
Multicultural Arts Day

Evaluation report

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Background

Why we wanted to do it

A multicultural arts event on this scale will broaden knowledge of the arts within the community, give a sense of achievement and encourage creativity. Moreover participants are encouraged to learn new skills and benefit from the guidance of professional artists.

In offering a wide variety of art forms from different cultures and at different skill level, the participants were given an opportunity to express themselves in new and exciting ways, be it through dance, music, drumming or simply looking like a lion.

The west end of Newcastle is one of the most diverse areas in the whole of the North East, but art activities are not generally available in the area. The participants were able to benefit from the choice on offer and it might have given some an opportunity to get interested in the arts.

When choosing the artists it was made sure that they were both professional as well as local, providing employment as well as a chance for them to work within the community they live.

Organisations

Organisations and individuals that helped prepare the day

BECON

Young Voices / Riverside Community Health Project

First Step

Ethnic Minority Volunteers

Angelou Centre

Sure Start

New Deal for Communities

NECDAF

Outcome

Achievements

The main achievement for the day was that over 350 participants from all walks of life in the West End of Newcastle enjoyed arts and joined in activities that they won't otherwise have the chance in part taking.

The numbers on the day exceed by far the expectation. This emphasises again the need for Art Events of this kind.

Lessons Learned

One reason for the success of the day was the collaboration across many very different organisations that had never worked together before. Bringing these organisations closer together must be counted as one of the most important outcomes of the event.

However this was also the place where space for improvement might be possible for future event of this scale and with these organisations. A clearer designation of tasks and responsibilities in preparation of the event and on the day, would have improved some of the organisational aspects of the day. This would most certainly provide for a more equal distribution of time and effort among the organisation committee. As it was, these small shortcomings were more than adequately compensated through individual efforts.

None of this should distract from the fact that all participants had a wonderful and enjoyable day.

Where we were seen and heard

The event got some good reviews in the Chronicle, as well as local radio. There is also a video that is still in progress.

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Activities

All the fun we could get

The day started with everybody registering themselves and indicating which activities they wanted to take part in. Some activities like African drumming or Bollywood dancing had long waiting lists. Others like Origami or Pottery, participants could join the artist without having to wait.

With 18 different activities spread over the whole day and in six different rooms in Westgate Centre for Sport, there was always something new to be done for the children that came. Some took place as workshops where registration was necessary.

- Trapeze
- Bollywood Dancing
- Steelpans
- Drama
- African Caribbean Drumming
- Samba Drumming
- DJ ing workshops

To other activities they could just turn up.

- Face Painting
- Henna
- Watercolour Painting
- Glass Painting
- Beading
- Pottery
- Origami
- Arts & Craft

Most of the workshops took place in one space, which enable the children to go from one activity to the next. There were activities on offer which are not normally available to them or that would be in their expectation when going to an Arts Event like Trapeze, or steel drums, giving them a completely new experience outside of their normal cultural framework.

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And their enthusiasm and joy was visible on all faces (painted or not)

Summary

That was the day it was

The Multicultural Arts Day was a resounding success confirmed by over 350 happy faces of the participants, 18 exhausted Artists, satisfied organisers from 9 different organisations and a positive article with picture in the Evening Chronicle the following day.

Many positive reactions have been heard in the groups and in conversations with participants in the weeks since the event took place and there are plans to repeat the event next year.

Thanks

Funders and others that helped us make this day a success

Arts Council and especially Padma Rao

Riverside Community Health Project

BECON

Young Voices

First Step

Ethnic Minorities Volunteers

Newcastle Arts Development Team – Tony Dunne

Sure Start

New Deal for the Communities

NECDAF

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Angelou Centre

Volunteers – Faye M Smith, Anisha Malik

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