



DELIVERING PARTICIPATORY THEATRE DURING SOCIAL DISTANCING: WHAT'S WORKING?

JULY 2020



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Throughout June 2020 Collective Encounters ran a series of free events exploring how the participatory theatre sector was responding to COVID-19 and the effect lockdown and social distancing was having on participants, participatory theatre makers and their practice.

The events were attended by over 320 participatory theatre makers, creative learning managers, engagement managers, choreographers, drama teachers, lecturers, HE course leads, artistic directors, producers, choir leaders and researchers. This report documents the findings from these events.

**COLLECTIVE ENCOUNTERS AND THE
CENTRE FOR EXCELLENCE IN
PARTICIPATORY THEATRE**

Collective Encounters specialises in using theatre as a tool for social change. Established in 2004 and based in Liverpool the company delivers a place-based participatory programme across the Liverpool City Region including:

- residencies that look to empower communities in Bootle, Birkenhead & Liverpool to get involved in producing and making theatre.
- projects with young carers, looked after children and young people, those living in poverty and those newly arrived.
- a multi-faceted programme to enable women to use creativity as a tool in their pathway to safety, confidence and activism.
- theatre and performance projects with rough sleepers and the homeless community in Liverpool.
- touring new work to new public spaces to reach new audiences.

In 2019 Collective Encounters launched the UK's first **Centre for Excellence in Participatory Theatre** to explore the notion of 'excellence' and participation and inform, support and advocate for the participatory theatre sector. Since its launch Collective Encounters' **Centre for Excellence in Participatory Theatre** has established

- A new training programme in participatory theatre delivery for people from diverse backgrounds at the early stage of their career.
- A library of academic resources, toolkits and policy papers pertaining to participatory practice.
- A timeline highlighting the key moments in the development of community theatre in the UK over the last 60 years.
- A global map of participatory theatre practitioners.
- A series of short accessible films explaining key terms such as 'power sharing' and 'cultural democracy'.
- A masterclass programme and seminars exploring different aspects of participatory theatre practice.



A production image from Collective Encounters Youth Theatre show *The Streets Where the Stories Live*, planned to be revived for festivals nationally for Summer 2020 and now unlikely to be remounted

COVID-19 AND THE PARTICIPATORY THEATRE SECTOR

Collaboration, solidarity and **creativity** are core values of the participatory theatre sector, and these can clearly be seen in the way the sector has responded to the existential risk posed by COVID-19. Organisations such as **Curious Minds, Voluntary Arts England, Arts Chain, Company Three, ArtWorks Alliance** and **64 Million Artists** were just some of the organisations that very quickly organised events or distributed information to support other artists and organisations to navigate lockdown and social distancing. New approaches to managing communications; new safeguarding guidelines for delivering activities during social distancing; new lists of games and exercises that could be delivered online have all been shared openly, with urgency and generosity by predominately Arts Council England funded companies. Participatory theatre companies and touring companies such as **Cardboard Citizens, London Bubble** and **Open Clasp** and many more have made some of their performances freely available for online viewing.

The participatory theatre workforce, like much of the arts and cultural sector, is predominantly made up of **freelance workers, often working in isolation on multiple projects** for a number of arts and non-arts organisations. Many of these artists were trying to find ways in which their work, and the support they provide to individuals and whole communities, could continue. There was an increasing need to ensure new information and guidance shared was being cascaded to these individual freelancers, and to bring the sector together to **collectively devise new ways to respond to the challenges of COVID-19** and identify further areas for support and development. By its very nature being 'responsive' leads into unknown and potentially uncharted territory. Nevertheless, and much like participatory theatre workshop practice, being responsive can bring about creative, joyous moments that help shoulder the uncertainties of a changing world and a changing sector.

Collective Encounters works with very vulnerable individuals and groups, and in late February 2020 we became increasingly aware of the health risk the coronavirus COVID-19 posed to project participants and our workforce. The statistics from China & Italy were showing an alarmingly high death rate for older people and those with underlying health conditions. We responded with additional office & creative space cleaning measures, encouraged all staff to work from home and the situation was monitored daily.

Collective Encounters' office and workshop space is directly opposite Liverpool Lime Street, the city's mainline train station. When on March 11 over 3000 football fans travelled from Madrid to Liverpool (despite the fact part of Spain was already in lockdown), Collective Encounters made the decision to cease all public facing events with immediate effect to protect the company's workforce, participants and audiences.

It is a testament to the commitment of Collective Encounters' participants, voluntary sector partners, funders and workforce that the majority of our place-based programme and Centre for Excellence in Participatory Theatre programme quickly pivoted online. By late March participatory theatre workshops, along with the masterclass and training programme, were taking place via Zoom and digital performances were being showcased on various video and live streaming platforms. We also commissioned emerging local artists to create new participatory digital works in response to the theme of community power and action.

