

CANT DO
NOTHING
ABOUT YOUR
AGE
WHY WORRY
ABOUT IT?

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Limited edition print by Tony Allan, 2017

Previous page: Roland Young with his artwork



Linda Bell leading 'Cube Station' workshop at the Pump House Gallery, Battersea Park

About ActionSpace

ActionSpace is London's leading and longest running visual arts organisation for artists with learning disabilities. Our vision is for artists with learning disabilities to be at the heart of the visual arts sector.

Our Aims Are:

- 1** To enable artists with learning disabilities to have a professional career in the arts. We do this by providing high quality training in professional art studios and by giving our artists equal access to support, resources and opportunities to exhibit and sell their artwork.
- 2** To create opportunities for people with learning disabilities to engage with the visual arts. We run a programme of outreach projects, workshops and events across London. We also share our skills and expertise with arts organisations and cultural venues, to increase their confidence in engaging with people with learning disabilities, thereby supporting them to diversify their audiences.
- 3** To promote and showcase the work of artists with learning disabilities. We are a development agency for artists with learning disabilities, supporting, advocating and promoting diversity within the contemporary visual arts sector.

Launched in the 1960's and formalized as a limited company and registered charity in 1984, ActionSpace has a strong reputation for excellence. This is evidenced by a number of ongoing partnerships we have with high profile cultural organisations such as the Royal Academy, Tate, British Museum and Camden Arts Centre.

Our status as a sector leader has also been recognised by the Arts Council England in their latest National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding round, where we were one of only four organisations in London to be awarded an uplift in funding.

“ Excellent creative facilities to help bring out the talents and skills of the participants. I pray you continue to get all the funding you need to help all members of society have a place to release their gifts ... ”
Artist's Sister

Chair's report

ActionSpace has had another incredible year of creativity, expansion and impact.

As Chair it is always a privilege and inspirational to meet our artists, to see their work and to hear about their ambition. This has been the case over the last year. ActionSpace can only claim to be succeeding when the artists tell us that they are enjoying their experiences with ActionSpace.

Our partnerships with many arts and community organisations are very important to ActionSpace and for the artists. They have enabled ActionSpace's artists to hold events and arrange exhibitions in galleries that are at the heart of the creative art's community.

ActionSpace is driven by our mission and we plan to develop our operating model, our programmes and our reach so that

we fulfil the mission in ways that are contemporary and forward looking.

Despite the economic climate and austerity ActionSpace has had another sound financial year. We are financially sustainable but like most charities and arts organisations fund raising, sponsorship and securing alternative revenue streams remains vital. Our reserves are strong but are there for a purpose and to ensure that we can realise our mission.

As I reported in previous years. ActionSpace's success would not be possible without the exceptional leadership of our joint Chief Executives, Barbara van Heel and Sheryll Catto. On behalf of the Board and everyone at ActionSpace I would like to extend a huge 'thank you' to Barbara and Sheryll. Without our incredible staff team and volunteers ActionSpace could not do what it does. We owe a big warm 'thank you' to the ActionSpace staff and volunteers, and to my fellow trustees. And of course, above all to the artists!

John Tizard

*Tony Allan with
Rt Hon Keir Starmer,
MP for Holborn & St Pancras*



Review of the year

2017/18 was a hectic but exceptionally rewarding year.

We were delighted to be able to share our artists' work with a wide and diverse audience through a series of high profile public exhibitions and events and elated that the response was always resoundingly positive.

We developed new partnerships, which helped us to expand our work across London and introduce more young people and adults with learning disabilities to professional visual arts practice. Through these partnership projects we discovered new talent, which we will nurture through our Studio Projects.

We were successful in our application to continue as an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and proud to be one of only 4 organisation in London to be awarded an uplift in funding. This endorsement from ACE as well as strong and prudent financial management and effective fundraising means that ActionSpace has once again continued its track record for stability and ended the year 31 March 2018 with healthy reserves.

