

Review 2008



2

Mid Pennine Arts is the arts partnership for the Pennine Lancashire area. Created as an alliance of local authorities, community organisations and individuals, MPA applies an inclusive, collaborative approach to developing a multidisciplinary programme of work.

MPA works across a wide range of artforms, and aims to put culture right at the heart of social and economic regeneration.

All our projects combine a community base with ambitions for creative excellence. We aim to marry participation with inspiration.



Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| An Extraordinary Year | 3 |
| About Mid Pennine Arts | 4 |
| A Year's Work | 5 |
| MPA and Education | 6 |
| Art and Landscape | 8 |
| Panopticons | 9 |
| New Landmarks for Pennine Lancashire | 10 |
| Mid Pennine Gallery | 12 |
| Spectacular Art for New Public Buildings | 13 |
| Talking Shop | 14 |
| Renewing Pride of Place | 15 |
| Celebrating Diversity | 16 |
| Imagine a Future... | 17 |
| Looking Ahead | 18 |
| People and Thanks | 19 |

'An artist from Eden filled me with inspiration'

Student at Imagine a Future...
conference

Photos by Nigel Hillier, Ian Lawson, Neil Harris, Gayle Knight, Lucy Bergman, Andy Ford, Suki Chan, B&P Projects and Hannah Kidd.

AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR

Pennine Lancashire's dynamic, award-winning partnership for the arts has had an extraordinary year:

- Innovative partnerships to enable ambitious projects.
- New landmarks for Pennine Lancashire.
- Spectacular art for new public buildings.
- An expanding programme for our 200 local schools, with a growing reputation for excellence.
- Imaginative, creative ideas in support of Housing Market Renewal.
- A young people's conference, engaging the citizens of tomorrow in Lancashire's regeneration.
- A challenging programme of contemporary visual arts.
- Support for partner groups celebrating cultural diversity.
- A resource for all our partners, providing advice, consultancy and the support of our multidisciplinary team.

All this endorsed by multiple national and regional awards, from the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Civic Trust, the Arts Council, Lancashire's Be Inspired Business Awards and more.

Mid Pennine Arts has had an extraordinary year, but only made possible by the support of all our partners. Thank you for working with us.

Nick Hunt
Director



'Good design can change places and change people's lives in a positive way. This was the intention behind creating the Panopticons, and I think it's already starting to work.'

Wayne Hemingway
Designer, and project champion
for Panopticons



ATOM WON A
NATIONAL CIVIC
TRUST AWARD 2008

BACKGROUND:
LABYRINTH BY
JIM BUCHANAN
AT IMAGINE
A FUTURE...
CONFERENCE





IMAGINE A FUTURE...
CONFERENCE

ABOUT MPA

'Showed me how to think differently about the place I live in.'

Student at Imagine A Future... conference

- Created in 1966 as a partnership of local authorities, community groups and individuals.
- Serves a core area of four Lancashire boroughs and Todmorden in West Yorkshire.
- Supported by grants from Arts Council England, North West, Lancashire County Council and others, with subscriptions from member local authorities.
- Associate Members (Friends) include local non-profit organisations, families and individuals.
- Registered charity, number 250642.
- Managed by a board of trustees.
- A flexible team of ten to twelve staff, supported by freelance collaborators and volunteers.
- An Investor in People.

MPA exists to enrich the cultural life of our area, by putting creativity at the heart of social and economic regeneration.

The MPA Approach:

- Working in partnership, and building networks of partners.
- Strong roots in our diverse local communities.
- Dedicated to creative learning.
- Ambitious for high quality end results.

These are the values that shape the programme of work developed by our multidisciplinary team.

