



Rowan Arts

Annual Review - May 2011



Stithwalkers 'The Wrong Size' at Halloween in Holloway 2009 in Royal Northern Gardens, Photograph by James Royall

Introduction

Since 2003 when Rowan Arts began, we have created, delivered and partnered on a great many projects and activities. In a time of financial uncertainty for all, we wish to remain focused on producing high quality events and activities that will enable us to achieve our aims.

Illustrating our endeavours, two recent projects stand out for me: Making Inroads, which tells the story of forty people who have come to live or work around London's Holloway Road; and Islington Exhibits, which developed from a 2009 project in Archway to a borough-wide enterprise, unlocking venues and displaying a range of art and craft. Both projects drew on the support and enthusiasm of local volunteers and partners, whilst providing the means by which people could connect with others around them in unusual and unexpected ways - brought together often by a shared experience, location or interest in the arts. Rowan Arts has also been committed to creating a legacy, often digital, to catalogue and record our work and the experiences of the people involved – to be accessed by anyone, anywhere, anytime. I would like to thank our staff and volunteers who have worked with dedication and passion on our projects, and our partners, supporters, funders and audiences who have all ensured we can continue to operate towards achieving our vision - we have valued their collaboration.



Harriet Carter, Chair,
On behalf of the Board of Trustees

The last year has been challenging for Rowan Arts, as for many other voluntary sector organisations. Despite this, we have been able to move forward by developing our digital presence, putting on some very successful projects and attracting excellent volunteers. Our Making Inroads: Stories of Putting Down Roots on and around Holloway Road project finished and we launched the book and website in summer 2010. The response has been overwhelmingly positive and this has allowed us to recognise the great potential for community building in telling the stories of 'ordinary' people – a theme we are continuing in the south of the borough with the project Plunging into History - Stories from Ironmonger Road Baths and Beyond.

Our websites have been attracting visitors from all over the world, including the United States, Australia, Brazil, China and Saudi Arabia - in the last year they have received over 12,000 unique visitors. The total number of audiences for all our events was around 13,000, which was an increase of nearly 4,000 on the previous year. We have launched our 'friends' scheme and put on a fundraising comedy event. Our excellent volunteers and freelance staff make our work possible. As ever, the Board of Trustees has supported the organisation and advocated for Rowan Arts' work in the fast changing external environment. We feel confident that Rowan Arts can continue to develop and innovate.



Ruth Robinson, Coordinator

Our Projects

Connecting Conversations

We produced seven Connecting Conversations events during the year. The aim of the series is to examine the creative processes and practices of artists through discussions with practitioners from the world of psychoanalysis. Highlights of the series were artist Grayson Perry discussing his work in the context of his identity and poet Wendy Cope's candid exploration of the impact of therapy on her writing career. Partners included the British Library, Byam Shaw School of Art, the Freud Museum, London Metropolitan University, the Institute of Psychoanalysis, the Psychoanalysis Unit at University College London and the Women's Therapy Centre.

Halloween in Holloway

We produced Halloween in Holloway for the fifth time in 2009 during autumn half term. A week of activities saw participants involved in making costumes and decorations, creating a 'spooky' soundtrack for an outdoor event held at Royal Northern Gardens and North Library. We worked in partnership with the Friends of Royal Northern Gardens to deliver the final event, which included a glow in the dark juggling performances from Gandini Juggling, live music and a light-up stilt-walking performance. Project Leader Megan Dowsett worked with seven volunteers aged 16-25 to produce the workshops and activities over the week, helping them to gain experience and skills in the creative sector. Throughout September and October we ran weekly after school workshops at Tufnell Park Primary School with funding from local councillor Tracy Ismail. We secured funding from First Light to produce a 'scary movie' film making project for young people with production company Chocolate Films, which took place at Hargrave Park Primary School in the half term week. Both films were shown on a large screen outside North Library during the final event.

