



FLATPACK PROJECTS

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR
1ST SEPTEMBER 2017 – 31ST AUGUST 2018

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

3

OUR WORK

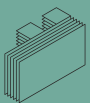
8

PARTNERSHIPS

22

GOVERNANCE

25





"I THINK IT IS REALLY IMPORTANT THAT EVENTS LIKE THESE EXIST IN BRUM. IT GIVES AN IDENTITY TO THE CITY AND BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER TO ENJOY THE MEDIUM THEY LOVE - FILM. LONG LIVE FLATPACK!"

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK



INTRODUCTION

2017/18 WAS A RED LETTER YEAR FOR FLATPACK IN MANY WAYS.

WE JOINED ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND'S NATIONAL PORTFOLIO FOR THE FIRST TIME, ALONG WITH A HOST OF OTHER EXCITING BIRMINGHAM CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS. WE LAUNCHED FILM HUB MIDLANDS, A NEW REGION-WIDE AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE SUPPORTED BY THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE AND DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH BROADWAY NOTTINGHAM. WE EMBARKED ON AN AMBITIOUS COMMUNITY HERITAGE PROJECT DIGGING INTO THE UNIQUE STORY OF LATE 60S BIRMINGHAM.

ALL OF THIS, WHILE REACHING OVER 20,000 PEOPLE WITH OUR TWELFTH FESTIVAL AND AN ADDITIONAL 10,000 THROUGH YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITY ACROSS THE MIDLANDS. ALTHOUGH THE REACH AND IMPACT OF OUR WORK CONTINUES TO GROW, FLATPACK'S CORE PRINCIPLES ARE NOT SO DIFFERENT FROM WHEN WE STARTED PUTTING ON FILM NIGHTS IN A DIGBETH PUB FIFTEEN YEARS AGO.



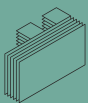
THIS IS WHY WE EXIST...

1) TO SHOW AMAZING WORK

Flatpack Festival has developed a national and increasingly international reputation for the quality and variety of its programme - in particular by exploring the fertile areas where film meets other artforms.

2) TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Streaming and social media do not mean the death of the communal experience. By building an inclusive context for adventurous work, we create opportunities for connection and conversation.



3) TO DEVELOP SKILLS

Whether offering an early step in an arts career, mentoring young curators or giving schoolkids the chance to make their first flipbook, we work to foster creativity and problem-solving.

4) TO NURTURE NEW IDEAS

From the start we've acted as an incubator for projects and a launchpad for artists, and increased stability means we can now play this role in a more structured and strategic way.

5) TO ILLUMINATE PLACE

Flatpack acts as a beacon for Birmingham's independent creative scene, attracting thousands from outside the city every year. We also support partners across the region by coordinating Film Hub Midlands, while our heritage activity draws out connections between the stories of the past and the world we live in today.



**“THIS BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL
MUST BE ONE OF THE MOST
OPEN-MINDED IN THE COUNTRY”**

THE GUARDIAN

MACBETH



SHOWING AMAZING WORK

Flatpack's playful, boundary-hopping programme has attracted national and international acclaim.

By connecting film with other artforms we create a powerful sense of occasion, animate unusual venues and draw in a wide range of people. In many cases the work we present would not otherwise be available to a Midlands audience.

2018 saw us mount our most ambitious lineup to date. Highlights of Flatpack's twelfth edition (13-22 April) included:

- A full house at Birmingham Town Hall to see Swedish silent oddity *Häxan*, with live music and narration by Stephen Horne and Reece Shearsmith (The League of Gentlemen);
- A range of performances and installations experienced in the UK for the first time as part of audio-visual weekender Optical Sound;
- The story of late 60s Birmingham explored through a city-spanning series of exhibitions and events connecting themes of art, activism, migration and redevelopment (see p.21);
- The addition of an interactive schools day to popular family strand Colour Box, allowing us to increase our under-11 audience by 30%;
- An eclectic selection of international film which achieved an even split of male and female directors, and a short film competition which featured over 20 UK premieres.

