see art as part of peoples' lives; not as something separate . . .' Carol Kenna, formerly of Greenwich Mural Workshop.

Murals must be the most photographed aspect of community arts work — 'before' and 'after' shots are often striking, and a mural is so obviously 'there', a solid result of work done, for everyone to see. There are different ways, though, for the mural to get *there*, on to the wall, not all of which have anything to do with community arts. An artist may be commissioned by a local authority or business sponsor to paint a mural *'to brighten up the neighbourhood'*. A YOP team may be set up to paint murals, working under a supervisor with some visual arts experience. A community group may decide to do a mural, and then look for help to anyone inside or outside the group with some sort of knowledge of how to do it. Or, as in the case of *Greenwich Mural Workshop*, a group of artists may put their talents at the disposal of a neighbourhood.

Greenwich Mural Workshop (GMW) was set up in January 1975 by Carol Kenna, an artist with town planning experience, who had the previous summer visited New York and Chicago, and been very impressed by the way muralists were working with the communities there. She, and the other artists who became involved, were looking for *'an alternative to the present-day alienated position of galleries'* and were convinced of the need to *'see art as part of peoples' lives, not as something separate.'* By 1980 the group had developed into a co-operative with ten members.



They provide the resources for local people, working with them, to produce murals, banners, shop signs, posters, badges, and sometimes total environmental schemes. Murals are the most prominent feature of their work, and over the years these have been painted on playground walls, gable ends, converted churches, portable panels (where a building is to be demolished), schools and shop shutters. They work mainly within the *London Borough of Greenwich*, but in other places when requested. Their experience, both in terms of the techniques of painting outdoor murals, and their method of working with the community, has also meant that they are asked to run training sessions and speak at conferences all over the country.



GMW's way of working with community groups has evolved as the project has developed, and has several vital features:

- * That the community group makes the first contact; approaching GMW because they are interested in doing a mural or similar project.
- * A detailed process of consultation and discussion follows out of which GMW produce at least 8 possible designs for consideration.
- * Finally, the image is agreed. Because of the lengthy process of discussion and debate, it is now certain that the final image is confidently supported by everyone involved. The mural is then executed, by the artists from GMW helped by people from the community; the actual painting may take as long as four months; GMW stress the importance of the highest standards being maintained:

'For the statement to be something that people can be proud of, it has to be well painted. This means that the artists expect a high level of work both from themselves and the people who work with them.'

Joint Funding

Most of the murals have a combination of sponsors; drawn from the ACGB, Greater London Arts Association, the London Borough of Greenwich, paint companies, trusts, schools, and the GLC. The revenue costs of the Workshop are met by a combination of grants from GLAA, Urban Aid, Greenwich Borough Council, the Murals Trust, Lewisham Borough Council, and from earned income.

'We all talk about our neighbourhood, and this is like verbally taking possession of it, of saying this in painting. The mural people are literally taking on an aspect of ownership, improving their territory; changing it to suit the way they would want to see it and use it . . .'

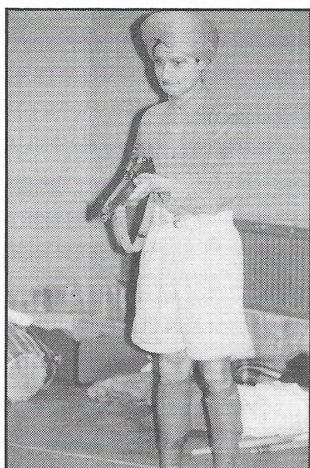
Carol Kenna



Tara Arts Group

'... the group have moved towards a redefinition of ethnic arts. From a concept of ethnic art as an external representation of some imperfectly remembered distant past, to the use of art as a medium for expressing and interpreting our experience here ...