Archway Winter Craft Fair

Working with Anna Woodward, Archway Town Centre Manager, we produced Archway Winter Craft Fair in December 2009 at Archway Methodist Church. It was attended by over 500 people. The two day event included free workshops for young and old, including pottery, badge-making, weaving and making your own wrapping paper. As well as the workshops there was a variety of craft-stalls offering people affordable and contemporary gifts made by craft-makers from London and beyond.



Connecting Conversations with Grayson Perry and Valerie Sinason

'The creative people who have presented their ideas and work in Connecting Conversations have broadened and deepened my understanding of what it means to be human. Connecting Conversations is an invaluable resource for anyone working in the arts and mental health.'

Donald Campbell
Former Chair of the Portman Clinic, The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust



Parade in Royal Northern Gardens at Halloween in Holloway 2009

'Being creative can be fun'
Children's workshops participant at Archway Winter Craft Fair



A stall at Archway Winter Craft Fair

Our Projects

'It's so important to have a project that explores the idea of roots - where we come from and where we plant roots later in life'

Daniela Essart

Making Inroads participant



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Danny Simani, Making Inroads participant

'The Making Inroads site is an amazing website. I know about a third of the people on there!'

Mina Hunt

Holloway resident



Mosaics made by the Urban Craft Club

'The workshop not only fosters individual creativity, but it also cultivates constructive growth and a sense of belonging, neighbourhood-wide'

Urban Craft Club participant

Making Inroads: A Story of Putting Down Roots

Making Inroads, a project exploring the rich cultural heritage of Holloway Road through the stories of people who live and work there, was completed in 2010. The project was funded by Heritage Lottery Fund and featured forty participants, all of whom have come to live or work on or near Holloway Road from another country or another part of the UK. Participants were photographed with an object that connected them to the place where they grew up, and were interviewed about how they have come to live in the area.

Photographer Ruth Corney and oral history interviewer Tagreed Ismail worked with a team of volunteers who received training in photography and oral history interviewing. The participants came from a wide range of backgrounds, including an Ecuadorian chef, an Italian aerial performer, a teacher from Leicestershire and a Polish tailor. The photographs and interviews were used to create a book, website and exhibition which were launched during Holloway Arts Festival 2010. The touring exhibition was initially displayed at Islington Central Library and has since moved to St. Luke's Community Centre, Islington Museum and the Old Fire Station. All 3000 books have been given away and we are currently fundraising for a reprint. The photos and sound files were deposited at the London Metropolitan Archives.

Urban Craft Club

The Urban Craft Club was launched in October 2009 with funding from The Transformation Fund. It functions as an informal learning environment for adults, aiming to reach people from a range of backgrounds and experiences. Weekly sessions were run by Project Leader Megan Dowsett throughout 2009 and 2010 and the group worked on projects including felt-making, mosaic-making, tapestry-weaving and model-making. They produced decorations for Halloween in Holloway, held a drop-in workshop at Archway Winter Craft Fair and ran workshops at Holloway Arts Festival as well as hosting an exhibition as part of Islington Exhibits. The Friends of Royal Northern Gardens raised funding to enable us to work with them to continue the club in summer 2010 with a recycling theme.

From autumn 2010 Nicola Pomery ran the club with funding from Richard Cloudesley targeting it at 50% of participants in recovery from mental illness. Referrals were received from Creativity centre, Islington Mind Employment Projects, Highgate Centre, Hanley Road Centre, Islington Mind, Islington Mind Day Centre and Womens Therapy Day Centre.

Plunging into History — Stories from Ironmonger Row Baths and Beyond

We embarked upon an oral history and photography project exploring the history and culture of Ironmonger Row Baths and the surrounding area in EC1. The project, funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, features the stories and portraits of people who have used the baths in the years since its opening in 1931. The baths consist of a swimming pool, a slipper bath, a gym, a Turkish bath and a public laundry. They closed in May 2010 for major refurbishment, reopening in summer 2012.