It was in this background that Collective Encounters decided to host a series of events to enable the participatory theatre workforce to come together. These events were not intended to prove anything, and the information within this report wasn't developed out of a research agenda, but out of human and political immediacy, and in response to the articulated need of peers to 'come together and discuss the situation'. There were no units of measurement and no theoretical framework.

The aim of the events was to open a space for **consultation**, **conversation** and **collaboration** for participatory theatre makers. Themes such as the five contained in this report were suggested but the agenda remained open and their only agreed purpose was to develop an understanding of participatory theatre practice in a Covid-19 era and its ramifications for the future. Event hosts were required to document the sessions, facilitate introductions, introduce themes and keep the conversation going. Hosts recorded sessions under three points: "What's been positive?", "What's been challenging?" and the sharing of examples of good practice.

The information from these sessions has been analysed to identify re-occurring themes, challenges and examples of practice and innovative approaches to delivering participatory theatre in a digital space. In addition to the information that follows Collective Encounters has been collaborating with the sector on a shared [Games & Exercises](#) Resource, and a [library of useful documents](#) for participatory theatre makers looking to develop their socially distanced practice.

Recurring themes during these events were:

DIGITAL INCLUSION

FROM ZOOM & ROOM

SAFEGUARDING ONLINE

WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES ONLINE

DIGITAL PARTICIPATORY THEATRE

CHALLENGES

Marginalised people and groups often **experience significant barriers to digital technology**. Barriers include the affordability of hardware such as functioning laptops, computers or tablets, skills to set up and operate hardware, familiarity with digital platforms, poor or unaffordable Internet connection.

Certain platforms can also be **restrictive for participants with sensory disabilities** (e.g. the challenges of lip-reading on digital conferencing platforms), or have in-built functions to enable accessibility that many are yet to become familiar with. Some people are unable to find a private space at home to engage freely in a workshop, and others are restricted by the competing needs of other family members to access limited technology or bandwidth.

The **unnatural formality of working in an online space** can compound or create emotional challenges to participation, and enjoyment. It can be difficult to create an informal space where connections between participants can be made. The absence of this space limits the opportunities for the pastoral care that takes place between participatory theatre maker and participant or teacher and student.

The participatory theatre **workforce has also experienced significant challenges with regard to digital inclusion**.

Many artists have spoken about their own limited digital literacy and the technical struggles with pivoting work online.

11.9 million people (22% of the population) do not have the **digital skills** needed for everyday life in the **UK**.

By 2030 it is predicted that 4.5 million people (8% of the population) will remain digitally disengaged. people with a disability are 35% less likely to have essential **digital skills** for life.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

It was recommended that before undertaking digital participatory theatre a **digital audit should be conducted** with existing and new participants to ascertain access to hardware, software, skills and connectivity.

There was evidence of some **working with local tech companies** to coordinate the hiring out of hardware to participants, and devising new projects and collaborations that would develop the skills of participants, and the participatory theatre workforce. Others were **working with local libraries** to organise the loaning of any hardware they held to participants, and some wrote 'quick turnaround' funding applications to supply participants with hardware and Internet connections.

Some participatory theatre makers had written **new pastoral care guidelines** to ensure those with neurological differences or social anxiety had a positive experience if participating in activities online. These included encouraging participants to switch their camera and microphone off to 'take a break' if they need it, and then come back to the 'zoom room' when they are ready. These safeguards were communicated clearly to participants prior to sessions, and where appropriate the length of activities was reduced.

Utilising accessibility functions such as zoom transcription was enabling D/deaf people to take part in workshop activities and performance, and it was recommended that using more than one digital platform (e.g. Zoom + WhatsApp) enabled those with visual impairments to receive audio description during workshops and performances.

Mixing digital activities with analogue activities (either over the telephone or through the post) was a useful way of maintaining or igniting a creative dialogue between participants and participatory theatre makers. Analogue activities were also being distributed via food banks and other support services for communities.



DIGITAL INCLUSION

Research & Support

[The UK Government's Digital Inclusion Strategy](#) (2014): useful statistics for understanding the scale and scope of digital poverty and a useful checklist.

[Digital Culture Network](#): a new resource from Arts Council England where 'tech champions' help artists with support and advice.

[Technically Older](#): An update on digital arts/technology and creative ageing by Baring Foundation.

Practical ideas

Creative Exercises for analogue working (some hybrid ideas):

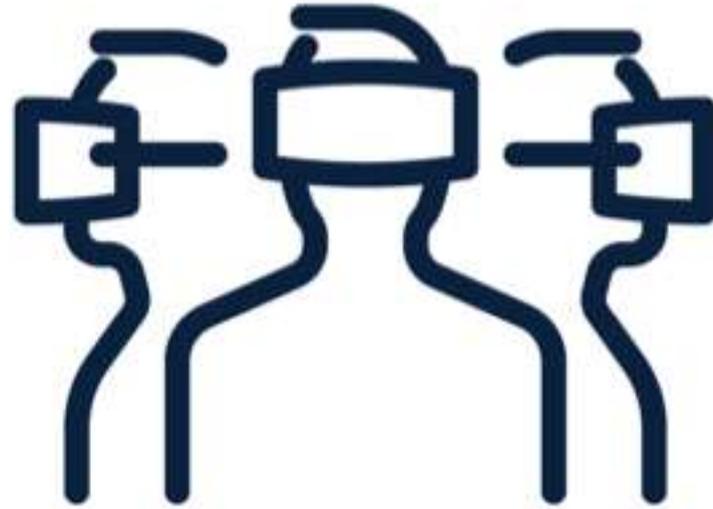
[Create to Connect/Do Think Share](#) by 64 Million Artists