Our active year-round presence means that audiences are able to enjoy elements of the festival many months later, with more than 3,000 people across the UK engaging with touring Colour Box and short film packages in 2017/18. This year-round programme also acts as a vital test-bed for new work, and helps to raise awareness and attract new audiences.





21,845
admissions



audience
members from
**outside of
Birmingham**

"Coming to Flatpack genuinely transformed my perception of Birmingham. I'd never been motivated to visit before, but was blown away by the city's creative scene."

"It's fantastic. Super interesting subject matters, super friendly staff & volunteers, wonderfully crafted events. Long may it continue."



331
artists

51
premieres



THE 2018 FESTIVAL IN NUMBERS

25
new
commissions



"It's always a pleasure to dart around so many exciting venues experiencing films and performance I won't see anywhere else. A joy as always!"



50+
international
partners over
the last 10
years



of films screened
directed or
co-directed by
**a female
filmmaker**



45
funders,
supporters
and partners





BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Our work is designed to spark conversations and make connections.

A good programme is nothing without an audience to enjoy it, and the thing that really makes us tick is creating a memorable communal experience.

The advent of streaming and social media has not killed this off - if anything people are even more hungry for such events, whether it be a screening in a village hall or an outdoor multimedia spectacular. As well as acting as a gathering-place through the festival and our year-round programme, we also help others to do this across the region.

Film Hub Midlands is the driving force behind film culture in the Midlands. Flatpack works in partnership with Broadway Nottingham to coordinate the hub, and a key part of our job is offering advice and support to people who show films, from seasoned venues to emerging pop-ups. This includes hiring out community cinema equipment, working with partners to develop new activity, hosting preview screenings and promoting film culture to audiences via our monthly Filmwire newsletter.

Results of our Hub work this year included al fresco spookfest Beware The Moon, which attracted over 2000 people to Dudley Castle for two nights of screenings and site-specific projections.



**“AMAZING EXPERIENCE.
SEEING THE CROWD GAVE
ME GOOSEBUMPS AND THE
SETTING WAS HAUNTING
AND SPECTACULAR.”**

AUDIENCE FEEDBACK, BEWARE THE MOON



Whether developing opportunities for people to take a valuable early step in an arts career, mentoring curators or giving schoolkids the chance to make their first flipbook, we work to foster creativity and problem-solving, including...

BUILD YOUR OWN FILM NIGHT

Build Your Own Film Night is our programme of workshops that give young people the skills and support to establish their own film screenings. Since its launch, the programme has expanded across the region to include Birmingham, Stoke, Hereford and Stafford and has built up a network of over 170 alumni, many of which have gone on to establish youth-led community cinemas and regular film nights.

- Movie Mavericks, who took part in the programme and secured in-kind support from Stoke City Council to run film nights at Fenton Town Hall, have recently become a CIC and received a grant to run their very first film festival.
- Ikon Gallery in Birmingham have continued supporting their Ikon Youth group to curate film events on a canal boat for Birmingham on Film Festival, a programme of South Asian themed shorts for Sandwell & Smethwick Mela and a diversity themed film night at our festival.

DEVELOPING SKILLS



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AT THE FESTIVAL

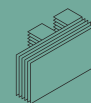
Unpacked is our festival strand to develop new and emerging talent, through workshops, presentations, demonstrations, and informal conferences. This year the strand included:

- How do they do that?: a full day of 11 artists, filmmakers, animators, and musicians sharing their expertise in innovative and interactive ways;
- Film Camp: a day-long conference for film exhibitors across the Midlands to share ideas, inspiration, and best practice with one another;
- Short and Suite: a platform for a group of budding film programmers to curate a special programme of short films to screen at the festival.