WELCOME TO
WEST ACCRINGTON



A YEAR'S WORK

- 618 sessions of participatory work
- 76 education projects
- 14 community projects
- 42 events and performances
- 10 exhibitions
- 6 publications and 3 DVDs
- 16,150 attenders at events
- 4,343 at exhibitions
- 19,356 took part in education projects
- 3,514 in community projects
- At least 36,800 visitors to Panopticons
- **Total attendances 80,163**
- **Commissions of new work 38**
- **Work days for artists 1,010**

Figures refer to the year to 31st March 2008

And some measures of success:

- Halo was adopted by the Northern Way as part of Welcome to the North, a select programme of iconic public art projects across the north of England.
- Singing, Ringing Tree won a string of awards – from RIBA, Structural Steel Design Awards and more.
- Atom won a national Civic Trust Award 2008.
- For the Panopticons project, MPA won the Arts Council's Art 07 award in the Totally Inspired! category, one of four for work around the North West.
- MPA was named Creative Business of the Year 2008 in the BIBAs, Lancashire's business awards.
- Turnover topped £750K for the first time. Two thirds was generated by projects and fundraising. MPA generated a small surplus on the year's activity. This will be carried forward and invested in our programme. MPA maintains modest reserves in line with stated policy to insulate the organisation against the unexpected.

WINNER the **bibas**
Lancashire 2008
be inspired business awards





6



TRIPLE STEP DANCE FESTIVAL

PUPILS AT WHITEFIELD DELIGHT IN CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WORK

MPA AND EDUCATION

All our work is underpinned by a commitment to creative learning. MPA has a longstanding track record of work with schools, and our outstanding education team have had their busiest year yet:

- Built up our role as a key delivery partner for Creative Partnerships Lancashire. Support from CPL helped us consolidate our staff team.
- Work for CPL included special relationships with certain schools including Whitefield Infants and other Pendle schools, and Haslingden High in Rossendale. These long-term partnerships have enabled some exceptional creative work.
- A regular programme of activities offered to all our 200 plus local schools.
- Professional development and networking opportunities for our local teachers.
- 76 projects and 618 sessions of activity.

'We really enjoy singing so this morning was fantastic...'

Casterton Primary School, Burnley on a voice workshop with Hannah Kidd

'A wonderful stimulus for creative writing'

Heather Hodson, Head teacher at Higham Primary School.

GREAT FIRE OF LONDON REIMAGINED, WHITEFIELD INFANTS SCHOOL





BOOK LAUNCH AT BURNLEY YOUTH THEATRE



KICKING LEAVES

Kicking Leaves is the biennial celebration of children's literature led by MPA. The publication from the last festival set young people's own work alongside a story commissioned from leading writer David Almond. The book launch at Burnley Youth Theatre was a delightful event shared by 150 young people and their families.

Kicking Leaves returns in winter 2008, another packed programme of inspirational activity delivered with an alliance of partner organisations.

'Erin my little girl got up and read her poem out. She was so proud of herself, as we were.'

'What a fantastic opportunity for the children to be involved in such a lovely evening... The confidence this builds in them, and the encouragement to do better still next year...'

Parents from St Veronica's RC School in Rossendale after the Kicking Leaves book launch



ART AND LANDSCAPE

Dramatic hillsides set right alongside our towns... These are Pennine Lancashire's greatest assets, and they offer rich material for creative work. MPA has developed a specialism.

Over five years of the Land project, for East Lancashire Regional Park, we have built up a strong network of partners, and an ambitious body of work. Land has concluded, but we are just getting started...

The new Brun Valley Greenway links Burnley's canalside areas to another heritage gem at Queen Street Mill. Partnership with Lancashire County Council enabled a commission of very distinctive waymarkers from sculptor John Merrill.

Leading willow sculptor Serena de la Hey created the Land Giant at Crow Wood, by Junction 11 of the M65. This imposing sixteen foot figure, willow on a steel frame, is another unique landmark for Pennine Lancashire.

Projects conceived through Land, and developed over time, continue to unfold. This has been made possible in part by support from Arts Council England North West.

Partnership projects now taking shape include:

- The Shoe Trail, new link from Rawtenstall up to the Halo site.
- Valley of Stone, a major programme for Rossendale's old quarries.
- New landmark sculpture and outdoor classroom at Croft Top by the A56.

And a new joint venture with the LCC Remade programme will bring a creative dimension to derelict land sites and local people in locations across the county.