[Tiny Revolutions](#) by Fun Palaces

[Enjoy at Home](#) by Mafwa Theatre

[Get Creative at Home](#) by the BBC

[Keeping Creative at Home](#) by A New Direction.



WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES ONLINE

CHALLENGES

Delivering participatory theatre workshops online restricts the possibility for facilitators to **read individuals' needs and group dynamics** through visual and audio cues. This can have an impact on the quality of activities in terms of positive engagement, responsiveness and creativity, when compared with the possibilities within a physical space.

Some participants resisted taking part in online workshops from their home. Reasons included a reluctance to play drama games within a home setting, possibly with other family members around, a **reluctance to share their home environment with other people**, and a perception that adapting to online would be futile as things would go 'back to normal' very soon.

Due to the immediate nature of the Covid-19 outbreak and the quick shift from face-to-face to online, **the time to redevelop ways of working for digital space was limited**. This meant that often activity was ad-hoc and very much responded to factors such as the vulnerability of participants, the context of the projects and their intended outcomes and other factors such as digital access. Many participatory theatre makers were **keen to find a space to try out new ideas, games and exercises** and to talk about new approaches to workshop planning.

Working online over extended periods of time requires high levels of energy and commitment from both the participatory theatre maker and the participant. **'Zoom fatigue' and 'digital burnout'** cause significant difficulties when aiming to develop energy and enthusiasm for activities.

It's also worth stating the obvious: drama is by its very nature a group activity that often depends on physical intimacy, being in a circle 'in the space' and using the whole body to communicate. **Pivoting practice online has led participatory theatre makers to re-think the very fundamentals of their practice.**

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

Workshops online require a **'technical facilitator' in addition to a lead facilitator**. The technical facilitator supports the lead by acting as a 'co-host' when working on digital platforms such as 'Zoom'. They are responsible for picking up visual cues from participants, checking in with participants through the chat box, managing 'waiting rooms' and 'break out' rooms and supporting any pastoral care or access needs. The technical facilitator can be engaged in a paid or volunteer capacity.

Where appropriate inviting **other family members to take part in workshops**. This worked particularly well with young people where it was cited younger siblings were often keen to get involved. This was not always appropriate and very much depended on the circumstances and the context of the project or activity.

Teaching participants to use the **'background' function** in platforms such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom to either aid privacy about their home environment, or as a creative tool. Other functions, such as 'spotlight', 'share audio' and 'reactions' are being used creatively to aid the process.

The **home environment provides a wealth of resources** in terms of materials, music or objects that can be used as stimuli for games and exercises. The workforce has been incredibly inventive in converting analogue games for online practice and the sharing of ideas and learning has been generous. Some facilitators/groups have found **sessions need to be shorter** to aid concentration on a digital platform, but this isn't consistent across the board. Some have sent tasks for participants to complete independently before the on-line session, or split sessions over two meetings.

The digital and analogue formats for exercises have enabled a rethink of what practice is more suitable for online and analogue formats.

Storytelling, creative writing, dance and circus were mentioned frequently within conversations. Practitioners cited that such skills development is positive and enabling a more multi-disciplinary approach to participatory theatre practice. **The adoption of dance and circus also avoided online provision becoming static, as well as the inclusion of physical warm-ups**.



WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

Practical Games & Exercises for Online Working

[Games & Exercises for Social Distancing](#): a shared resource compiled by Collective Encounters.

[Activities & Games](#): a shared resource compiled by Company Three.

[Corona Games](#) compiled by Human Systems.

[Three in One](#) by Theatre of the Oppressed New York: recording of their first on-line forum theatre experiment.

[Play it Forward](#) by Global Play Brigade: resource to support using performance, clowning, improv and music as stimulus for online play.

[Improv Encyclopedia](#): extensive collection of improvisation tools, games & exercises that can be adapted for online working.

[Paper Stages](#): a collection of performance and activity ideas for creative digital engagement.

Useful Apps and Packages

[Zoom](#): the platform most often cited as useful for on-line workshops.

[Anchor](#): frequently referenced by practitioners as excellent for creating and distributing podcasts, with shared editing facility.