Ruth Robinson is leading the project. Photographer Ruth Corney has been visually documenting the users of the baths and the refurbishment. Oral historian Dr Catherine O'Byrne worked with Assistant Project Leader Polly Rodgers and a team of volunteers to conduct oral history interviews.

Volunteers are involved in all aspects of documenting the history of the baths and the area through photographs, interviews and local historical research to create a website, a book and an exhibition which will be produced to accompany the baths' reopening in 2012.

Islington Exhibits

In 2010 we formed a partnership with Cubitt Education and St Luke's Centre to develop our 2009 open studios project, Archway Open House into the borough-wide project Islington Exhibits. Working to unlock hidden venues in and just beyond the borough, Islington Exhibits showcased the work of 180 artists in over forty exhibitions. Venues included shops, cafes, community centres, schools, churches and office buildings as well as conventional galleries. The ten day programme featured thirty-one events, including talks, workshops and guided exhibition tours. One artist said the exhibitions enabled her to become more 'involved with the spaces and fabric of Islington'.

Seven organisations and venues across Islington took on an artist-in-residence as part of Islington Exhibits, including Archway Herbal Clinic, Islington Council Town Hall, St Luke's Centre and St Martin of Tours Housing Association. Research residencies took place at The Estorick Collection, The Claremont Project and Culpeper Community Gardens. Islington Arts Factory hosted their annual Summer Salon showing the work of local artists, graduates and emerging talent.



The Optimists Swimming Club at Ironmonger Row Baths

'Ironmonger Row Baths has a long and colourful history and has touched the lives of a huge cross-section of the local community. *Plunging into History* is a great example of how Rowan Arts creatively celebrates the everyday gems in our neighbourhoods.

Loan Tran
Rowan Arts Trustee



Cubitt Education's pop up drawing workshops during Islington Exhibits

'For weeks, the clinic buzzed with a vibrant undertone as one by one, staff, patients, and students were drawn into a series of interviews, creative explorations and art production in the form of performance, photographs, sculpture, poetry and design

Kathryn Lwin Brooks
Director, Archway Herbal Clinic,
Islington Exhibits Artist-in-Residence host organisation

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Our Projects



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'High Tea' performance at Holloway Arts Festival's Big Day Out

'It was a lovely evening - the talent was an exceptionally high standard'

Audience member at Holloway Arts Festival 2010's Female Singer Songwriter Final

'On a scale of 1 to 10, it's a massive 10'

Attendee at Holloway Arts Festival 2010's Big Day Out



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Pedal-powered film screenings at Holloway Arts Festival's Big Day Out

'We were a partner on the 2010 Finsbury Arts Festival and Islington Exhibits. As our partnership continues to flourish, I'd like to thank them for their ongoing support in helping deliver community art activities in South Islington'

Keren Wiltshire
Centre Manager, St Luke's Centre

Holloway Arts Festival 2010

Over 3,000 people took part in Holloway Arts Festival 2010, which ran from 24 June to 4 July. The festival featured thirty-one events, which took place at a variety of venues in and around Holloway and featured local and international talent.

We held two new competitions. The Female Singer Songwriter Competition was won by Holloway resident Ellie Roswell. We have worked with her to support her development and she will perform at the festival in 2011 with her new band Wolf Alice. The Battle of the Bands was won by Scarlett in the Wilderness who have gone on to have success on a national level and continue to be supported by Rowan Arts. We attracted a high standard of judges and entrants.

The Big Day Out in Whittington Park, the festival's outdoor event, attracted more than 1,250 people for a free day of music, dance performances, street theatre, short film screenings, stalls and arts activities. One highlight was an interactive performance 'High Tea', which was produced by volunteer Rebecca Coward and depicted a group of 1950s Girl Guides trying to gain their hostess badges while the audience joined in with their tea party.

