



# arts and minds **Newsletter**

network Winter 2019

## Express your creativity in 2019



*The Kick Off Boys Project (part of DAZL) performing as part of Love Arts 2018*

A new year is a good time to think about new opportunities, and new ways to be creative. This newsletter is packed with all sorts of things happening in Leeds over the next couple of months. All of them arty, all of them welcoming to people with mental health issues. And this is just the tip of the iceberg... Become an Arts & Minds member to get email updates of *more* ways to be creative!

## Also in this issue

Coffee & Craft Group	p.3	East St Arts Courses	p.12
Love Arts Festival	p.5	The Lonely Society	p.14
Converge Courses	p.8	Art Doctors	p.18
Body, Image & Mind	p.10	Poetry	p.19

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## Culture Club: 2018 in review

*Culture Club volunteer Margaret Wilkinson on the highlights of a packed year at the Culture Club:*

We have had an AMAZING Year with all the activities we engaged in in 2018...

- 12 regular planning meetings
- 1 Panto
- 12 Playhouse performances
- 10 Howard Assembly Rooms events
- 8 Opera North productions
- 1 Northern School of Contemporary Dance event
- 8 outside visits
- 3 evening meals in Kirkgate Late Market
- ...and another 5 events that we would have attended but they were cancelled!

We have had an exhibition of our Hull work in LYFPT HQ.

We have had 2 exhibitions on the theme of “light” in John Lewis’s We participated (with acclaim) in Light Night with our illuminated umbrellas

And our Parapluie ou Parasol exhibition in the Love Arts exhibition of painted umbrellas took us onto the front page of the Yorkshire Post and page 3 of the Yorkshire Evening Post.



*Parapluie ou Parasol*

*Thanks Margaret! If this sounds up your street, join Culture Club in 2019. They meet monthly at John Lewis Community Room to plan trips to the theatre, opera, gigs and galleries. Contact us at Arts & Minds to find out more.*

## Connect & Create

*Arts & Minds members meet every month at the Tetley art gallery - find out more below!*

Over the last year we've been encouraging our members to connect more. Often, having a mental health issue can be isolating and we wanted to provide a space for people to hang out, meet other creative people and get ideas for projects. The sessions have been a success so will continue throughout 2019.

We meet in the Learning Studio on Floor 2 of the Tetley. But we often spill out into other rooms if there's a workshop or a particular issue we think needs to be talked about. Join us on the first Monday of every month!

### Connect & Create

The Tetley, Hunslet Road, Leeds LS10 1JQ

4th February/ 4th March/ 1st April/ 13th May/ 3rd June  
2 - 4pm

## Coffee & Craft Group

Do you suffer from a mental or physical issue? Or work/live with someone who does? Do you suffer from isolation after services have closed for the day?

Are you creative, or want to learn a new craft?

Why not join me in at St Cross Church, Middleton, LS10 4HT  
(Corner of Acre Road).

6.30pm - 8.45pm - Every Tuesday

Refreshments will be available on a PAYF basis to contribute to the utility bills of the Church.

Contact Sabrina on 07910 841193

## Love Arts Supported Artists

*Last year the Love Arts Festival supported 5 artists who wanted help to create an exhibition or performance. Here, one of the artists gives his thoughts about the impact of the scheme.*

### Conrad Cookson

*Conrad had never exhibited ever before, but had thousands of amazing fine art photographs that he'd been creating for around 20 years. His work looks for beauty in unexpected places. He takes found objects and discarded items and turns them into something new. Conrad's pictures went on display at The Social and one of his images was used as the cover of the Love Arts Festival 2018 brochure.*



“Just a few months ago I had never shown a thing and didn't see any realistic chance that I would.

It has been a big jump forward for me in so many ways, far more than just putting up a few pictures. In a short space of time I feel I have almost reinvented who I am, or at least reconnected with something very distant! It has also given me a chance to look at myself as an artist and a person and to attempt to understand what it is that has stalled my ambitions and work out ways to overcome these obstacles.

I was very anxious about doing this, and participating in the workshops. It took me a while to actually believe I wasn't an impostor and that I was meant to be there, but slowly I started to take myself seriously and I can't overstate the value of the support I got.

I was proper bricking it about coming down for the first time, I was so relieved I was to be welcomed in and not be alone.