Echo May 1979



In 1976 a young Asian lad was murdered in Southall. Among the many reactions to this was the formation of an Asian community theatre group, *Tara Arts Group*, drawing its members from young Asians all over London. They were, however, wary of simply reacting: *'It was time for a re-assessment — to look again at our lives; we had to do justice to ourselves, realise our potential as a group, exploring our relationships within the group as well as exploring our relationship to white society as a whole.'* Jatinder Verma — one of the founders of Tara, now one of two professional workers, funded by grants from the *ACGB*, the *CRE* and the *London Borough of Wandsworth*.

Tara decided not to take either of the two obvious courses open to them — either to present purely historical material from the Asian sub-continent, or to deal exclusively with current contemporary issues. Instead they evolved a way of combining the two — using traditional stories and legends, or factual historical material in such a way as to make points about life for Asians in Britain today. A play devised by the group in 1980 *'Vilayat — England, your England'*, for example, deals with the attempts of a put-upon but conscientious bank clerk, Ashwin Bhatta, to rise in British society. He moves away from his fellow immigrants into the commuter belt, ignoring his wife's problems in adapting to the British way of life. Ashwin Bhatta's difficulties in dealing with 'authority' in Britain are highlighted by comments from three 'Ghosts of India Past' (an ayah, a lascar, and a barely-tolerated MP) who talk about their own relations with the British raj.

Tara's plays are original and are written in English. *'The languages of the sub continent are important, but they are not the dominant language here. We want our work to be accessible to Asians and non-Asians alike; we play to all kinds of audiences, both in London at an arts and community centres all over Britain.'*

The 20 young people (aged 19-28) involved are all volunteers apart from Jatinder Verma, who is *Tara's* writer, and came to the group having studied Indian literature and history, and Paul Bhattacharjee, the Administrator-Director, who has a background in youth theatre work — with a group in Harrow, and the *National Youth Theatre*.

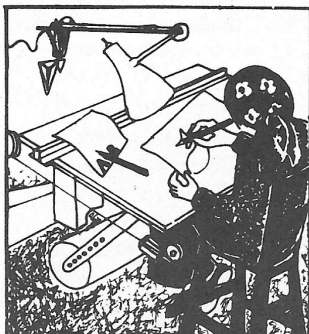
Tara meet four evenings a week for rehearsals and workshop sessions at the Milland Centre in Tooting, to develop skills in singing, dancing and general performance. They work extremely hard, producing at least three plays a year, performing generally at weekends. The group is open to anyone interested; there are no auditions for entry.

How have the more recent troubles in Southall and other areas affected their work? *'We always hold discussions after each show with the audience and these now have a greater depth. Basically what has happened serves to revalidate our position — we have to do justice to ourselves as people not as problems. We are the new culture in Britain, expressing Asian experience through the English language and theatre conventions — it's a peculiar mixture and it reflects the conflicts in our personal lives. All the time we have to move between the two poles of our experience.'*

Jatinder Verma

Print Shops

Things have changed since the days when voluntary groups either hand wrote their posters, or ordered them from the local letterpress printer (often large black letters on yellow or orange paper!) True, many groups still use these means to publicise their activities, but a large number also now have access to facilities where they can produce exciting publicity material, and be involved in part or all of the printing process.



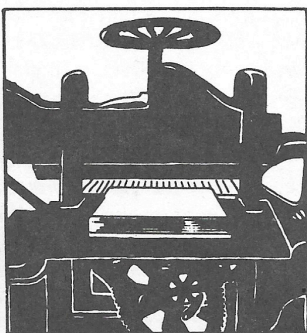
Artwork



Offset Litho



Silkscreen



Finishing



Community Print Shops developed out of initiatives from two directions — first, community workers and others involved with voluntary groups became convinced that people were not exploring the full potential of publicity — often not thinking beyond a couple of posters in shop windows or an entry under 'Clubs and Societies' in the local paper. Community Newspapers began to appear, training courses in 'using the media' — press, radio and TV — were started, and people began to get interested not only in writing about their community, but in learning how to print the written material.