LAND GIANT BESIDE THE M65

**'I see the Panopticons
as being a relaunch of
the 'can-do' creativity
of this wonderful part
of the world.'**

Wayne Hemingway

PANOPTICONS

Launched in 2003 to support East Lancashire's Regional Park initiative, our most ambitious ever project has this year come to a thrilling conclusion. Three new landmarks were in place. In 2007 we delivered the most ambitious commission, Halo in Rossendale.

Halo was supported by the Northern Way as part of the Marketing the North to the World programme, one of a select few iconic projects across the north of England.

The County's Remade derelict land programme attracted over £400K of extra investment into the site at Top o' Slate. Landscaping of this former tip was followed by construction of Halo's steel frame and lighting array, and the new landmark was unveiled in late 2007.

Halo's launch also celebrated the wider Regional Park programme. The event was devised with the international company WildWorks. Over two weeks, they engaged more than one thousand local people in workshop sessions, tea parties, and creative contributions to a unique, community-led celebration.

An extensive supporting programme included an evaluation project with young people from local schools, who made their own, uplifting film of public responses to the new landmark.

Media interest in Panopticons continues to build, with features in Holland, Portugal, Mexico, China and the USA, and growing coverage on websites like YouTube and Flickr.

Halo, by John Kennedy of Landlab, was developed in partnership with Lancashire County Council, Groundwork Rossendale and Rossendale Borough Council.

The partnership programmes Panopticons and Land were made possible by Lancashire Economic Partnership's East Lancashire Regional Park programme and by funds from the Northwest Regional Development Agency. Further support has been generously provided by Arts Council England, North West, Lancashire County Council and the Northern Way.



HALO LAUNCH EVENT

NEW LANDMARKS FOR PENNINE LANCASHIRE

The project has concluded, but the work continues. MPA aims to maximise the impact of Panopticons, promoting cultural tourism for Pennine Lancashire and helping build positive images.

'Beautiful and evocative'

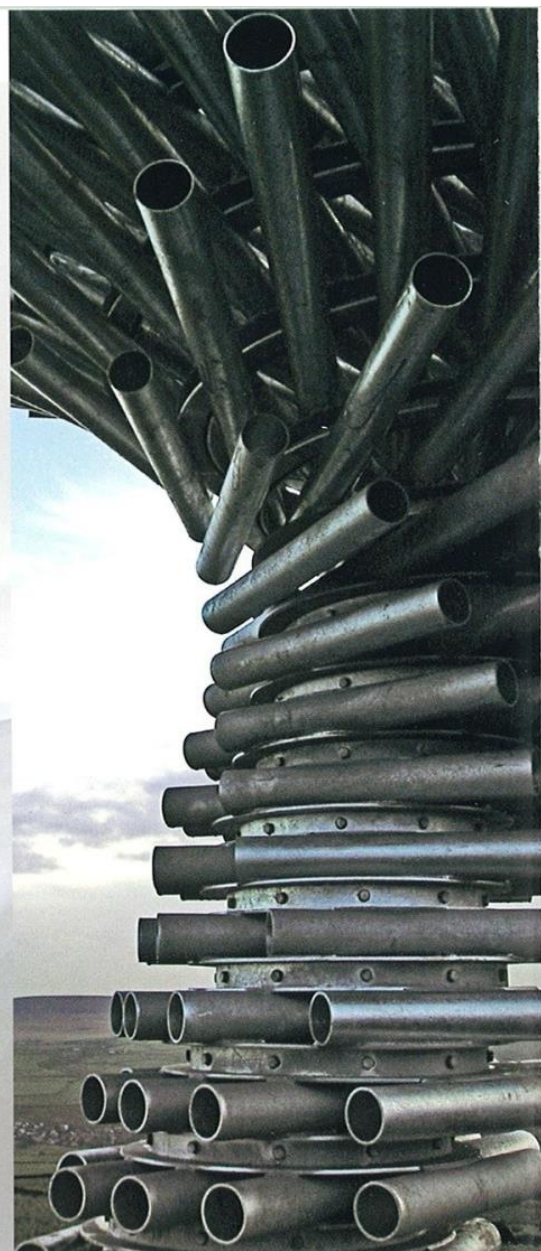
Judges for the Structural Steel Design Awards 2008, about the Singing, Ringing Tree.