So much of the sludge has drained away and being in an environment where I felt safe to be honest meant I had to confidence to face things head on. And I'm now looking at further opportunities. I'm amazed by the positive response too. If I had been asked to make a list of reasons why I didn't think people would be interested in my photographs (it's all about me and my day to day frustrations and boredom and destroying things for the fun of it and shutting out stuff etc etc) I now discover that's the same list as the reasons why some people do like it. Funny world. It's been a journey and I feel alive now. Its has gone better than I could have hoped. I was worried it may be a big anticlimax when it was all over but some of the steps forward are cemented in place I'm certain.

I know I still have hurdles ahead. Even though I'm feeling more positive and in control I've also learned to recognise elements within myself that even when I've been feeling stronger are always going to make pushing myself forward difficult, but this has been a massive step."



# Love Arts: 2018

Love Arts Festival took place in October 2018 - and was a great success. Here's a few pictures by Mat Dale. Check out more galleries at [www.loveartsleeds.co.uk](http://www.loveartsleeds.co.uk)



*The Institute for Crazy Dancing*



*Converge Theatre*



*Installation by Natasha Pyne*



*Paperworks Workshop*



*Poet Bethany Rose*



*Love Arts Launch*

## Love Arts: The Future...

As some of you may be aware, Love Arts Festival is not happening in 2019. We're taking a year off to reflect on the festival, and work out how it could be differently - or better! Arts & Minds has run the festival since 2011; it's about time we paused to think about how we're doing it. We want your ideas on how a future Love Arts Festival might look, and your help to shape how that happens.

We are spending the next 3 months listening. The first way we'll do this is at a THINK-IN. This is a chance for you to have your say on your ideas for the festival. This event is for anyone with an interest in creativity and mental health in Leeds. You don't have to have been involved with Love Arts before.

**LOVE ARTS THINK-IN Tuesday January 22nd 1 - 4pm**  
**Leeds City Museum, Millennium Square**  
**Sing up by emailing us at [hello@loveartsleeds.co.uk](mailto:hello@loveartsleeds.co.uk)**

If you can't make it to this Think-In, don't worry, we're planning another one in early March. And check the Love Arts website for more ways to contribute thoughts. We're really excited about the possible direction Love Arts could go in!



*Girl with a Suitcase*

## Converge: New Courses for 2019

*We're excited to report that Converge is returning in 2019 - and with a new coordinator. Kathleen Renwick (pictured below) explains what's happening, and tells us a little about herself and what her hopes are for the Converge project in the future.*

I am excited to announce that Converge Leeds is welcoming applications to enrol for courses beginning in January 2019.

Converge Leeds offers engaging courses for people with experience of mental health difficulties who are interested in learning a wide range of skills and activities. The courses are taught by students and tutors on campus at 4 Higher Education Institutes; Leeds College of Music, Leeds Beckett University, Leeds Trinity University and the University of Leeds. Converge courses are now into their third year of delivery with people attending from across the city of Leeds. They are experiential, hands on, creative and fun. The courses are not focused on assessment or outcomes but about the process of enjoying your subject in a supportive and enjoyable atmosphere with like-minded people.



In addition to Songwriting, Drama, Music Production and Converge Singers courses running this term, we are excited to announce three new courses based at Leeds Trinity University; Health and Nutrition, Volleyball Skills and Coaching, and Journalism. As we move into the 3rd round of courses we aim to build upon the project's success by continuing to run inclusive, high quality courses and develop new learning opportunities.

I have recently joined Converge as Coordinator working together with the Higher Education Institutes to deliver these excellent educational opportunities.

Previously, I have volunteered and worked with Converge in York, where the idea was initially formed and developed at York St John University. I got involved as an occupational therapy student and used by arts background to support in Converge classes. I have been drawn in to Converge particularly because it offers ‘education not therapy’. I think this is a key point because Converge



*Converge performance*



*Converge Music Production class*

embraces individuals identities as students and learners primarily, rather than focussing on mental health.

Have a look at the Converge prospectus and our website, you might just find the right course for you!

Enrolment information is available on our website, and please get in touch if you have any questions.