FROM ZOOM TO ROOM

CHALLENGES

COVID-19 is a highly contagious, potentially life-threatening virus; the long-term impact on people's health is still unknown and whilst actions are being taken to release people from lockdown very little has changed in terms of the virus, and its effects. Whilst many participants and participatory theatre makers are keen to return to face-to-face activity in some way, there is uncertainty and nervousness as to whether it is safe to do so, and how best to do it.

There is an increasing tension between returning to or incorporating face-to-face activities, and inclusion. Public Health England's guidance highlights the seriousness of COVID-19 for those with underlying health conditions. **Any return to face-to-face activities is likely to exclude those with these conditions, or those who are continuing to 'shield' from the virus for other reasons such as age, gender, disability or those caring for others who are vulnerable.**

There is a **lack of public space** and venues in which face to face participatory theatre activities can take place. Multi-purpose public spaces are either completely closed or only allowing the most urgent and necessary activities to take place within them. These spaces include arts and cultural venues, education settings, community centres, libraries and health and social care spaces. It is likely that many existing workshop spaces will not be safe to return to, for instance because they are too **small or poorly ventilated.**

Socially distanced face to face participatory theatre workshops will require strict rules to ensure both the safety of the workforce and participants. These rules could potentially have **negative impact on the number of participants that can work in a group, on spontaneity, responsiveness, inclusivity and could limit creativity within the workshop space.**

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

Participatory theatre makers are keen to innovate new ways of **hybrid working** i.e. developing projects and workshops that can be delivered both digitally and face to face. This combination will trigger exciting, new and innovative ways of working that will lead to greater inclusivity and nuanced theatre-making. For example, participants can join in a face to face workshop via a webcast or zoom call. This has the potential to offer new perspectives on the ideas and themes being explored during the workshop.

Asynchronous working is another approach to COVID-secure participatory theatre delivery that will open up new creative avenues. Asynchronous working enables participants to download or access content at a time of their choosing. It can help overcome digital inclusion barriers by enabling those without a stable internet connection to access content and exercises.

Workshop planning will need to be more extensive as asynchronous and hybrid approaches are adopted, and the first planning task should be to undertake an audit of what is possible face to face and online, and what can support or hinder project outcomes.

Creating participatory theatre within a socially distanced context establishes **new physical parameters with no tactile or contact based work**. By utilising the dynamics of space there is an opportunity to question established exercises and ways of making. In tandem with this, due to smaller participant numbers there are possibilities for more intimate ways of working that can deepen outcomes.

Outdoor working, the use of larger indoor spaces and some innovative door-step practice creates new possibilities. Of course outdoor work is weather dependent and may only be possible for some of the year, but it does increase opportunities for open access activities and the potential to reach new participants.



FROM ZOOM TO ROOM

Advice and Support:

[Guidance: Coronavirus](#), Health & Safety Executive: range of relevant risk assessment resources.

[Working Safely during Coronavirus](#), UK Government: Guidelines for Performing Arts.

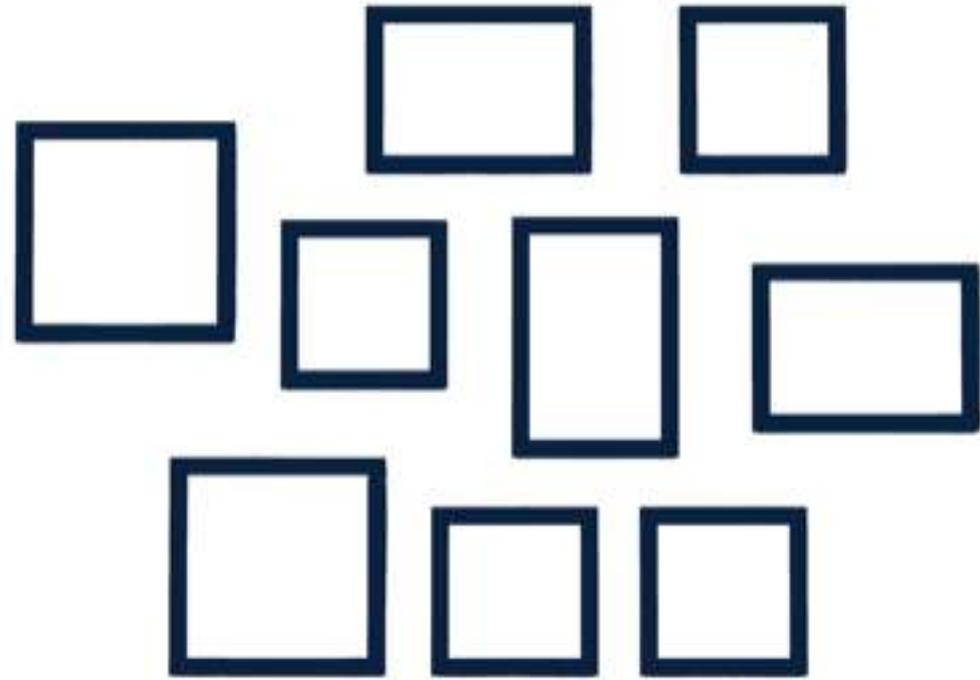
Examples of Emerging Practice

[Paper Birds](#): 90-minute webinar and toolkit looking at devising theatre in a socially distanced environment.