It is a privilege and an honour to work with so many outstandingly talented artists. ActionSpace's vision is for artists with learning disabilities to be at the centre of the contemporary visual arts sector. We look forward to continuing to work with our dedicated Board of Directors, passionate and committed staff team, exceptional artist facilitators, enthusiastic volunteers and forward thinking partner organisations to make this vision a reality.

Barbara van Heel & Sheryll Catto
Joint Chief Executives

Artwork by Helen Biney, 2018



Supported Studio Programme

ActionSpace's main aim is to support artists with learning disabilities and we do this mainly through our supported Studio programme, our various events & exhibitions, our participatory arts programme and our young people's projects.

ActionSpace's flagship project, the Studio Projects, has a proven track record for talent development, having produced a number of artists who are exhibiting on a regular basis and receiving critical acknowledgement for their work.

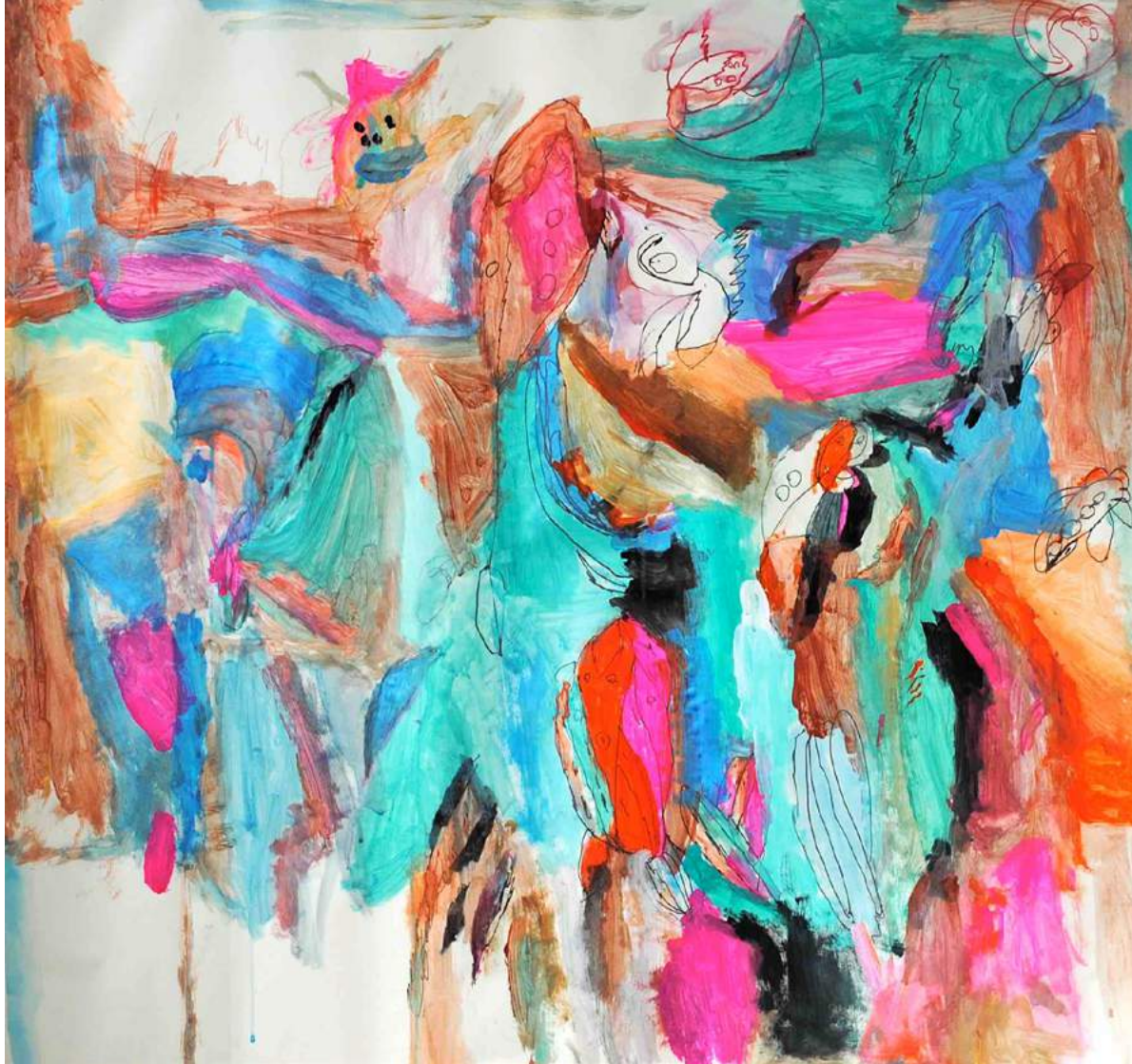
The Studio Projects provide our artists with a weekly opportunity to work in a professional studio facility, based in a vibrant art environment. They have access to high quality art materials and equipment and space and time to explore ideas and experiment with a range of techniques and approaches. Working alongside other artists gives them the peer support, inspiration and critical context they require.