National distribution of tourism print, a new website in partnership with Lancashire & Blackpool Tourist Board, guided tours, international conference presentations and continuing global media interest... Our latest enquiry came from Russian state TV.

Images of the Panopticons are working hard, as intended... Prominent in regional promotions, district strategies, TV weather bulletins and more. In The Independent travel supplement, a handsome two-page spread...

On YouTube, one video clip of Singing, Ringing Tree has now registered the astonishing figure of over 800,000 hits!

Momentum is building, across our area, for joint working to achieve ambitious aims. As it does, the Panopticons are leading the way. Starting to achieve the project's central aim – a new way of looking at Pennine Lancashire.



SINGING RINGING TREE

BACKGROUND: ATOM

'A major landmark for Burnley, attracting visitors and boosting our tourist sector and economy. It is a true symbol of Burnley's emergence and regeneration.'

Kitty Ussher MP

Awards

Awards for Singing, Ringing Tree

RIBA North West Award 2007

RIBA National Award 2007

Nomination for the Stephen Lawrence Prize 2007

Certificate of Merit, Structural Steel
Design Awards 2008

Hot Dip Galvanisers Association Award 2008

For Atom

Civic Trust National Award 2008

For Halo

Nomination, Structural Steel Design Awards 2008

Land and Panopticons were projects of the East Lancashire Environmental Arts Network managed by MPA and supported by the Northwest Regional Development Agency, the East Lancashire Partnership, Arts Council England, North West, Lancashire County Council, the Northern Way, the local authorities of Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley and Rossendale, Pendle Leisure Trust and Rossendale Leisure Trust. Many other partner agencies played a part in making these projects happen.



11

**'The most staggering
piece of iconic public art
I have seen in years.'**

Dennis Taylor, Chief Executive,
Lancashire Economic Partnership.



HALO: PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK WHITAKER/
MAINWAVE PHOTOGRAPHIC

MID PENNINE GALLERY

The Mid Pennine Gallery at our Burnley base presents high quality contemporary arts across a wide range of media, with links to our education and community programmes:

- Six main exhibitions.
- A platform for more local artists in the adjacent C-Space.
- Regular artist in residence days and artist-led events.
- Opportunities for schools and colleges.
- Family-friendly workshop sessions.
- Support from our specialist team for our Pennine Lancashire partners.

'Wonderful ideas to really make us think'

Visitor to Disasters of War exhibition by Alan Birch

'Amazed everyone with both the quality of the pieces on display and the excellent work of the curatorial team at MPA in drawing the exhibition together...'

Chris May, Creative Director, Creative Partnerships Lancashire about STart 2008. Selected work from secondary schools, presented to professional standards and offering young artists the real stimulus of a gallery showing. Supported by Creative Partnerships Lancashire.

'Took a while to work out, but once I did it was very rewarding. I have never been to Burnley before, but it's great to find a gallery putting on an exhibition of this sort.'

Visitor to Language & Science exhibition of text art.

'Having the artist in residence available for a chat about his work was great.'

Visitor to Considered Matter exhibition.

'Lovely to live with, time spent ... increases stimulation.'

Visitor to Frames exhibition.



MID PENNINE GALLERY WORKSHOP

GALLERY INSTALLATION BY ANNE CHARNOCK

artwork

given a choice, that I

UNDERMINED MEASURED

xt is marginally fairly

ABSOLUTELY.
critical to in real



IMAGINING RAINDROPS BY SUKI CHAN IN
THE PALS CENTRE ATRIUM

VINYL ART BY DAVID BURNS FOR ACORN
CENTRE ENTRANCE

SPECTACULAR ART FOR NEW PUBLIC BUILDINGS

MPA worked with Hyndburn Leisure Trust and the East Lancashire Primary Care Trust to procure some stunning original work for two major new public buildings.