Beyond Unpacked, the festival played a big part in developing young creative talent through:

- The short film programme: a large proportion of the filmmakers screening in the competition are under 30, and were eligible to win 6 awards, including £1000 for best short;
- Our continued partnership with Birmingham City University saw a number of projects working with both current students and alumni, including Studio_LAB - a pop-up week-long workshop for a select group of students to create work in response to the festival programme; Conservatoire collaborative project in which a group of composers wrote new scores for silent shorts which were performed at the festival; and the poster project which saw illustrators creating film posters for exhibition in one of our key venues.

DEVELOPING SKILLS



“THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN CONSERVATOIRE STUDENTS AND FLATPACK FESTIVAL IS ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS IN THE STUDENTS’ CALENDAR. THE PROJECT CHALLENGES THEM TO THINK ABOUT MAKING THEIR MUSIC FUNCTIONAL AND MUSICALLY UNIQUE AT THE SAME TIME, AND PREPARES THEM FOR REALISTIC WORK OPPORTUNITIES AFTER THEIR COURSE.”

MICHAEL WOLTERS, DEPUTY HEAD OF COMPOSITION,
ROYAL BIRMINGHAM CONSERVATOIRE



DEVELOPING SKILLS

COLOUR BOX

Family events have been a popular strand of our work for over ten years. By combining international film, brilliant educators, hitech wizardry and sticky-back plastic, every year we give thousands of children an opportunity to develop their creativity and media literacy - while having fun.

This year's highlights included:

- Addition of a new interactive day for schools as part of Colour Box at Flatpack, featuring sellotape cinema, digital maypole and virtual reality;
- Captivating short films from around the world, presented by a compere at the festival and then touring to venues throughout the year;
- Taking our DIY Drive-In across the region, with participants building their own car from a cardboard box and then sitting in it for a special themed screening.

With the addition of a new Young People's Coordinator to the team and the continuing growth of our schools work, the future for Colour Box looks very bright indeed.

“AN EMOTIONAL, INSPIRING EXPERIENCE.”

TEACHER, ALL SAINTS SCHOOL, WEST BROMWICH



VOLUNTEER & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Flatpack offers a range of work-based opportunities including volunteer roles, internships and school work experience placements. Through various schemes (University of Birmingham's Cultural Interns Scheme, Jerwood Foundation, Santander, ICO FEDS) we work to develop opportunities for the next generation of arts professionals to develop valuable skills and experience.

Rico Johnson-Sinclair joined us in 2017 as part of the FEDS (Film Exhibition Distribution & Sales) scheme, set up to make the film industry more inclusive, with a priority for engaging BAME people and people who consider themselves to have a disability who are currently underrepresented in cinema and film festival jobs. As an entry-level post, Rico gained valuable experience of running a festival and is now the director of CineQ, a film festival focusing on telling stories of queer people of colour.

“MY TIME AT FLATPACK WITH THE ICO FEDS PROGRAMME WAS INSTRUMENTAL TO MY PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH. WORKING ALONGSIDE TALENTED AND EXPERIENCED STAFF ALLOWED ME TO NOT ONLY SEE THE PROCESS FROM BEGINNING TO END, BUT GAVE ME A DIVERSE UNDERSTANDING OF A SMALL ARTS ORGANISATION WITH A LARGE OUTPUT AND SKILLSET. I’VE SINCE CREATED MY OWN FESTIVAL AND I’M PURSUING OPPORTUNITIES IN FILM NATIONWIDE”

RICO JOHNSON-SINCLAIR, CINEQ DIRECTOR

DEVELOPING SKILLS



NURTURING NEW IDEAS

Exciting new work is the lifeblood of Flatpack, and our responsibility to develop ideas and projects is something we take very seriously. Where this has happened on a more informal basis in the past, it is now embedded in Flatpack strategy thanks to our role within Film Hub Midlands and the growth of the festival.

A particular focus of our Hub activity is to work with new exhibitors, giving them the resources and advice they need to take the next steps. The pathway followed by Movie Mavericks from initial BYOFN workshop to organising their own festival is a terrific case in point (see above).

From a festival point of view, we continue to increase the number of new commissions and premieres we present annually, and through the introduction of Waveform we have sown seeds which should continue to bear fruit for many years.