Our highly experienced artist facilitators provide encouragement and support on a one-to-one basis. All of this encourages the artists to develop their skills and creativity and to move their work on by analysing and reflecting on it.

During 2017/18 ActionSpace ran:

- Five Studio Projects in our North/Central London studio, Cockpit Arts
- Two Studio Projects in our South London studio, Studio Voltaire
- One Studio Project in our East London studio, Flying Angel at ACAVA's studios in Newham
- One Studio Project in our North West London studio, Barham Studio at ACAVA 's studios in Brent

We are working with 65 Studio Artists on a weekly basis across the nine Studio Projects. We have been working with each Studio Artist on an one-to-one basis implementing their Practice Development Plans, which include projects such as: residencies, commissions and exhibitions, individual, group and collaborative projects, training in specific skills and creation of opportunities and support for our artists to be employed as curators, artist educators, workshop leaders, etc.



*Untitled painting
by Ali Kamalati,
2017*

Highlights of the year



Nnena Kalu...

Was invited to stage a solo exhibition in Project Ability's gallery at Trongate 103 for **Glasgow International 2018**. The exhibition was chosen to be part of GI's prestigious Across the City programme and highlighted in artists' membership organisation a-n's round-up of the festival:

“...Kalu undoubtedly has an essence of Phyllida Barlow about her but Kalu's ingenuity makes Barlow look demure and restrained in comparison – her colour palette is riotous and the taped shapes crackle with surprising, boundless energy.”

Laura Davidson, a-n

Nnena was also shortlisted for **Spectrum Art Prize**, a national arts award celebrating art produced by British artists on the Autistic spectrum. The judges included Turner Prize winner, Mark Wallinger and international arts writer and critic, Sasha Craddock. In his speech award judge and internationally renowned Autism expert Simon Baron-Cohen noted that Nnena was the only one of the 7 shortlisted artists who had complex autism and is non-verbal. He said that he hoped to see more artists from the less able end of the spectrum shortlisted in the future.

*Nnena Kalu installing work for “**Spring Syllabus**”, J Hammond Project, London, March 2018*

Thompson Hall & Ian Wornast...