Opened in spring 2008, the two health centres are landmark buildings and new focal points for Hyndburn, concentrating healthcare provision. The partners recognised that creative arts can transform a healing environment, and asked MPA to commission the work. Support from Arts Council England, North West enabled an ambitious programme.

Open competition resulted in commissions of new, site-specific work from five artists. One major work, by Suki Chan, forms a breathtaking centrepiece for the three-storey atrium at the Pals Centre.

An in-depth study by Susan Weeks of Manchester University has examined the impact of the work, and responses to it, with overwhelmingly positive results. In the Pals, 90% of staff and 85% of users said that they liked the work. 100% of staff agreed that it added character and identity to the building.

MPA aims to contribute to a vibrant, distinctive built environment for Pennine Lancashire. An art commission can make a location unique, and we will prioritise work of this kind.

'A huge percentage of both users and staff believing that art in a healthcare setting is beneficial to those exposed to it.'

Research project by Susan Weeks





TALKING SHOP

Regeneration impacts upon people as well as places, and this sequence of projects looks at one key sector. Small, independent retailers are crucial to the vitality of our towns, but in time of dramatic change this is an endangered species.

Talking Shop projects document small shops and the effects on them of rapid regeneration:

- Talking Shop in Accrington looked at the regeneration hotspot of Blackburn Road, working with partners to help involve retailers in the process of renewal.
- Children from ten primary schools explored village shops and created a publication for Talking Shop Rossendale.
- Our project with partners Oswaldtwistle Players has now resulted in a permanent display commissioned by Oswaldtwistle Mills.
- Projects are in development for Bacup and Blackburn, and a countywide programme is taking shape.

PAUL'S CORNER SHOP,
ROSSENDALE

Talking Shop has been supported by Elevate East Lancashire, Lancashire County Council and Lancashire County Developments Ltd.

'The children gained some fantastic literacy, communication and artistic skills. They also had the opportunity to meet the shopkeepers, ask questions, form opinions and make decisions.'

Lucy Bergman, contributing artist.

'A pioneering creative project, which has enabled Elevate to listen to and celebrate Pennine Lancashire's business community.'

Claire Tymon, Creative Community Engagement Manager, Elevate East Lancashire.

TALKING SHOP,
ROSSENDALE

SARI SHOP ON
BLACKBURN ROAD,
ACCRINGTON



RENEWING PRIDE OF PLACE



DESIGNER CHRIS EDMUNDS PROJECTS AN IDEA FOR NEW STREET SIGNS

Housing Market Renewal brings major investment to the regeneration of Pennine Lancashire, but with it comes huge challenges. For West Accrington, the partners in HMR – Elevate East Lancashire and Hyndburn Borough Council – wanted to make best use of creativity, and commissioned MPA to report.

Our work started with children and families in local schools, exploring their shared past and their hopes for the future. Community groups, local residents, regeneration professionals and artists have all made key contributions. Twelve months' work has resulted in a detailed, sixty-page study.

'Welcome to West Accrington' was compiled with Vista Projects. The report recommends a subtle approach to encourage maximum support... Multiple strategies for tackling key issues, with community involvement to the fore, an emphasis on exploiting the best of local heritage, and a single central aim – to renew West Accrington's pride of place.

Now adopted by the Council, the report provides a tool to help trigger inward investment. Next step, a demonstration programme of a few key ideas... With government eyes on Pennine Lancashire, a few bold, creative actions can put West Accrington right in the spotlight.

'Imaginative ideas to build communities that will be sustainable long into the future.'

Max Steinberg, Chief Executive, Elevate East Lancashire.

'Positive and exciting ways to help West Accrington regain the pride in itself and the sense of place that it once had.'

Cllr Peter Britcliffe, Leader, and Cllr Peter Clarke, Deputy Leader, Hyndburn Borough Council.