At the same time, community artists, particularly those with a visual arts background, realised that design, graphics, lay-out and the techniques of different types of printing were clearly useful skills that they could offer to local people. More than this, to be able to provide actual printing equipment as a community resource meant that people could be involved in writing, design, and then in making up plates or stencils, and printing the newspaper, book or poster themselves. Not only was this cheaper than commercial printers, but it led people to think much more deeply about the whole business of publicity, the media, and publishing.

Community Print Shops were set up, sometimes connected to resource or advice centres, sometimes as part of community arts projects with a wider range of activities (as at Telford and the recently established *Commonground Community Arts Resource Centre* in Sheffield), and sometimes as community arts projects concentrating on print (as at *Paddington* and *Bath Print Shops*). The range of equipment offered varies from project to project, but usually includes some of the following — basic stencil duplicating (often with a 'scanner'), letterpress printing, silk screen techniques (both for fabric and paper), and off-set lithography. Training is also given in design, lay-out, and photographic techniques associated with printing, as well as printing techniques themselves.

Some Print Shops offer a printing *service* for community groups, whereby they print material *for* people, for a price that does include labour charges, and also offer *self-help* opportunities, usually just for the cost of the materials involved. A problem faced by all Print Shops is that, as in any printing business, equipment wears out, and therefore income must be raised to cover repairs or replacements. There is then pressure to take on 'service' work to raise funds. This can mean that staff have less time for training the 'self-helpers'. All community arts Print Shops, though, are strongly committed to the importance of maintaining and improving artistic standards in the material published by community groups, and it is for this element in their work that they receive arts subsidy from the ACGB or RAA's.

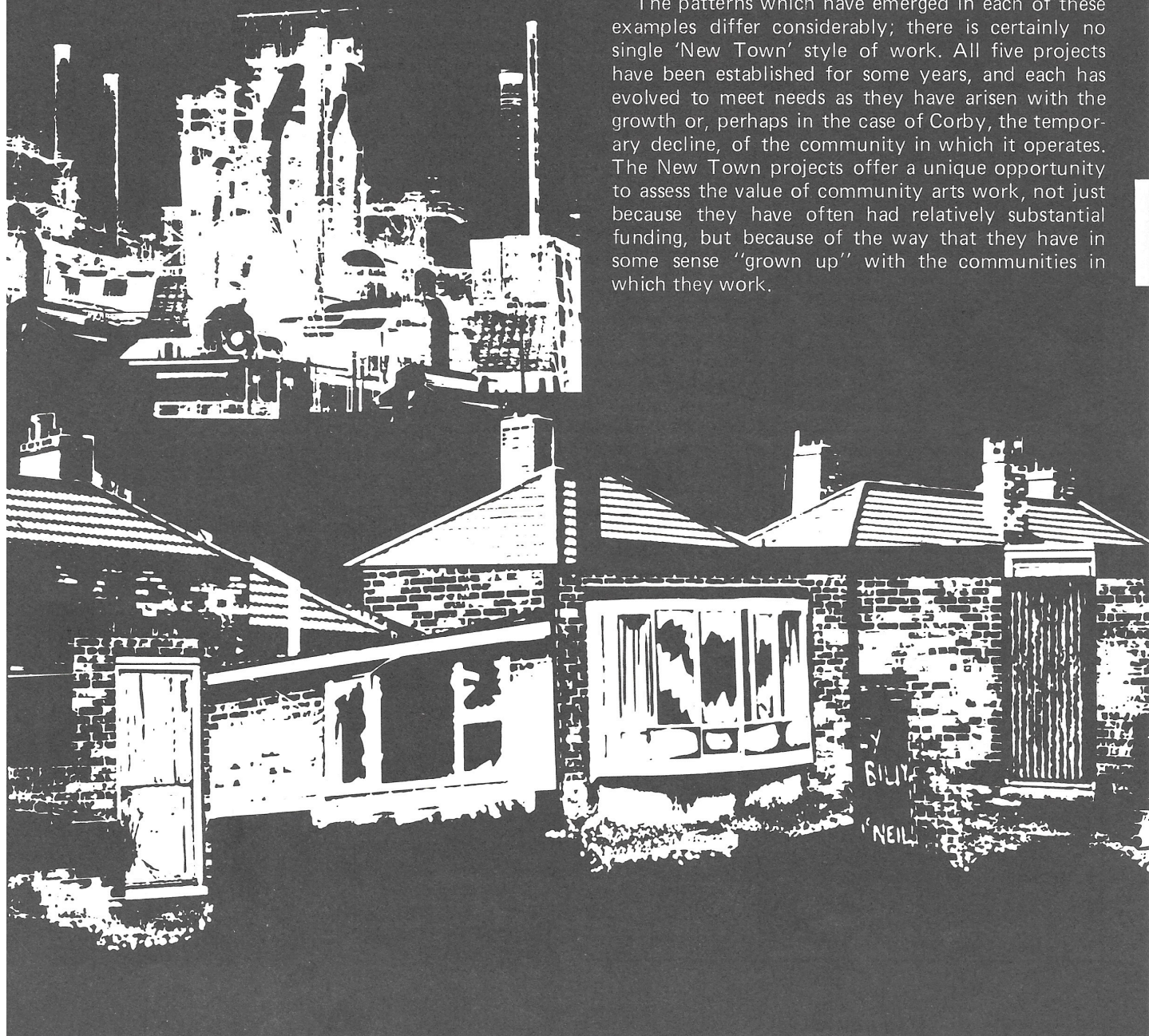
Those new to the idea of Community Print Shops might imagine that commercial printers would react against this form of competition — this is seldom the case. The silkscreen and the offset-litho of the community printshop replace the felt-tipped and crayoned poster and the duplicated handout, not the work of commercial printers. Most Print Shops rely on a good relationship with local printers, as often they need to go to them for advice, or for finishing on certain jobs, where they do not have the appropriate equipment and the arrangement is sometimes reciprocal.