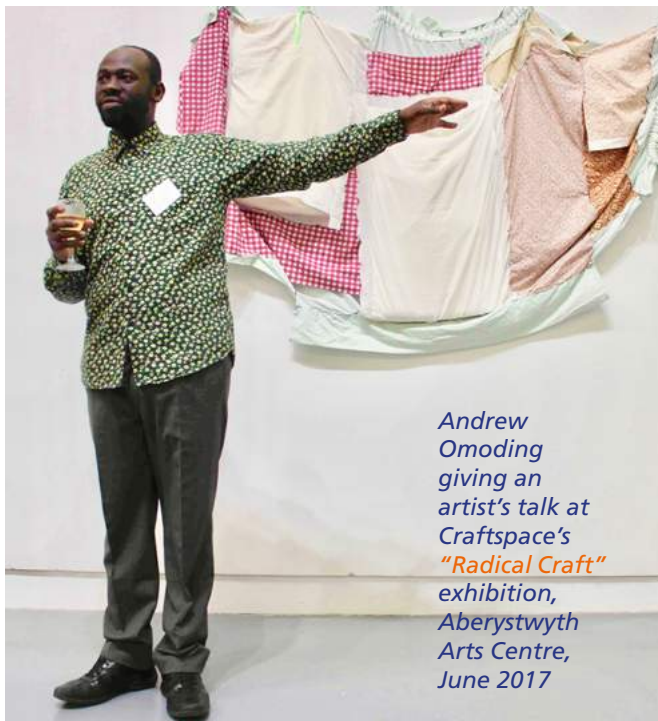
Were awarded an **Unlimited Emerging Artist Commission** and ActionSpace supported them through a one-year process of R&D and creation of work for their exhibition, *"My Life in London"*, at The Koppel Project Hive in March 2018. *"My Life in London"* will be touring to the Unlimited Festival at the Southbank Centre and Project Ability in Glasgow.



"My Life in London", The Koppel Project Hive, London 2018 (paintings by Ian Wornast)



"My Life in London", The Koppel Project Hive, London 2018 (paintings by Thompson Hall)



Andrew Omoding giving an artist's talk at Craftspace's "Radical Craft" exhibition, Aberystwyth Arts Centre, June 2017

Andrew Omoding...

Was awarded a commission by Outside In and HOUSE Festival to create new work to be shown alongside work by self-taught textile artist Anthony Stevens. The exhibition entitled "**Common Threads**" was at Phoenix Gallery, Brighton as part of HOUSE Biennial 2017, which included a new exhibition by Turner Prize Nominee Laura Ford at Brighton Museum.

Andrew also completed the second year of his employment as a workshop leader on **Camden Art Centre's "Get the Message"**. Gemma Wright, Education Manager at CAC said:

“ I feel proud of what we have achieved this year and so proud of Andrew. I just wanted to thank ActionSpace for being our partners on this project and for all of the support you have given us. I learn so much from every conversation we have and am pleased we're continuing to work together. ”

Gemma Wright, CAC



"Fish Flying" by Andrew Omoding, 2017

Young People's Projects

In addition to the supported Studio programme we also ran projects specifically for young people. Our work with young people is of the same high standard as our work with adults.

The direction of the programme is informed by the needs of the young people. We are flexible and responsive in creating possibilities for them to explore their creativity and have the same opportunities as their peers. Gaining Arts Awards and developing transferable skills through art making enables them to access further training, whether in the arts or otherwise. Some discover previously unearthed talents, which we encourage them to develop further by joining one of our Studio Projects.

Participation in ActionSpace projects inspires young people to believe in their talent, increasing self-esteem, confidence and independence. This is particularly true for young people for whom non-specialist art projects are not accessible due to the nature and extent of support needs. The visual arts can provide a lifeline by helping them develop a method of self-expression, reducing frustration and anger. Exhibiting artwork in local venues enables them to participate in their community and gives them positive acknowledgement.

During 2017/18 ActionSpace ran:

- One Young People's project in partnership with the John F. Kennedy, a special needs school in Newham
- One Young People's project at our North West London Studio at ACAVA
- One Young People's project at our South West London Studio at Studio Voltaire

On March 29th the young people at our North West London Studio had an exhibition event to which local Brent MP, Dawn Butler, came to meet all the young artists and see their work. She was incredible supportive and said:

“ I was delighted to visit ActionSpace for their open day and I thank them for their warm welcome. We have such talented artists in Brent and they do such great work there, and I commend the hard work of all the volunteers who make it possible. I encourage everyone to check them out and get involved. ”

Dawn Butler MP



ActionSpace is an Arts Award Centre and Supporter, with five advisors to Bronze and Silver level, two to Discover and Explore levels. We work with young people across all our projects and liaise with the Arts Awards delivery agency (Trinity College) and Bridge Organisations to share our expertise in evidencing achievement against the criteria when working with young people with severe learning disabilities, in order to increase access to the scheme.