FAMILY SESSIONS IN SCHOOLS EXPLORED LOCAL HERITAGE

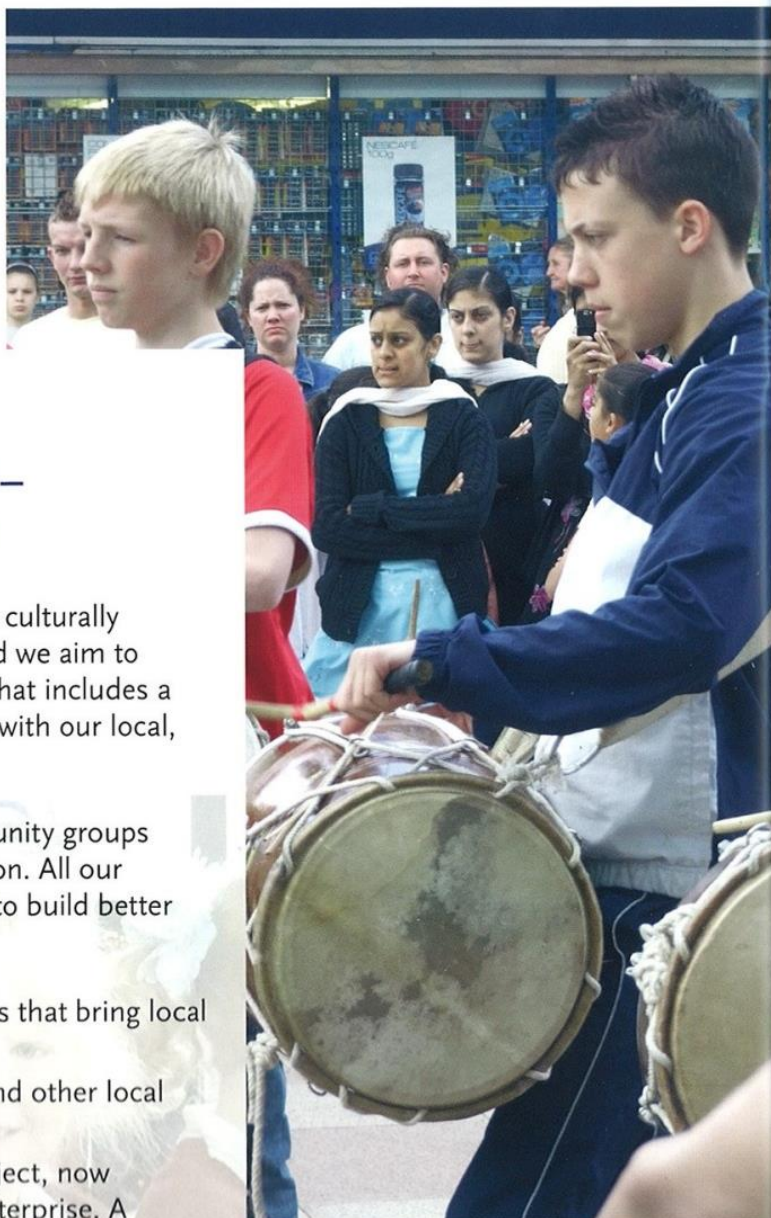
CELEBRATING DIVERSITY – PROMOTING COHESION

The communities in all our towns are culturally diverse. MPA celebrates diversity, and we aim to engage a full range of local people. That includes a long track record of pioneering work with our local, minority Asian communities.

Across our area, councils and community groups are striving to promote social cohesion. All our work aims to contribute to that, and to build better understanding. That has involved:

- Supporting the melas and festivals that bring local people together.
- Joint projects with mela groups and other local promoters.
- Nurturing the Dhamak music project, now established as an independent enterprise. A partnership with More Music.
- Facilitating ELAAF (East Lancashire Asian Arts Forum) as a vehicle for sharing and networking.
- Support for emerging young talent and new community partners.
- Alliance with visual arts agency Shisha to bring an international dimension to Pennine Lancashire.

ELAAF has been supported by Arts Council England, North West. With their help, the network will shortly engage a consultant to advise on organisational development.