NEW TOWNS

NEW GHOST TOWN-TOWN?

An atmosphere of experiment and innovation, positive initiatives from development corporations, the availability of interesting premises and work-spaces; the needs of residents to become involved in their new communities, particularly once the first flurry of settling-in is over, and perhaps the most telling of all, the pressure on both residents and corporations to accelerate a community-building process that normally takes years — these must be among the reasons why many of the New Towns have community arts projects.

The patterns which have emerged in each of these examples differ considerably; there is certainly no single 'New Town' style of work. All five projects have been established for some years, and each has evolved to meet needs as they have arisen with the growth or, perhaps in the case of Corby, the temporary decline, of the community in which it operates. The New Town projects offer a unique opportunity to assess the value of community arts work, not just because they have often had relatively substantial funding, but because of the way that they have in some sense "grown up" with the communities in which they work.





- ◆ A fabric mural made in a women's textile workshop on the Sutton Hill Estate seeming at first glance, to be traditional patchwork — though when you look again you can see each piece shows a woman in the dole queue.
- ◆ *Wheels in Motion*, a play dealing with transport through the ages and the transport problems of Telford today, is one of the works devised and developed by *Malinslee Drama Group*.
- ◆ A set of 100 posters dealing with girls' lives, created by a group of teenage girls at *Telford Printshop*.

There is a common approach among these and other local groups which TCA works with — these local people — teenagers and adults — use both traditional and more recently developed media to express their immediate concerns — unemployment, the family, youth problems, health, transport and so on — in an original and imaginative way, using arts techniques acquired with the help of the TCA workers. For example, the women working on the fabric mural not only learn or relearn the skills involved in textile work, they use the mural to make a point about the position of women today.

Slow and Steady Growth

Telford Community Arts has grown slowly and steadily since its foundation in 1974; from a two to a seven full-time worker project. The main emphasis is on work with teenagers and adults, meeting in regular workshop groups, the majority of which have been formed with the help of TCA workers.