During 2017/18 ActionSpace supported:

- Eight young people to achieve Arts Award at Discover level
- Four young people to achieve Arts award at Bronze level

Painting by Allen Gyimah from ActionSpace's partnership project with the Village School in Brent

Participatory Arts Programme

ActionSpace's piloted its Participatory Arts Programme in Spring 2016 with two year funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) as part of their Widening Access and Participation in the Arts: Explore and Test Programme.

ActionSpace's Participatory Arts Programme was designed to build on the organisation's track record of supporting learning disabled artists to develop their artistic practice in new and exciting ways by taking a refreshed focus on participation with a view to reaching and working with more learning disabled people in different ways.

During the 2 years ActionSpace ran more than the 36 workshops initially planned. There were 38 half-day workshops in different public contexts all across London. They varied from workshops inside an empty shop unit at **Southside Shopping Centre** (Wandsworth) to workshops in Anthill day centre as part of **"Creativity & Wellbeing"** week (Tower Hamlets) and workshops at Willesden Green Library as part of the **"Fun Palaces"** celebrations. All were led by one of our artists with severe learning disabilities and supported by our Associate Artist. The total number of people who have taking part as participants is 914.

ActionSpace engaged consultant Sarah Pickthall, Artist Producer and Diversity and Inclusion Specialist, to interrogate and evaluate the programme. The evaluation clearly demonstrated the success of the programme in

developing artists with severe learning disabilities to be workshop leaders and the impact this has had on their practice, their confidence and their wellbeing. Throughout the programme, ActionSpace have made it possible for artists with severe learning disability to demonstrably develop their skills and confidence to take on successful workshop leadership within a diversity of settings both familiar and new.

“ This work is too important not to be shared more widely with established and new audiences for what it says about ActionSpace and what it means in the bigger schema of equality and professional art practice with and for learning disabled artists, communities and the wider public. The work is complex and brilliant and should be cherished and communicated as the participatory programme develops in the future as an outstanding model of best practice.”

Sarah Pickthall

We're delighted that the Arts Council England agreed with ActionSpace that the Participatory Arts Programme has enormous potential and that they have given us additional funding to further develop and continue the programme for four more years.



Pardip Kapil and his assistant Michael Sporik, "Pop Up Pardip" at ActionSpace's Fun Palace, Willsenden Greent Library, October 2017

