

# Wandsworth Arts Fringe 2024 Public Impact and Learning Report



WANDSWORTH ARTS  
**FRiNGE**



Anasai & The Lost Sun,  
photo by Tasha Best



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# Welcome to our 2024 impact and learning report

**In 2024 Wandsworth Arts Fringe celebrated its 15th year as London's most exciting and inclusive arts festival, as Wandsworth prepared to become London Borough of Culture 2025.**

Wandsworth Youth Mayor Millie Quinn and Favour Oniri, Wandsworth Deputy Youth Mayor, with cabaret sensation Ade Campe, officially opened WAF 2024 at a celebratory public launch at Tooting Tram and Social on 5 June featuring performances from this year's participating artists and creative participants.

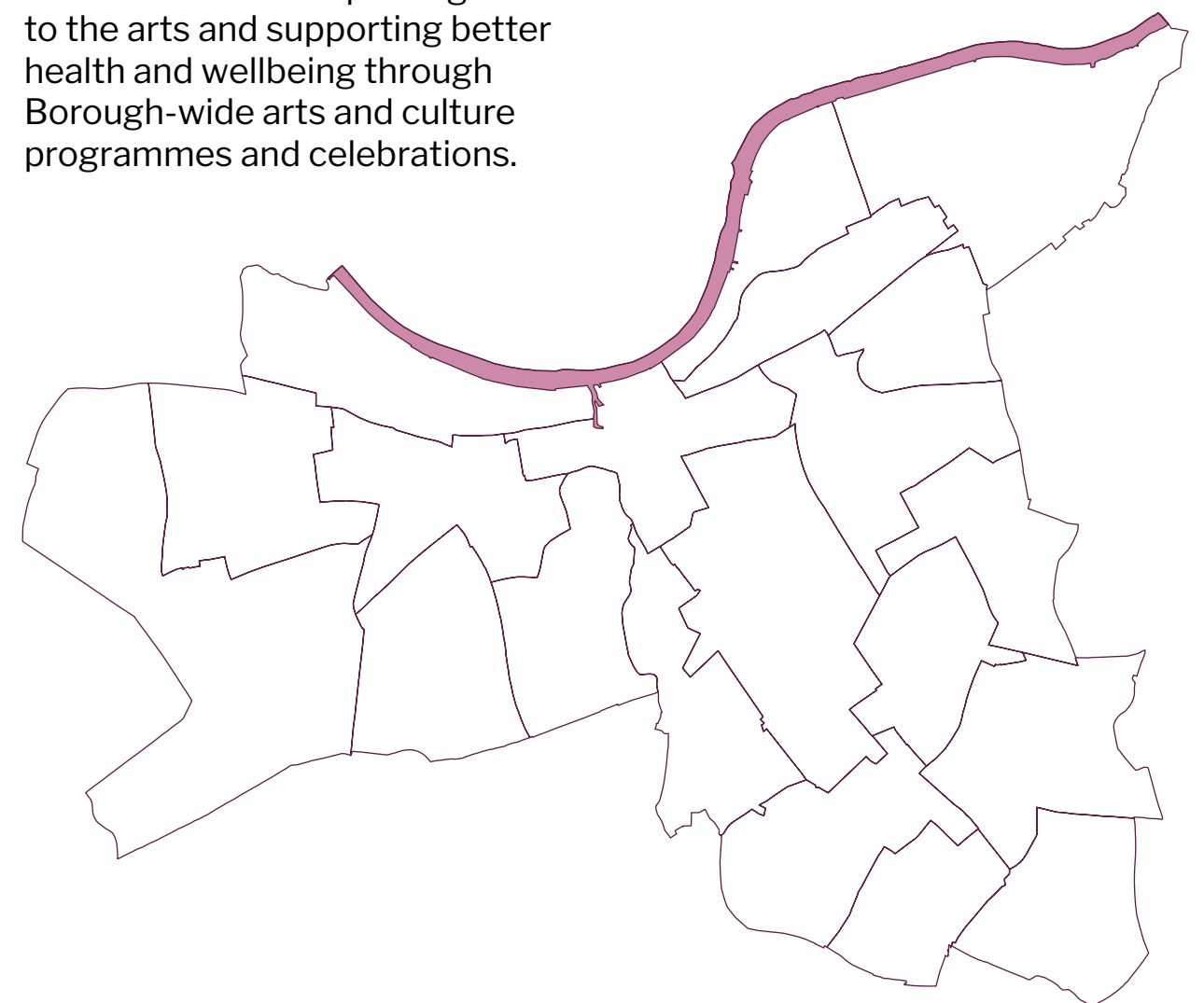
From 7 to 23 June 2024, audiences leapt into a world of brand-new theatre, experimental dance and music, heart-racing cabaret and

works-in-progress from the next big names in comedy. More than 130 events took place across more than 40 venues, including parks, streets, churches, estates, libraries, pubs and theatres. The programme was led by 112 artists, involved 1,276 creative participants and reached an audience of 17,434 people.

Welcome to our 2024 impact and learning report, which spotlights what we've achieved together and what we've learnt.

**Wandsworth is a vibrant inner borough in south London with a population of 327,500 covering the areas of Battersea, Balham, Putney, Tooting and Wandsworth Town.**

The Mayor of London has chosen Wandsworth to be the London Borough of Culture (LBOC) 2025 based on a bid centred on the power of culture to change lives. For Wandsworth's LBOC year, there will be a focus on improving access to the arts and supporting better health and wellbeing through Borough-wide arts and culture programmes and celebrations.



# WAF24

## at a glance

**15**

years old. WAF celebrates its 15th year as London's most exciting and inclusive arts festival, ahead of Wandsworth's London Borough of Culture year in 2025.