“FLATPACK IS NOT JUST ONE OF THE UK’S BEST ARTS FESTIVALS, IT’S PROBABLY ONE OF THE WORLD’S. THE PROGRAMMING IS EXCELLENT, THE EVENTS ARE INVENTIVE, AND THE PARTIES ARE BRILLIANT. A FESTIVAL WHICH REALLY HAS ITS OWN UNIQUE IDENTITY, AND STANDS OUT ON AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL. IT’S AN EVENT WHERE FILMMAKERS AND INDUSTRY CAN COME TOGETHER AND MEET/NETWORK. I’D ENCOURAGE ANY ARTIST WHO CAN, TO TRAVEL AND ATTEND FLATPACK FESTIVAL.”

ARTIST FEEDBACK, DUNCAN COWLES

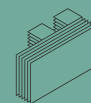


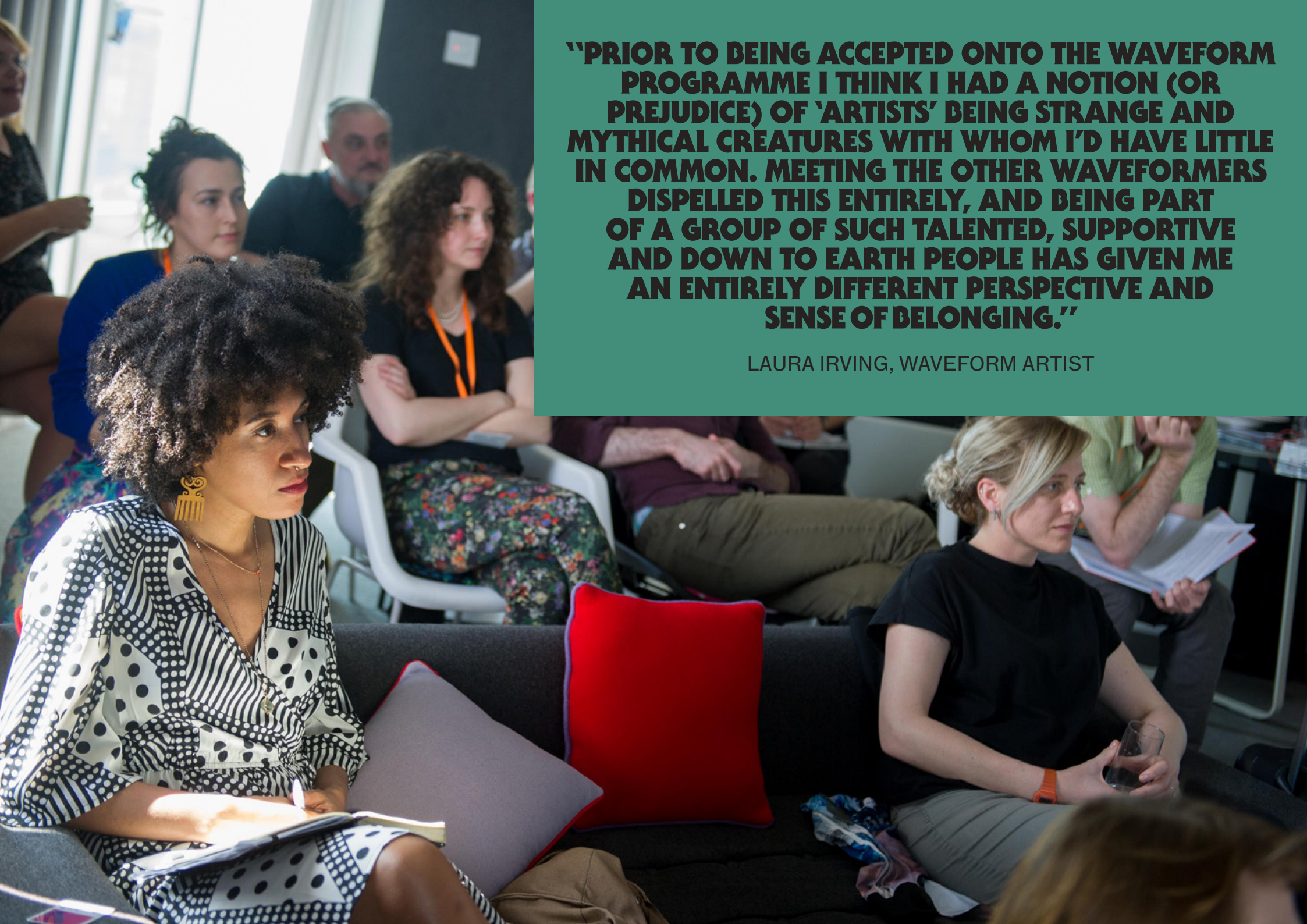
Flatpack 2018 saw the launch of our most significant artist development programme to date, thanks to support from Jerwood Arts.