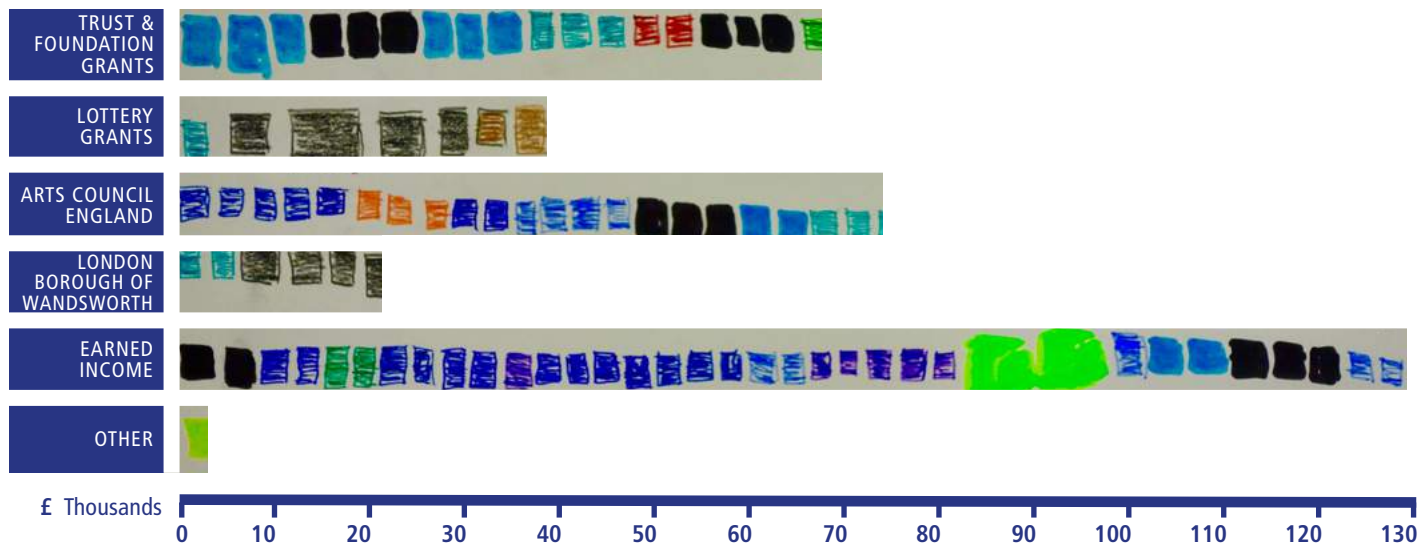
Finances 2017 / 2018

INCOME

We continue to progress a diverse portfolio of funding of which roughly half of the income is unrestricted.

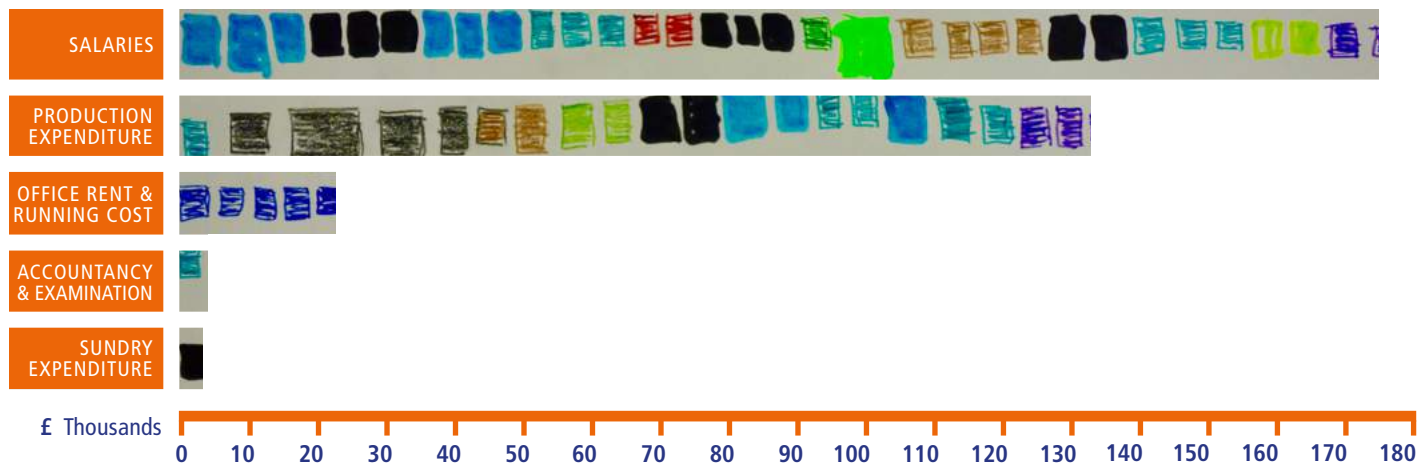
These figures are taken from our annual accounts which satisfied our auditors. Should you wish to see more details, please go to our ActionSpace website where you can see them in full.