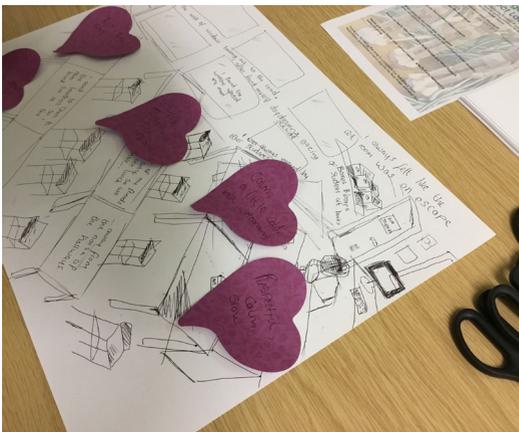
*More info? See: [www.leedsmind.org.uk/our-services/converge/](http://www.leedsmind.org.uk/our-services/converge/)*

## Body, Image & Mind at the Library

*Over the last few months Leeds Libraries have been delivering some excellent workshops. See below for details of how you can participate in this excellent project in January.*

Body Image and Mind is a creative arts and health and well-being project by Leeds Libraries. It is part of the pioneering new Engaging Libraries programme supported by the Wellcome and Carnegie UK Trust.

Leeds Libraries have worked with partners Leeds Public Health Resource Centre, Leeds Art Gallery Education Department and individual artists and groups to deliver the project. Groups explored the theme of body image using participatory activities with artists (and the library's art collections) to spark conversations about body image and the impact it has on self-confidence, mental and physical health and wellbeing. Artwork has been created using portraiture, photography, sculpture, textiles and zines and this has culminated in an exhibition in Room 700 at Leeds Central Library throughout January. It is a celebration of the groups and their creative work, and an opportunity for them to showcase their ideas and conversations about Body Image and Mind to audiences.



Selected highlights from a week of well-being at Leeds Libraries:

### **Body, Image and Mind Celebration Event**

Monday 14 January, 4.00 - 7.00pm

Drawing Room, Central Library

A special evening to celebrate our partnerships and time on the programme. We will explore the different ways that people have worked to explore the theme of body image and mind, see what has been achieved through the project, reflect on our experiences, get inspired and look ahead to what next.

### **Film screening: Song of the Sea, cert PG**

Tuesday 15th January, Doors 6.00pm, film starts 6.30pm

Leodis Room, Central Library, Doors 6.00pm, film starts 6.30pm

This enchanting Irish animation. Tickets £5, please book via [www.ticketsource.co.uk/leedslibraryevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/leedslibraryevents)

### **Laughter Yoga**

Wednesday 16 January, 6.00-6.45pm

Room 700, Central Library

Playful laughter exercises and deep breathing. Have fun, giggle and laugh. Tickets £3, please book via [www.ticketsource.co.uk/leedslibraryevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/leedslibraryevents)

### **Drop in and Draw - Special**

Thursday 17 January, 10.30am-12.00pm

Drawing Room, Central Library

A relaxed session with the focus on figure drawing with a clothed model. Art books available for inspiration and to borrow. Materials and refreshments are available to buy from the Art Library or you're welcome to bring your own.

Free for adults with a Library card, no booking required.

*There's loads going on! Get involved! You can find all the information at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/leedslibraryevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/leedslibraryevents)*

## East St Arts: Short Courses

*East St Arts offer great creative courses - they detail the options below:*

Since 2012, we've worked with our partners to offer a wide variety of short creative courses at community venues in the city. Over the next six months, in term two and three, we have a whole host of opportunities for you to get involved with. Whether you're looking to learn a new skill, meet new friends or begin a career in the arts, adult learning offers you so many benefits.

Our courses will help you to build your confidence, explore new activities and have fun while you're doing it. All of our courses are suitable for absolute beginners.

If you can't find what you're looking for, or just want to have a chat about our courses, please do get in touch with Elaine or Frances in our adult learning team. Here's a selection of the courses and where they take place.

### **Leeds Art Gallery, The Headrow, Leeds, LS1 3AA**

Making art in the gallery

When? Wednesday, 10 – 12pm,

Level: beginners and those with some previous experience

Textiles and photography

When? Wednesday, 1 – 3.30pm,

Level: beginners and those with some previous experience

Textiles and sculptural forms

When? Wednesday, 1.30 – 3.30pm,

Level: beginners and those with some previous experience

**The Reginald Centre, 263 Chapeltown Road, Leeds, LS7 3EX**

Learn to draw from scratch

When? Tuesday, 1 – 3pm, term 2 and 3

Level: beginners

**The Feel Good Factor, 53 Louis Street, Leeds, LS7 4BP**

Mindful textiles: sculptural textiles

When? Thursday, 10am -12pm, term two

Level: beginners and those with some previous experience

**Mindful textiles: printing onto fabric**

When? Thursday, 10am – 12pm, term three

Level: beginners and those with some previous experience

Email to see if you are entitled to a free place!