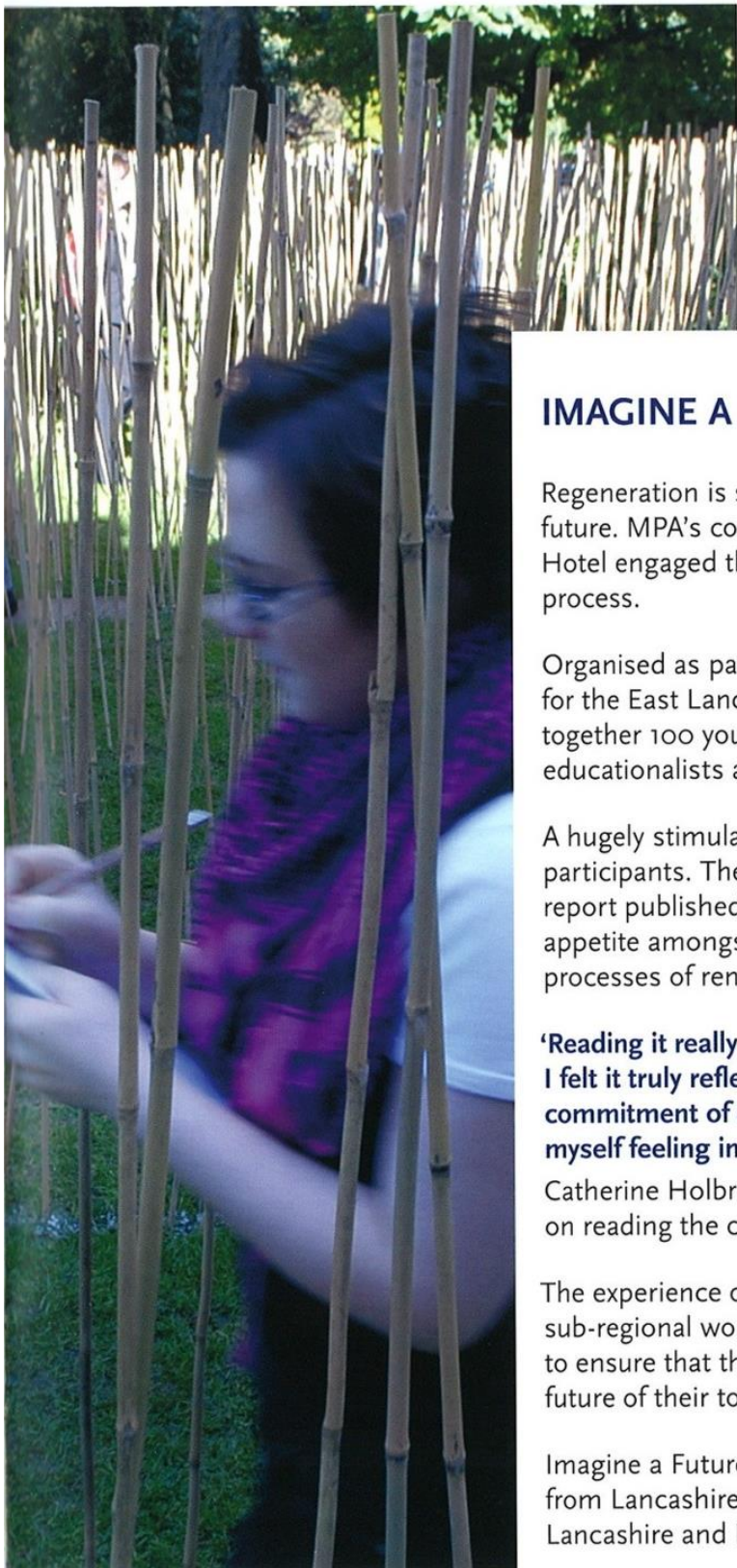


‘I was fantastic... I really felt good about being able to do it...’

Pupil from St. Joseph's Todmorden after a drumming workshop by Dhamak.



HYNDBURN MELA
BACKGROUND:
DHAMAK DRUMMING
WORKSHOPS



IMAGINE A FUTURE...

Regeneration is shaping the communities of the future. MPA's conference event at the Dunkenhall Hotel engaged the citizens of tomorrow in the process.

Organised as part of the celebration programme for the East Lancashire Regional Park, it brought together 100 young people with artists and designers, educationalists and regeneration professionals.