[Slung Low & Wrongsemble](#): a socially distanced performance for children and young people.

[ACTA's Malcolm X Elders](#): a film made through doorstep visits/performances

[Collective Encounters Above & Beyond Commissions](#), companies like CE are piloting new ways of commissioning & developing participatory work.



DIGITAL PARTICIPATORY THEATRE

CHALLENGES

For many, making participatory theatre through **either a purely digital process or hybrid process is a new experience**. The quantity of platforms and apps available to assist this can be overwhelming and most require a degree of digital literacy and skills and some experience of using technology to edit or put together creative materials.

Audience and performer relationships in an online space differ from what can be created in an offline space. Online spaces have a different feel and energy. There is a perception that audience and performer interactions are limited or stilted in terms of what they can achieve or add to a performance. The duration of online performances might also reduce due to audience attention span and digital fatigue.

Developing audiences for performances online requires different marketing skills, platforms and approach. The global nature of the Internet opens up possibilities to reach audiences around the world, however it also means increasing competition for audiences and potentially a depreciation of locally focused work.

Digital participatory theatre is an area in which the sector needs to grow skills and learning, and training/support was frequently cited by participatory theatre makers as a key sector need. Since the beginning of lockdown the focus for the majority of participatory theatre makers has been on developing their workshop process, so there was limited sharing of suggestions as to how best to approach making digital participatory theatre, however there were many examples shared of interesting digital participatory theatre practice.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

Digital participatory theatre performances are an **emerging area of practice** and there is still much to be tested and learned.

Approaches to developing digital participatory theatre performances **echoed those used when developing site-specific performances**: they provide an **opportunity for directors and writers to re-think the performer-audience relationship and redefine what a performance space** is (a three dimensional space, the size of a small screen and space around it). Like live theatre the **number of audience members** allowed in the digital space has an effect on the type of work produced, and what is experienced by the audience.

The creative process is very similar to the way films are created, with previously limited **opportunities to edit and re-edit content**. This allowed **participants to have greater agency over the final version as creative products could be checked for accuracy, meaning and quality**. Less confident participants were potentially more able to talk directly into an on-screen camera than they were to perform on a live stage.

Some participatory theatre makers looked to **re-create the social aspects of attending live events**. For example by playing music to audience members whilst they were waiting for performances to start, and encouraging audience members to connect with each other either by using visual signs or signage in Zoom or through the chat box function. Others performances were hosted by a 'Master of Ceremonies' type character who encouraged audience participation through quickly devised sign language or use of the 'reactions' function on platforms such as Zoom or Facebook Live.



DIGITAL PARTICIPATORY THEATRE

Practical Examples

[Crips without Constraints: A Play, A Podcast, A Picture](#),

Graeae

[The Coronavirus Time Capsule](#), Company Three

[Room to Escape](#), National Theatre Wales

[Scenes for Survival](#), National Theatre Scotland

[Peas on Earth](#), Maya Chowdhry

[Summer 2020](#), Word of Warning

[Spit Spreads Death](#), Blast Theory

[Homemakers](#), Home

[42 Choreographers](#), [1 Dance](#), Exquisite Corps

[Zoomprov](#), P.O.P Art

Additional Information

[All Together Now but Virtually](#) by Utkarsha Laharia, talks about how to rehearse via zoom

[Creating Digital Theatre](#), a free resource from Theatre Uncut

[Open Online Theatre](#), a platform for live co-creation online.

Platforms for streaming performance: the ones most frequently mentioned as useful by participatory theatre makers were: [OBS](#), [Twitch](#), [Facebook](#) live and [Instagram](#)



SAFEGUARDING ONLINE

CHALLENGES

How to set up safeguarding systems and processes for online workshops and performances was a major concern amongst participatory theatre makers, and some voluntary sector partners and public services. The safeguarding needs and risks when working online are perceived as much **more complex and multi-faceted** than when working in the room, and this has caused some stress for the workforce. There has, however, been a generous sharing of good practice safeguarding advice within the sector to support the workforce.

Whilst digital platforms such as Zoom and WhatsApp have taken significant steps to improve security capabilities, the press attention incidents of 'zoom-bombing' received continues to deter a small handful of partners, managers and practitioners from using the platform to deliver workshop and performances. It is worth noting that none of the event attendees cited that they had been party to a 'zoom bombing' incident.

Most Local Authorities were reluctant to enable online working with young people and vulnerable people due to these risks. Their concerns also extend to what content participants, particularly children and young people, might be accessing online during a workshop. The digital platform rescinds a level of control from the facilitator and makes content sharing difficult to manage.