**By email: [adultlearning@esamail.org.uk](mailto:adultlearning@esamail.org.uk)**

**By phone: 0113 248 0040**

## **Dementia Friends in the Arts**

arts@leeds, in partnership with Yorkshire Dance are hosting a Dementia Friends info session as part of the arts@leeds business programme. This will be followed by followed by a short seminar by Artlink, demonstrating Dementia Friends values in arts practice through their recent projects with Wykebeck Day centre and Wellbeing Hub in Chapeltown.

Dementia Friends aims to give people a better understanding of dementia and the small things we can all do to make a difference to the lives of people affected by dementia.

Dementia Friends Info Session, Leeds Town Hall

Thursday 31st January 2019, 10:00am – 12:00pm

Email [arts@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:arts@leeds.gov.uk) to sign up

# The Lonely Society

*Common Chorus Theatre performed at the Love Arts Festival - it was part of a wider project about loneliness. Here Simon Brewis explains more.*

'The Lonely Society' is series of theatre projects driven by Common Chorus Theatre: workshops, community engaged performances, public conversations and finally a national tour of a new theatre production, we seek to lift the lid on the great taboo of loneliness in the modern age. The project is unfolding in 3 stages:

## **Part 1 – Creating the script for a new community play.**

Through the Autumn of 2018 our artist team ran storytelling workshops to give voice to stories about social isolation. A group of twelve community writers then took inspiration from these stories in an ongoing scriptwriters group led by Leeds based writer Andrea Heaton. Together they wove the research together with their own personal experiences to create a compelling fiction that has now been crafted into a new community play.

## **Part 2 – 'Let's Talk About Loneliness' and Community Performance**

In early January 2019, a cast of approx 20 people with diverse voices and their own connection to the impacts of social isolation will begin rehearsing the new script that we have developed.



Hosted by partners at InterACT, the show will be performed at Stainbeck Church Hall on the 22nd & 23rd of February as part of an evening of theatre, food and conversation which we are calling 'Let's Talk About Loneliness'.

### **Part 3 – New Theatre Show and National Tour**

Following months of storytelling, learning and discussions our professional artist team will then develop a new storytelling production for studio theatres; previewing in early summer 2019. Built upon what we have learned from part 1 & 2, this new show will tell an entertaining and provoking story that speaks truthfully about the taboo of social isolation and loneliness today.

*Sounds interesting! See [www.commonchorus.co.uk](http://www.commonchorus.co.uk) for more info*

## **Primrose Valley Project**

*Arts & Minds member Kim Birch has an opportunity for you!*

We are a community project based in the Killingbeck area, in east Leeds, and have been receiving grants for the last 4 years to run various activities and workshops to benefit the local community. We have an allotment, with a pizza oven, polytunnel and outdoor growing area.

A newly-established orchard of 15 fruit trees, a timber round house, and a large yurt. We also have the use of a small community centre, and the nearby Primrose Valley nature reserve. We plan to extend the range of activities we offer from horticulture, into arts and crafts, keeping chickens and bees, drama and storytelling, campfires and bushcraft, etc.

We always welcome new helpers and particularly want to hear from anyone who can offer workshops in arts and crafts. There may be funding to pay for this.

If interested in getting involved, please contact Kim Birch on 07908329121 or 01132164006. Email [kimbirch@ntlworld.com](mailto:kimbirch@ntlworld.com)

# How to Have a Good Day

*(And consequently a good life!) New member Fe asked if she could write a positive piece for our newsletter. We agreed - we love her enthusiasm! Here it is!*

## 1. WAKE UP, BREATH DEEP AND SMILE

Taking in oxygen ignites the cells in your body and smiling releases happy hormones. Start the day how you mean to go on!

## 2. SPEND 5 MINUTES STRETCHING AND ROTATING

Warming up your body through movement activates your mind, body and soul by getting your circulation moving and “oiling up” your joints. Just like a car, your body moves smoother when it’s tuned up. Your brain becomes more alert and focused from the start instead of after half the day.

## 3. POWER SHOWER!

Showers invigorate! Water falling on your body acts like a massage. Its not just about getting rid of dirt. Water gets rid of negative energy too. Everybody feels good after a shower, a long bath, a swim, soaking your feet, paddling and...water fights! Even simply sitting near a stretch of water makes us feel good.