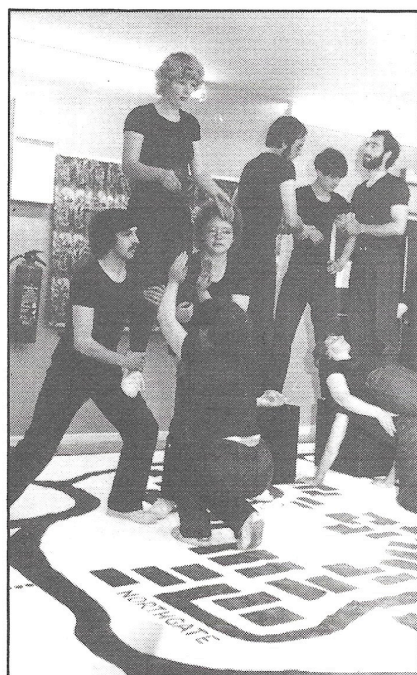
Drama was one of the first media to be used by TCA. They now work with groups in Sutton Hill and Malinslee, and have recently formed the *Diggers* political street theatre group. Productions are evolved through improvisation and have covered such topics as transport, the family, health, and the effects of the Industrial Revolution.

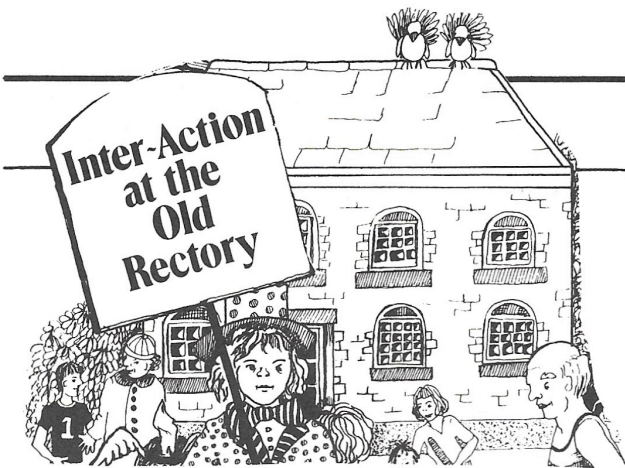
'We have a lot of fun at drama, but sometimes it's hard work as well, and we have to really stick to it. One thing I realised straight away is that to be able to join in our sort of group properly you have to learn to trust the rest of the group with your feelings' Jean Clarke, member Malinslee Drama Group

Print, photography and publishing have really taken off since the setting up of the Print Shop in Madeley High Street; this has led to a burgeoning of publications — a regular community newspaper, books for children, teenage magazines, environmental campaign posters and local history books, all produced by local groups.

One of the children's books, *Morning till Night*, a simple picture book showing a day in the life of a four-year-old, arose from discussions among a group in Malinslee about the style and assumptions of most children's books.

'We have tried to base the story on our experiences of local life with our children, so we've included collecting family allowance, meeting older children at school, going to a neighbour's house and other familiar situations . . . we have tried to avoid the cliches that so often appear in children's books . . .' Woman involved in the production group for *Morning till Night*





Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes is the largest of the New Towns, and the one where the most resources have been pumped into experiments of various kinds. Is this environment, where innovations are two-a-penny, an advantage or a drawback? *'We like working here'*, says Dick Chamberlain, one of the full-time workers at Inter-Action, *'and most of the people we work with seem to like living here. That's not to say there aren't any social problems; unemployment is high, and there are many single parent families making a new start in Milton Keynes.'*

But there is a lot of energy in the town — though things have perhaps calmed down a bit from the heady atmosphere of a couple of years ago when almost anything went.

'We've had to become very good at getting resources — our Corporation grant is being progressively reduced, and we came very late to Regional Arts funding. We raise a lot of income ourselves through fees for training, schools and social services work, hiring out our marquee, fund raising events of various kinds at fetes and the like, and we reckon we'll get more than £1000 this year in donations.'