As mentioned in the Digital Inclusion section of this report the formalities and disciplined regime needed for work to take place can restrict opportunities for pastoral care and one to one meetings between participants and participatory theatre makers. The absence of such opportunities to disclose or discuss pastoral concerns with a member of the workforce presents issues concerning duty of care. Many participatory theatre makers are spending a considerable amount of time in one-to-one phone calls with participants, offering the pastoral support they would usually give in and around a session. This in itself raises challenges for safeguarding the workforce.



SAFEGUARDING

[Online Safeguarding for Children & Young People](#), NSPCC Online guidance and support specifically geared for organisations undertaking safeguarding reviews in the light of Covid-19.

[Guidance for Working Online and Online Safeguarding](#), Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance: Arts specific focus on this guidance.

[Covid-19 Guidance for the Safe Use of Multi Purpose Facilities](#), UK Government Guidance for those managing community-based buildings.

[Safeguarding and Working Online](#), Company Three: A suite of resources to help organisations working with young people, with a youth theatre focus.

[Remote Working Safeguarding Guidelines](#), Collective Encounters: shared company policy, protocols for staff, based on best-practice guidelines.

[Zoom Information and Warnings](#), Belgrade Theatre

THINGS TO BUILD ON

Access: Digital participatory theatre can be more easily made accessible for those with sensory disabilities. Captioning functions, audio description and BSL interpretation can be easily embedded into online performance. Zoom, Microsoft Teams and YouTube all have this functionality as part of their free versions.

Audience Reach: Pre-recorded online performance enables participatory theatre makers to reach new audiences, and global audiences over a longer period of time. Instances of engagement with online performance are starting to exceed engagement with face-to-face performance. The opportunity to develop new audiences can lead to new collaborations and strengthen the case for support regarding continuation of practice.

Digital Skills: Participatory theatre makers are quickly developing a whole new range of technical and audience engagement skills, and adopting a more multi-discipline approach, however further support and affordable or free skills development opportunities are needed. There needs to be investment to enable the workforce to further innovate and pivot their practice into the digital arena.

Wellbeing: Those with the power to commission and manage participatory theatre need to be aware of the physical and wellbeing consequences of high levels of digital activity, and ensure workload and participation expectations are realistic and well thought through.

Use of Arts Spaces: Whilst many theatre arts and cultural venues remain closed to live performance and visitors, there is an opportunity to utilise large rehearsal spaces, and main stages for participatory theatre activities.

Mental Health: The benefits of working online for some participants for example those with neurological differences, social anxiety or ill mental health should be harnessed. Working digitally has provided huge benefits to those who struggle within groups or social spaces that should not be lost as we transition back into face-to-face or hybrid working models.

Asynchronous and Hybrid Working: Asynchronous working, hybrid working and the rethinking of the creative process, performance space and audience-performer is adding a whole new dimension to participatory theatre making; it's enabling participants and those leading sessions to deepen their reflection and their response to contributions and artists to work collaboratively with other sectors (such as tech, health, community) in new and exciting ways.

Inclusion: COVID-19 has created new barriers for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities to access the arts, participatory theatre makers and providers and commissioners should prioritise investment in activities and research which enable people to overcome these barriers.

Digital Inclusion & Digital Poverty: Realistic expectations should be set around participants' financial capacity, digital literacy and broadband access (particular in rural areas). Barriers to digital inclusion are very real for a large proportion of the population. The time and funds it takes to overcome this should be taken into consideration when planning and commissioning activity and projects.



NETWORKS, CAMPAIGNS AND OTHER RESOURCES

[Voluntary Arts #Creative Network](#): Drop-in sessions providing a forum for artists to share ideas, concerns and support.

[Arts Works Alliance](#): national network for Participatory Arts organisations and freelancers, continues to meet and share, and has extended membership for free during the pandemic.

[ArtsChain](#) spearheaded an on-going lobbying campaign to advocate for the important role of participatory arts in the arts and culture ecology over the next ten years.

[JoinedUp Theatre](#) spearheaded a campaign to creatively address the impacts of the pandemic and lockdown on child and youth mental health.

[Youth Work/Youth Theatre Online](#), Company Three: an extensive googledoc sharing ideas and resources specific to working during the pandemic, from safeguarding to practical ideas to digital platforms.

[Coronavirus Resources](#), The Art Newspaper: Articles and links to support artists during the pandemic.

[Coronavirus Resources for Practitioners and Organisations](#), Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance: A collection of resources connected to Arts, Health and Wellbeing

[Covid-19 Resources for the Ensemble Community](#), Network of Ensemble Theaters: A broad-ranging collection of relevant resources aimed at the collaborative theatre sector in the USA but relevant to UK.



ARTS PARTICIPATION POST COVID-19

[How can Community Arts Based Work Continue?](#), Arlene Goldbard & Francois Matarasso, recording of a conversation.

[Loosening Lockdown](#), Emergency Exit Arts: Recorded webinar/panel discussions about the future of outdoor and community arts.

[With for About](#), Heart of Glass: recording of their annual conference for socially engaged practitioners pivoted online.

[Lockdown Dialogues](#), Border Crossings: conversations with theatre makers about the future of the art form.