Work with Other Organisations

Further to the partnership work already mentioned, we worked with the following:

We are developing a significant partnership with Holloway Neighbourhood Group, who run the Old Fire Station community centre. We have been producing projects and events together, such as Pop Up Holloway and First Fridays and First Saturdays and they have come on board as a partner in Islington Exhibits.

Our partnership working with St Luke's Centre has been developing, particularly through Islington Exhibits. We continued to support St Luke's volunteer programme and helped them to continue Finsbury Arts Festival.

We continued to support local film organisation Reel Islington. They produced a film screening event as part of Halloween in Holloway in North Library. We worked with them on their Summer Screenings as part of Holloway Arts Festival.

We worked with several schools in the borough, including Grafton Primary School, Hargrave Park Extended Community School, Tufnell Park Primary School and Yerbury Primary School.

Culture Nights/Pop Up Holloway

We started these new ventures early in 2011. Both aim to get the arts into community venues such as the Floirin Pub and the Old Fire Station on an ongoing basis.

Volunteering

In 2009/10 we provided more than forty volunteering opportunities across all of our projects. Some volunteers worked on specific projects, while others helped with admin and marketing activities. We took on three employees through the government's Future Jobs Fund scheme, which supports young people in paid work placements.

PQASSO

We were assessed for the PQASSO quality assurance system (Level 2) and it has been recommended to Charities Evaluation Services that we be awarded the Quality Mark.

Legal and Administrative Detail

For year ending 31 August 2010

Bankers

CAF Bank (UK) Limited
25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4JQ

Independent examiner

Steve Brown ACMA

Trustees

During the period 1 September 2009 - 31 August 2010

Harriet Gallagher, Chair
Loan Tran, Vice Chair
Judy Dixey, Treasurer
Zena Gani, Trustee/Child Protection Officer
Holly Jones, Trustee
Jemma McDonagh, Trustee

'I am really happy with how much I have learnt and how much responsibility I was entrusted with in my role.'

Amy Smith

Rowan Arts Volunteer



Artist Kit Poulson conducts a guided tour of Islington Council Town Hall during Islington Exhibits

'Rowan Arts is a vital part of Islington's cultural landscape. As well as bringing high quality arts to the local area, the organisations, events and activities give people the chance to discover and unlock their creative potential. Rowan Arts provides a myriad of opportunities for residents to get actively involved in the arts as a participant, audience member, artist or volunteer.'

Pete Courtie

Arts Officer, Islington Council



The launch of the Making Inroads Exhibition at Central Library

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Income and Expenditure for 2009/10

Income and Expenditure for 2009/10

	2010	2009
Income	£168,585	£140,000
Expenditure	£165,988	£134,591
Surplus for year	£2,597	£5,409

Balance Sheet at 31 August 2010

	2010	2009
Total assets	£41,079	£24,775
Liabilities	£22,276	£8,570
Net assets	£18,802	16,205
Unrestricted funds	£24,102	£10,431
Restricted funds	(£5,300)	£5,774
Total funds	£18,802	£16,205

Income/Expenditure for 2009/10 Detail

Income

Core activities	
Voluntary income	£31,633
Earned income	£612
Total core income	£32,245

Project-based

Voluntary income	£120,150
Earned income	£16,190
Total project income	£136,340

Expenditure

Core expenditure	
Cost of generating funds	£4,630
Governance Costs	£1,500
Staff, volunteers & central costs	£36,396
Total core expenditure	£42,526

Project expenditure

Archway Winter Craft Fair	£3,105
Connecting Conversations	£7,914
Halloween in Holloway	£30,930
Holloway Arts Festival 2010	£21,153
Making Inroads	£32,222
Plunging into History	£26,001
Urban Craft Club	£2,137
Total project expenditure	£123,462



Connecting Conversations event with choreographer and dancer Alicia Alonso and psychoanalyst Luis Rodríguez de la Sierra

'I was particularly impressed by the enthusiasm, drive and energy shown by staff, trustees and volunteers across all tiers of the organisation. It is clear that Rowan Arts is driven by a desire to develop high quality products and activities.'