A hugely stimulating day was much enjoyed by participants. The story is told in the conference report published in spring 2008. There is genuine appetite amongst young people to engage in the real processes of renewing our communities.

'Reading it really took me back to the conference and I felt it truly reflected the enthusiasm, optimism and commitment of everyone involved in the day. I found myself feeling inspired all over again.'

Catherine Holbrook, Musician & Education Facilitator, on reading the conference report.

The experience of the day will help us plan for future sub-regional work. With a network of partners we aim to ensure that those young voices are heard, as the future of their towns takes shape.

Imagine a Future... was made possible by support from Lancashire Economic Partnership, Elevate East Lancashire and Lancashire County Council.

'We were all inspired and have lots of ideas to develop at our own school'

Teacher attending conference.



LOOKING AHEAD

Over the next two years, MPA plans to:

- Lead a new phase of innovative, partnership working for maximum creative impact.
- Support the 'transformational agenda' for renewing our area.
- Maximise the impact of Panopticons, and promote the cultural tourism offer for Pennine Lancashire.
- Contribute to a vibrant built environment, with original commissions of new work for our public buildings and spaces.
- Celebrate what's special about Pennine Lancashire, with projects linking local people and landscape.
- Bring new life to derelict land sites through an alliance with LCC and its Remade team.
- Build on the success of our education team, with in-depth work for Creative Partnerships and a programme for all our schools.
- Celebrate cultural diversity by supporting our partners working in local minority communities.
- Reinforce our contemporary, visual arts programme with artist-led activity and regular opportunities for participation.
- Celebrate our industrial heritage, and support the plan to transform Burnley's Weavers' Triangle.
- Forge international links through networks and intercultural exchange.

Pennine Lancashire is going through dramatic change. MPA, with our partners, will put creative arts right at the centre of that process.



'Art is a great way to make people feel good and optimistic about where they live.'

Student at Imagine a Future... conference

IMAGINE A FUTURE...
CONFERENCE



'MPA has done a fantastic job, in terms of working with public and private sector partners, but most importantly, working with local communities. MPA's approach has been an exemplar, and if you are going to do something as potentially controversial as a public art programme, then the MPA approach is the way to do it.'

Ian Whittaker, Policy and Partnerships Manager for Lancashire, Northwest Regional Development Agency.



ABOVE: HALO LAUNCH

COVER: HALO BY MARK WHITTAKER/
MAINWAVE PHOTOGRAPHIC



PEOPLE AND THANKS

President Sir Simon Towneley KCVO, JP

Chair Ian Ormerod

Vice-Chair Peter Kenyon

Honorary Secretary Maureen Neave

Thank you to all who have served as trustees of the charity.

Director Nick Hunt

Education & Projects Director David Smith

Admin Director Melanie Diggle

Strategic Partnerships Linda Newton (to April 2008)

Community & Projects Helen Callaghan

Visual Arts & Projects Rebecca Keating

Education Hannah Kidd

Marketing Gayle Knight (to Sept 08)

Helen Russell (from Sept 08)

Administration Chun McRae

Gallery Emma Midgley

Performing Arts & Membership Janet Clunie

Consultants Christian Barnes, Paul Hartley, Margaret Wyatt

Other staff and volunteers Phil Bradley, Dan Cumberland, Malcolm Dent, Brian Hall.

Mid Pennine Arts is grateful for support from Arts Council England, North West, Lancashire County Council, the Borough Councils of Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale and Todmorden Town Council.

Major partnership projects have also been supported by Lancashire Economic Partnership, the Northwest Regional Development Agency and the Northern Way. MPA is also grateful for support of other key projects from Elevate East Lancashire, Lancashire County Developments Ltd and Hyndburn Borough Council.

With fond memories of two good friends to MPA who died in 2007, Councillor Jeff Cheetham of Rossendale, and a true champion for Panopticons and for Pennine Lancashire, Anthony Wilson.



Lancashire's Creative Business of the Year 2008

'Totally Inspired!' Award at Art 07



www.midpenninearts.org.uk

Mid Pennine Arts

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