In the autumn of 2017 we put a call out for ten UK-based artists with an interest in audiovisual performance who were looking to develop their practice in this area. We had over 150 applications which we whittled down to a final selection spanning sound art, immersive family performance, live animation and generative visuals, and this plucky band then gathered at the festival in April 2018 for a packed and inspiring three-day residential.

Each of the participants take part in software workshops, technical and artistic support and training in areas such as fundraising. This unique programme has no precedent in the UK, and should help to produce a dizzying range of new work in a fertile area of creative practice where very little comparable support is available.

WAVEFORM





“PRIOR TO BEING ACCEPTED ONTO THE WAVEFORM PROGRAMME I THINK I HAD A NOTION (OR PREJUDICE) OF ‘ARTISTS’ BEING STRANGE AND MYTHICAL CREATURES WITH WHOM I’D HAVE LITTLE IN COMMON. MEETING THE OTHER WAVEFORMERS DISPELLED THIS ENTIRELY, AND BEING PART OF A GROUP OF SUCH TALENTED, SUPPORTIVE AND DOWN TO EARTH PEOPLE HAS GIVEN ME AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE AND SENSE OF BELONGING.”

LAURA IRVING, WAVEFORM ARTIST



ILLUMINATING PLACE

By using venues imaginatively and delving into forgotten histories, Flatpack events allow people to explore and enjoy the world around them. Birmingham has always been a source of inspiration for our work, whether it be underground tunnels or early Odeon cinemas, and in 2018 the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund enabled us to take a more sustained look at one particular story, mapping out the city fifty years ago.

Shedding light on the city today is just as important to us - half of the festival audience comes from outside the city, and Flatpack is often cited as a factor in improving public perceptions of Birmingham.

We've led the development of Birmingham Festivals Group, raising the profile of our amazing events calendar and helping to lobby on behalf of the sector. We also produce Filmwire, a monthly email newsletter summarising events and opportunities for a growing subscriber base.

Filmwire is just one element of our Film Hub Midlands activity, which sees Flatpack playing an increasingly region-wide role in place-making. Our approach has been to work closely with partners in areas of low provision, helping to create the conditions where audiences can enjoy a wider range of films and events. In 2017/18 highlights included the Pocket Film Festival in Stafford, which attracted over 2000 admissions across one week, and a successful series of screenings and workshops in Stoke-on-Trent which has led to more self-sustaining activity since. We are now collaborating with Telford and Wrekin Council and a range of other partners on a film festival as part of their fiftieth anniversary celebrations.



“A WONDERFUL EXHIBITION. VERY MOVING AND EMOTIONAL. TO SEE THESE IMAGES OF THE CITY THAT I GREW UP IN... SOCIAL HISTORY IS SOMETHING THAT WE CAN AND SHOULD ALL LEARN FROM - THANKYOU!”

“ONE OF THE BEST PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITIONS I’VE SEEN FOR A LONG TIME. WHAT AN ACCOUNT OF REDEVELOPMENT AND THE BRUTAL LOSS OF COMMUNITIES AS THEY DISAPPEARED.”