PQASSO Quality Mark Assessor

Acknowledgements

Partners

Archway Methodist Church
British Library
Byam Shaw School of Art
Chocolate Films
Cubitt Education
Freud Museum
Friends of Whittington Park
Friends of Royal Northern Gardens
Holloway Neighbourhood Group
Institute of Psychoanalysis
Islington Arts Factory
London Metropolitan University
Octopus Community Network
Reel Islington Screenings
St Luke's Parochial Trust
Women's Therapy Centre
University College London:
Psychoanalysis Unit

Our volunteers

A big thank you to more eighty volunteers who have supported the work of Rowan Arts.

'We thought the event went brilliantly - great atmosphere and 111 attendees! We really enjoyed working in partnership with Rowan Arts as well at the Islington Chamber of Commerce and the Estorick. We were delighted to support an initiative like Islington Exhibits, which is a fantastic opportunity to increase access to the arts in Islington, to encourage artists to see Islington as a canvas and to promote opportunities for the arts and business sector to work innovatively together.'

Katy Fattuhi

Director, Creative Islington,

Partner in Islington Exhibits networking event

Funders and sponsors

Archway Town Centre
Awards for All
First Light
Friends of Royal Northern Gardens
Heritage Lottery Fund
Islington Council
Richard Cloudesley's Charity
The Transformation Fund
The V Project

We worked with the following schools and young people's groups

Cornwallis Youth and Play Project
Hargrave Park Extended Community School
Tufnell Park Primary School
Yerbury Primary School



Islington Exhibits networking event at the Estorick Collection

Acknowledgements

With thanks to all those who have supported our work, including:

Absolute Print
Aquaterra Leisure
Archway Herbal Clinic
Archway Market
Archway Town Centre Manager
Arsenal in the Community
Blackwell's Holloway
The Boston Arms
Budgens
Caxton House Community Centre
Complete Music and Sound
Continental Drifts
Creative Islington
Culpeper Community Garden
The Claremont Project
The Estorick Collection
Film and Video Workshop
Freeport Records
The Handweavers Studio and Gallery

Holloway Odeon
Islington Council
Islington Library Service
Islington Museum
Islington Time Bank Network
Jackson's Lane
Jane Garfield
John Jones
Legend Press
London Metropolitan Archives
Map Gift Shop
Nash Newsagent
Manor Gardens Centre
St John's Tavern
St Martin of Tours Housing Association
Tufnell Park Parents Support Group
Whittington Park Community Association
Yerbury Home School Association
500 Restaurant



'When we did that event, we had a gentlemen who was teaching kids how to make books. Just little, simple books. It takes fifteen minutes and you have a book! He showed me how to make one and I got all excited and went home and showed my son how to do it, then he got all excited and made some books. It was great and we just never would have done that...'

Participant at Pop Up Holloway

Stained glass window making at Pop Up Holloway

About Rowan Arts

Mission Statement:

We aim to act as a catalyst for social change through the arts. Our projects create space for exchanges and experiences that improve lives and enhance a sense of place.

Operating out of Holloway, North London, we:

- Produce high quality events and projects
- Train and support volunteers
- Document our work and create a digital legacy
- Build and participate in partnerships
- Work collaboratively
- Foster talent
- Value fun and enjoyment

We aspire to work in a way that:

- Addresses inequality
- Unlocks potential
- Challenges prejudice
- Includes everyone

For more information about what we do, visit our website: www.therowanartsproject.com

'Holloway Arts Festival's Big Day Out is a great event. I've been living here for 30 years and seen significant change occur. If we are to take care of our youth, a tighter and more caring community must emerge.'

Nash Patel

Landlord at the Floirin Pub,

563 Holloway Road,

Proprietor of Nash Newsagent,

678 Holloway Road



Drawing of Nash Newsagent by Laurie Lipton