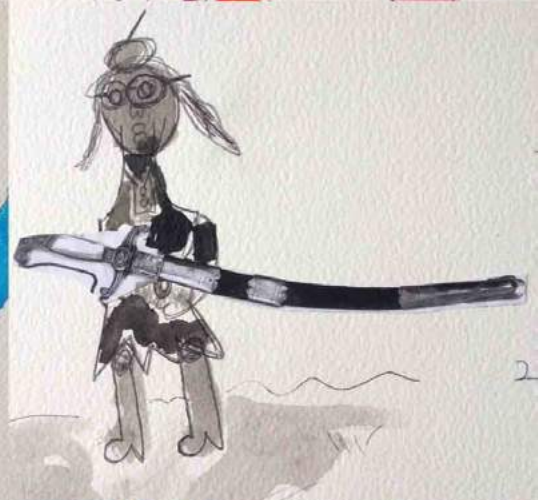
Trusts & Foundations grants	67,692.00
Lottery grants	38,592.00
Arts Council England	73,416.00
London Borough of Wandsworth	21,010.00
Earned Income	129,970.00
Other	2,268.00



Salaries	174,728.00
Production expenditure	132,227.00
Office rent and running cost	21,934.00
Accountancy and independent examination	2,796.00
Sundry expenditure	2,245.00

Illustrated by Roland Young





Thank you to our Board of Directors, staff & volunteers

We are grateful to our Board of Directors, each of whom offers us their time and expertise on a voluntary basis.

Board of Directors

Ruby Dixon	Antoinette O'Loughlin
Thompson Hall	Helen Renwick
Jackie Murin	Marc Steene
Karen Noakes (<i>Treasurer</i>)	John Tizard (<i>Chair</i>)

Staff

Co-Directors: Sheryll Catto & Barbara van Heel
Associate Artist: Charlotte Hollinshead
General Manager: Vicky Tweedie
General Manager (Maternity Cover): Philip Levine
Pastoral Care Co-ordinator: Siobhan Stewart
Marketing & Administration: Ella Fleck
Administrative Assistant: Ian Wornast

Artist Facilitator: Phoebe Barnicoat
Artist Facilitator: Pia Bramley
Artist Facilitator: Lisa Brown
Artist Facilitator: Rebekah Cameron
Artist Facilitator: Patricia Finnegan
Artist Facilitator: Lesley Greening Lassofo
Artist Facilitator: Kirstin Leighton-Boyce
Artist Facilitator: Lisa Muten
Artist Facilitator: Emily Rees-Haynes

We would also like to thank our volunteers who are an important resource as they enable us to provide a uniquely personalised service.

All of our volunteers are trained artists and they each bring their own skills and ideas to the projects. In return, ActionSpace provides them with on the job training and experience, which forms a basis from which they are able to develop a career in working with artists with learning disabilities, either with ActionSpace or elsewhere.

The volunteers for the year 2017/18 were:

Elizabeth Alexander	Vagia Krokida
Andy Auld	Scarlett Lassofo
Maddie Beeson	Hannah Le Feuvre
Pia Bramley	Kirstin Leighton-Boyce
Rosie Cammack	Isabella McEvoy
Helen Caulfield	Anya Mustoo
Georgia Clark	Naomi Nehemen
Isabel Couchoud Bataller	Sean Roy Parker
Suzanne Coughlan	Kate Paul
Shelley Davies	Richard Phoenix
Jackie Ford	Hannah Robson
Joe Frost	Blen Solomon
Isabel Greenslade	Adam Thomas
Rachel Jones	Jeremy Warder



Thank you to our principal funders

We would like to thank our major funders for their continuing support, mainly the Arts Council England, London Borough of Wandsworth, City Bridge Trust, John Lyons Charity, London Catalyst, St Andrew Holborn Charity, The Big Lottery – Reaching Communities, and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for our innovative participatory arts programme.



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



JOHN LYON'S CHARITY

London  Catalyst



St Andrew Holborn
Group of Charities



*Ian Wornast (left) and Thompson Hall (right) with Sir
Nicholas Serota, Chair of Arts Council England*