[What Now for Theatre of the Oppressed](#), Cardboard Citizens: recording of a conversation between Adrian Jackson and international peers.

[Care as a Radical Act](#), Chrissie Tiller for Heart of Glass: an article imagining a positive future for communities and artists

[Redefining the Value of Art](#), Deborah Fisher: an article imagining how the arts ecosystem might change for the better post Covid-19.

PEOPLE

Thank you so much to all the people who joined in the sessions. Unfortunately, a few names slipped through the net – we do apologise if you're not listed here.

Conor A, James Aconley, Nicola Acquaviva, Brigitte Adela, Karen Allan, Bex Anson, Sarah Argent, Imogen Ashby, Gillian Asherley, Julie Ashurst, Alison Bailey, Danielle Bailey, Clark Baim, Keith Barber, Hannah Barker, Shelley Barrett, Hannah Birkin, Laura Bissell, Jayden Blacklock, Jackie Blake, Linda Bloomfield, Jemma Blythe, Teri Bobb-Baxter, Jain Boon, Catherine Boot, Astrid Breel, Owain Brodrick, Laura Brooks, Jannina Brosowsky, Louise Brown, Helen Bryer, Emily Buck-Roberts, Emma Bush, Andrea Cabrera Luna, Anna Carr, Ida Casilli, Sarah Cassidy, Elizabeth Caudle, Gemma Cawley, Jennifer Chamberlain, Elspeth Chapman, Katie Charlton, Eleanor Clack, Philippa Clark, Josie Clarke, Rachael Clarke, Caitlin Clough, Josh Coates, Jodie Cole, Elaine Collins, Mary Colson, Sally Comfort, Abigail Conway, Alex Cooke, Chris Cowan, Alison Cowan, Georgia Cowie, Jules Craig, Christopher Danowski, Martin Danziger, Charlotte Davies, Julia Davis, Laura Davison, Honey Dearsley, Debbie Denovan, Esther Dix, Nicola Dixon, Jill Dowse, Hannah Drummond, Lesley Eadie, Sharon Eckman, Emily Edwards, Hannah Elder, Lesley Emery, Kelley Evans, Kiri Evans, Phillida Eves, Phillida Eves, Lorraine Fear, Meg Fenwick, Alex Ferguson, Helen Ferguson, Rachel Fitzgerald, Sarah Fitzgibbon, Natalie Flynn, Juliet Fry, Kristina Frydberg, Margaret Anne Gachagan, Jordana Golbourn, Lucy Graham, Giga Gray, Steph Green, Cath Greenwood, Hayley Greggs, Courtney Grille, Sandra Gustafsson, Kim Hackleman, Stella Hall, Deborah Hamilton, Joe Hancock, Clare Hanington, Rhiannon Hannon, Cinzia Hardy, Emma Harley, Craig Harris, Kate Harris, Sorcha Harris, Amy Harrison, Jilly Helleman, Laura Hennessy, Niamh Hicks, Claire Hills, Ray Hodson, Tina Hofman, Cheryl Holland, Tiffany Hosking, Terrie Howey, Dave Humphreys, Sophie Hunter, Sameena Hussain, Ruth Hylands, Gillian Hyslop, Zoe Irvine, Megan Jacobs, Danielle Johnson, Olivia Joseph, Lucas Chih Peng Kao, Naresh Kaushal, Jessica Kemp, Gemma Kerr, Omar Khan, Zorazelda King, Phil Kingston, Jennifer Kitchen, Catherine Kodicek, Kesha Kristina Krutskih, Gaynor La Rocca, Lee Lappin, Anna Lewis, Hayley Lindley-Thornhill, Alan Lyddiard, Christina Lydon, Elizabeth Lynch, Jenny Macdonald, Sharon MacInnes, David Manzife, Amanda Masterpaul, Bex Mather, Marianne Matusz, Lewis May, Pauline Mayers, Olivia McDonald, Belinda Mcelhinney, David McFarlane, Sue McGeorge, Lorna McGinty, Hannah McPake, Ashley McTavish, Corinne Micallef, Deb Miles, Fiona Mills, Rebecca Milner, Sarah Mole, Connie Moore, Maddy Moore, Lulu Mokuku, Caitlin Morgan, TL Morrison, Jo Munyon, Catherine Murphy, Charlie Murrell-Edwards, Jacqui O'Hanlon, Naomi O'Kelly, Christie O'Carroll, Lisa O'Hanlon, Libby Odai, Rebecca Oldfield, Laura Oliver, Kirstie Owens-Tipping, Filiz Ozcan, Eleni Papadopoulos McMillan, Katerina Paramana, Joanna Parkes, Owen Parry, Rachel Parry, Kate Pasco, Jane Pawson, Rachel Pedley, Lindsay Perth, Rebecca Phipps, Zoe Pickering, Jenny Pohle, Jim Pope, Georgia Pritchard, Katerina Pushkin, Andy Quarrell, Natalie Quatermass, Henry Raby, Laura Rees, Rosie Reid, Hebe Reilly, Wyn Richards, Vicci Riley, Beth Robertson, Alice Roots, Jow Rose, Jessica Rowe, Katie Rowsell, Naomi Roxby-Wardle, Samantha Rushton, Bernadette Russell, Angelica Santander, Shanti Sarkar, Layla Sawford, Clare Shaw, Philip Sheppard, Maria Shury-Smith, Barbara Simpson, Rajinder Singh, Chris Singleton, Pooja Sitpura, Carly Smith, Michelle Smith, Nicola Smith, Annie Smol, Alexandra Snell, Allie Spencer, Hannah Stacey, Hannah Stephens, Bethany Steventon-Crinks, George Stone, Liz Strange, Tom Straszewski, Annie Sutton, Mathijs Swarte, Ellie Tait, Jackie Tait, Callum Taylor, Sophie Taylor, Liselle Terret, Sian Thomas, Stevie Thompson, Claire Threadgold, Rebecca Treseder, Rebeckah Turbett, Andrea Turner, Rachel Turner-King, Hannah Uttley, Bev Veasey, Charlotte Vincent, Alan Waldron, Karen Walkden, Karen Wallace-Jones, Aylwyn Walsh, Kayte Walsh, Qiuyun Wang, Jason Ward, Lynne Ward, Lizzy Warren, Janine Waters, Jennifer Webster, Siobhan Wedgeworth, Carys Wehden, Sarah Weston, Victoria Whelan, Joanna Williams, Marie Williamson, Isabella Wise, Gemma Woffinden, Sarah Worth, Hannah Wright, Abby Young, Zoe Zontou, Uzma Raziq, Angie Waller.