## 4. EAT A NATURAL AND ENERGISING BREAKFAST

Whatever you eat in the morning, make it natural! The first thing to hit your stomach in the morning needs to be a real food. Our gut is our second brain and starting off on artificial foods, high sugar, salts, chemicals, etc is designing a bad day for yourself. Feed yourself with the love energy of real food. Happy tummy, happy day!

## 5. WEAR SOMETHING YOU LOVE

Clothes are not only functional. They can be fun, expressive, make a statement and show our individual creativity. Wear clothes and accessories in your own style to enhance your experience

of your day. Wear jazzy socks in the name of fun or colour to brighten every where you go. Be the canvas!

## 6. SMILE ON THE INSIDE!

As you go about your day, smile on the inside. You reach out to people, invisibly like magic! We are energy including our thoughts. Think good, feel good and visa versa. When you think a smile, people feel it, even on the phone. They feel your energy and respond more positively towards you. Making your day better, along with theirs.

## 7. PASS THE TIME OF DAY WITH SOMEBODY

Our preoccupied lives are filled with many meaningless tasks, which we allow to obstruct what we really should be doing which is...CONNECTING! Lonliness is massive in our society, but it doesn't have to be. Talk to somebody you see everyday, at the bus stop, gym or work. Whilst queuing, someone homeless, etc. Make the effort to reach out so somebody can reach back.

## 8. COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS ONE BY ONE

We can instantly feel better by being thankful and grateful for what we already have. Doing this daily makes life feel so much better. The smallest things like a friendly smile, a cup of tea, a hug, a roof over your head, water from a tap, a friendly chat, etc there are squillions of things to be thankful for. Saying THANK YOU is a wonderful way to remember our blessings and share gratefulness.

*Thanks Fe!*



## Art Doctors

*Some of you might have seen people dressed up as doctors at Arts & Minds events - and they've been taking over Leeds Art Gallery too. Over to Alison McIntyre to explain...*

The Art Doctors are myself and Liz Stirling and our aim is to help break down barriers to participation in contemporary art whilst gently questioning the idea that art is good for you. Through playful informal consultations, dressed in paint-splattered lab-coats with stethoscopes and prescription pads, we ask members of the public how they are feeling, what they might need or desire creatively and prescribe anything from art and exhibition visits to starting their own making activities, just noticing things in life more or finding new creative opportunities with others.

Originally started as a commission for the British Art Show 8 visiting Leeds, Edinburgh and Norwich, the Art Doctors talked to specific groups and a diverse general public about art, life and culture. We listened to people's ideas, interests and experiences and prescribed specific art in the show that might particularly interest or challenge them or offered an accompanying prompt card and maybe even cushion or blanket in case everything got a bit much or they needed a lie down.



*Arts & Minds member Peter McDonagh recently had an Art Doctors consultation - and wrote the following poem.*

## Art Docs

There are no answers  
there are only questions  
ask an art doctor

clad in paint spattered white  
like Jackson Pollock's smock  
take the cushion for comfort

and respond to the art  
use one question to interrogate  
while defragmenting an anxious mind

with lots of things to sort out  
and measure me  
take my pulse

*Peter McDonagh, 2018*

## Stop Press

*There's just room to give you the heads up on a couple of things happening soon...*

**EXHIBITION:** The Arts & Minds exhibition will be in Summer 2019 - not October. Look out for more info soon but remember - the exhibition is for all members.

**FEBRUARY EVENT:** We're planning an event at the Swarthmore Centre on Tuesday February 19th - get the date in your diary!

**ARTS & HEALTH NETWORK:** There's a new Leeds arts and health network starting soon. Not just mental health! Sounds brilliant and we want to be a part of it. Come along to the launch on Thursday 24th January, 12 - 2pm at Room 700, Leeds Central Library.

## What is Arts & Minds?

Arts & Minds is a network of people in Leeds who are interested in creativity and mental health. We include carers, health workers, artists, performers, students, people who've used mental health services, OTs... anyone with an interest.

We want to get people talking about how the arts can help mental well being. We work closely with mental health services (we're funded by Leeds & York Partnerships NHS Trust) and encourage workers to use creativity in people's care. We also run the annual Love Arts Festival, a 2 week celebration of creativity and well-being.



If you want to know more, please contact us using the details on the front cover. You are welcome at any of our events or workshops, if you are a member or not. You can join Arts & Minds for free at: [www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/join-us](http://www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/join-us)

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