New City Project with Practical Approach to Problems

The practicality of *Town & Country Inter-Action's* approach to financial problems could be the result of several years of having to find solutions to the difficulties involved in renovating the derelict building they were given by the Corporation as a base. The Old Rectory is a 17th Century building, surrounded by three acres of wood and farm land, and the refurbishing of the house itself, the clearing, landscaping and planting of the grounds, and the eventual setting up of a City Farm on the site, have meant an enormous amount of work for the *Inter-Action* staff, assisted by a large number of volunteers. A YOP scheme now continues the work, one of their most recent ventures being the equipping of an Arts and Crafts Room in the house. An unusual mixture of activities goes on at the Old Rectory — farm visits by school groups, a Horse Group, Gardening Club, Rent-a-Bike scheme, a number of boats, a Woodland Walk, along with a range of community arts projects — play events, fire shows, radio work in the sound studio, community arts training courses, folk dance evenings, all over the Milton Keynes area.

Thematic Play

A prominent feature of *Inter-Action's* work is what is called a 'thematic' approach to play — instead of organising a succession of unrelated games or craft sessions, every activity is linked to a central theme — such as Space or Horror. This approach is not uncommon, but the *Inter-Action* team have made it one of their specialities,

Adapting for use in a community arts context the approach they have learnt from training and joint projects with the spectacular performance group *Welfare State International*, *Inter-Action* have become increasingly involved in organising large scale outdoor celebratory events.

Drama work is also being done on a large scale — *Inter-Action* worker Roger Kitchen, and Roy Nevitt, drama director at the Stantonbury Campus (three-school campus on the edge of New Bradwell), have worked together on a documentary drama production about people who went away from the area to the 1914-18 war, based largely on the memories of one man — 87 year old Hawtin Mundy.





Northampton

An Arts Development Officer for Northampton, Clare Higney, was appointed in 1978, because the Development Corporation 'recognised that its responsibility did not rest with the physical provision of homes, schools, industries and community buildings'. Certainly Northampton Development Corporation has backed this conviction up with resources, investing approximately £70,000 a year in the Arts Development Dept. (about £10,000 of which is used in direct grant aid to community groups), which now employs a staff of six.

Arts Development has worked over several years with a number of groups to help them become independent, such as the children's *Suitcase Circus* group, and an activities project in the eastern part of the town, called *Wotzit*. This grew out of a programme called *Summer Holiday* mounted by Arts Development in 1979. This was so successful that a group of residents decided to carry on this type of work, but on a year round basis, organising social events, craft sessions, play events, fetes and entertainment at Christmas, Easter, as well as over the summer break.

A considerable bank of resources is available through the Arts Development Department to community groups interested in the arts — information, advice, training, and a wide range of equipment available on loan. The department also publishes a regular *What's On* booklet, and a teenage magazine, and provides assistance to the community publishing project *Shoemaker Press*.

Corby

Corby Community Arts was founded in 1976 as the result of a joint initiative from East Midlands Arts and Corby District Council. The project was heavily involved in the efforts to save the Corby Steel Works, encouraging a creative aspect to the campaign through poster design, exhibitions, banners etc. and the workers have since continued banner making with members of various local union branches. Corby's only bookshop, *Bookplace* was set up by the project, who have organised a number of publishing ventures, including *Corby Voice* the New Town's first community newspaper. Help with print and design is also offered to local groups at the project's *Print Shop*.

Peterlee

Peterlee Community Arts has been run since July 1980 by Keith Armstrong, a North East poet who has been active in community publishing for some years. He has helped form an *East Durham Writers' Workshop* who publish anthologies of work, organise evenings of readings and other entertainment, and are about to launch a regular magazine *Fall-Out*. The project has also been involved in photography, visual arts and exhibition work, and a major exhibition is to be launched in July 1982 on the subject of the Durham Miners' Gala.