ORGANISATIONS AND REGIONS

While many of the attendees were freelancers there was a broad diversity of arts organisations represented, including:

20 Stories High, Abbey Theatre, Aberystwyth University, Access All Areas, Active Inquiry, Artworks Cymru, Bath Spa University, Belgrade Theatre, Birmingham Rep, Bradford Fringe, Brave Words, Bristol Cathedral, Burn the Curtain, Buxton Theatre, Contact Theatre, Create Sheffield, Curious Minds, Dundee and Angus College, Edge Theatre and Arts Centre, Fallen Angels, Festival of Thrift, Fish House Arts Centre, Glasgow Citizens, Goldsmiths University, Highly Sprung Performance, HOME, Homotopia, Imaginarium Theatre, Indoors Too Much, Joseph Rowntree, Kings Theatre, Lawn Mowers Theatre, Leeds Playhouse, Little Big Top, Liverpool World Centre, Mortal Fools Theatre, National Association of Youth Theatres, The National Theatre, National Theatre of Scotland, New Wolsey Theatre, November Club, Old Fire Station, Reaction Theatre Makers, Reading Repertory Theatre, Red Phoenix Story, Regent Theatre, Rhode University, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Royal Shakespeare Company, Salford Community Theatre, Speak Up Theatre, Standing Tall Arts, Strathclyde University, The Ambassadors Group, The Bone Ensemble, The White Rabbit, Theatre Clwyd, Theatre Royal (Plymouth), Theatre Royal (Wakefield), TIPP (Theatre in Prisons & Probation), Treseder Productions, Unicorn Theatre, University of Bolton, University of East London, University of Portsmouth, University of York, Vagabond Puppets, Warwick University, Watford Palace, Wiltshire Creative, York University, Young Vic, Z-Arts.

Locations

From the data supplied (approx. 65% of attendees) the following breakdown gives a sense of geographical spread:

London: 19.8%	North West: 15.6%	North: 13.2%	Midlands: 11.4%	Scotland: 11%
International: 9.6%	South West: 7.2%	Wales: 7.2%	South East 4.8%	

THANK YOU

Collective Encounters would like to say a huge thank you to the generosity and solidarity shown by the 320 people that attended our social distancing events and unfortunately there are too many to list here.

We would also like to sincerely thank the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for enabling these events to take place.

We would also very much like to thank our funders: Arts Council England, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Liverpool City Council, National Heritage Lottery Fund , Our Liverpool Fund and the Liverpool Council for the Voluntary Sector for giving us the space to pivot our programme online during COVID-19 lockdown and maintain our commitments to the communities and people we work with.

For Collective Encounters:

Artistic Director: Sarah Thornton

Executive Director: Annette Burghes

General Manager: Harriet Warnock

Marketing Coordinator: Tessa Buddle

Outreach Director: Abi Horsfield

Youth Theatre Director: Ben Mellor

Radical Makers Director: Aidan Jolly

Women In Action Lead Artist: Tessa Buddle

Women in Action Training Lead: Amy Hailwood

Social distancing event hosts: as above and Tamsin Cook,
Matthew Elliott, Zorazelda King

CREDITS

**Report written by: Annette Burghes,
Matthew Elliott and Sarah Thornton**

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