FEEDBACK ON GHOST STREETS OF BALSALL HEATH EXHIBITION

Kicking off with a programme of exhibitions, walks and talks as part of Flatpack 2018, Birmingham 68 connected tales of migration, activism and art against the backdrop of dizzying redevelopment, reaching communities across the city - many of them relatively new to Flatpack.

In the wake of the festival we were able to follow up on these stories with a committed team of volunteer researchers, gathering over 30 oral histories and bringing a host of new archival material to light including lost book manuscripts, gig posters and footage of an anti-racism march in May.

BIRMINGHAM 68



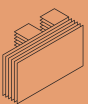
PARTNERSHIPS & FUTURE PLANS

We are thankful to the generous supporters and funders who made our work possible in the year, including;

- MADE Media generously developed our new website and bespoke ticketing system on a pro bono basis;
- Flatpack was one of a number of small and medium Birmingham organisations to join the Arts Council's National Portfolio for the first time;
- British Film Institute recognised the vital role we play in the region's film culture, not only funding the festival but also asking us to partner with Broadway in leading Film Hub Midlands;
- Birmingham City University are a key strategic partner, supporting the festival and connecting with us on a range of collaborations throughout the year;
- Working in partnership with Jerwood Arts we launched our new artist development programme Waveform;
- A grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabled us to step up our archive work and delve into the history of Birmingham in 1968.

"FLATPACK MAGNIFIES THE ENDEAVOURS OF ITS COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS, DRAWING ATTENTION EVERY SPRING (AND, INCREASINGLY, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR) TO THE CITY'S CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITY ARTS ORGANISATIONS."

THIRZA WAKEFIELD, SIGHT AND SOUND



**"BY PARTNERING WITH
FLATPACK, WE'VE BEEN ABLE
TO REACH NEW AUDIENCES;
ANIMATING AND REINVENTING
OUR VENUE WITH AMAZING
AND ENTIRELY UNIQUE EVENTS.
THE FESTIVAL IS SO IMPORTANT
FOR THE CITY, AND WE ARE
PROUD TO SUPPORT IT."**

MILLENNIUM POINT, FESTIVAL PARTNER

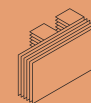


Flatpack's unique regional and national role has the potential to develop and grow as we look to work with more funders and partners. Upcoming projects and priorities in the pipeline include:

- Adopting a new approach to programme development, building events in conversation with communities across the region in a way that celebrates global film culture and the diversity on our doorstep;
- Establishing our annual May bank holiday festival as a national and international destination, while also developing the interactive dimension of the Colour Box weekend;
- Building on our reputation for fostering exciting new commissions, we'll establish a production fund enabling artists from a range of disciplines to develop and deliver new work at Flatpack and beyond;
- Working with key cultural partners in the West Midlands (including the Commonwealth Games and Coventry City of Culture) to ensure that film and the moving image are woven into our daily lives and accessible to all.

Contact us on info@flatpackfestival.org.uk to find out more and help make this happen.

WHAT'S NEXT



CHARITY INFORMATION

Charity Name: Flatpack Projects (CIO)

Registered charity number: 1162754

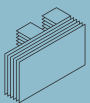
Address: Unit 304, The Custard Factory
Gibb Street
Birmingham
B9 4AA

NAMES OF THE CHARITY TRUSTEES WHO MANAGE THE CHARITY

Ian Francis	Director
Jake Grimley	Chairman
Sarah Gee	
Daniel Lawson	
Lisa Page	
Leighann Thomas	
Lee Kemp	

TEAM FLATPACK

Ian Francis	Director
Abbe Elliston	Operations Manager
Sam Groves	Programmer
Amy Smart	Partnership Manager
Lucile Bourliand	Shorts Programmer
Poppy Gilbert	Marketing and Development Manager
Keenia Dyer-Williams	Marketing Assistant
Emily Summers	Young People's Coordinator



WWW.FLATPACKFESTIVAL.ORG.UK