**17**

days of brand-new theatre, dance, music, art, family and community events, cabaret, and comedy.

**MORE THAN 130**

events across more than 40 venues, including parks, streets, churches, estates, libraries, pubs and theatres. Tickets from free to £20.

**17,434**

people attending WAF events

**112**

lead artists and creatives involved.

**1,276**

total creative participants

**96 PERCENT**

Audiences rate WAF events as very good (82%) or good (14%).

**453**

creative participants were pupils or young people, 297 were from a culturally diverse ethnic background, 210 identified as disabled, 14 as D/deaf, 174 as LGBTQ+, and 139 as having been eligible for free school meals.

**15 WAF GRANTS**

Awarding £24,785 to local artists for projects for projects taking place over this year's festival.

**97 PERCENT**

agreed, 'I enjoyed myself and had a good time'. 88% agreed that 'WAF has helped me to feel connected to people in the community'. Connecting with others is one of the NHS's five key steps to wellbeing.

**76 NET PROMOTER SCORE**

WAF24 had a very high top quartile Net Promoter Score of 76, putting it on par with international festivals like the Hay Festival for audience satisfaction

**381,414 POUNDS**

gross economic value made up of £326,602 gross visitor spend to the local area, plus 287 days of reported artist employment (£30,027 at the London Minimum Living Wage), and £24,785 WAF grants.

**287**

days of employment for local artists generating economic value of £30,027.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

85% of audience members travel by public transport (52%), by foot (30%) or by bike (3%) to local events.



Performing at the Civic Suite was a priceless experience for the children. Most of our students don't get this opportunity outside of school. My heart swelled with pride watching them perform on stage. (Teacher feedback, WAF 2024 Post-Programme Teachers Survey)

**Bravo, and more please... Keep on WAFfing!**

So much choice for everyone. I'm really grateful that Wandsworth Council puts this on every year.

**The outdoor walks/tours I did enabled me to discover parts of the borough that I'd never seen before**

The feeling of community... it is rare that such an event appeals to and contains people from all generations.

**So nice to have exciting things going on in local venues that are accessible to families.**

**The range of acts and events has been fantastic.**

I loved the inclusion of queer women comedians who spoke openly about mental health and identity, with a fabulous comedy edge. Relatable, inclusive, and thought-provoking. I very much enjoyed it

I really enjoyed the huge range of events. One I was able to enjoy with a granddaughter, another with two friends and a third I accompanied a friend to.

Quirky little festivals like this are the lifeblood of new art pieces and are precious. I'm so glad this exists, and congratulations to the whole team behind it. Keep going!

A lovely community of artists and performers. This year felt a bit like Edinburgh to me, so well done!

**Thank you! WAF is the event I am always looking forward to attending each year!**



A selected snapshot of comments from the WAF 2024 visitors survey (unless otherwise stated)





Roehampton Street Band  
photo by Tasha Best



# WAF 2024 Programme Highlights

**This year, the programming team focussed on building WAF's hub venue model and nurturing an associate's producers programme to attract new artists, audiences and networks.**

This ran alongside programming in Wandsworth's estates and through the WAF grants programme, which distributed £24,785 to 15 recipients for projects taking place across the Borough.

Comedy, theatre, music, exhibitions, cabaret, workshops and dance featured across the three weeks at venues all over the borough, including The Arches at St Mary's Church, Putney, The Bedford and The Exhibit in Balham, the Alton Arts Hub in Roehampton, the Royal Academy of Dance in Battersea and All Saint's Church in Tooting.





# Opening Weekend:

## Kathy Maniura: Objectified.

Award-winning Kathy Maniura brought inanimate objects to life in her debut comedy hour of pure silliness at Putney Arts Theatre.

## Most Notorious

a new musical about the lives of Anne Bonny and Mary Read, female pirates in the Caribbean of the early 1700s.

## Spreading the Joy by Group 64 Theatre for Young People

A journey through space, exploring what makes us happy and how we spread the joy to those around us, performed at community venues across the Borough

## Shakespeare Midsummer Night's Rave

offered audiences a new immersive adaptation of William Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', set to some of the most iconic dance music of all time

## The Everyperson

a glowing light and sound installation from G23Lab, started its tour of the Borough at St Mary's Church, Putney.

## DODOMU Nights: Big Fat Comedy Night

Late-night comedy from the best up-and-coming new comedians



A Midsummer Nights Rave  
photo by Rebecca Cresta



# In Week Two:

## ALL Saints Church Tooting

An evening of music at All Saints Church Tooting celebrated Tooting's musical community

## A mirror is not a mirror.

Choreographed by Casper Dillen and performed at Holy Trinity Church Roehampton, this piece engaged audiences in a study of the body's ability to imitate and perform for survival

## Anansi and The Lost Sun

A free family puppet show at York Gardens Battersea Library, followed by a sustainable fashion workshop and catwalk in the park.

## Furzedown Pridestravanganva

celebrated Pride Month with a vibrant event at The Furzedown.

## Alice D'Lumiere

presented a new show exploring the challenge of learning opera

## Peruvian Ritual Scissors Dance

the UNESCO-listed Intangible Heritage of Humanity dance, was performed at Holy Trinity Church Roehampton



All Saints Community Concert  
photo by Tasha Best



# In the Big Finish Final Weekend:

## Unique Community's Young Company

Sports! A musical reimagining of Alice In Wonderland, exploring the weird and wonderful challenges of growing up.

## Engelchen

a play inspired by the heroic lives of Wandsworth residents Ida and Louise Cook, featuring letters read by refugees in Wandsworth

## Royal Academy of Dance

hosted Community Dance Day with free arts and crafts and Pay What You Can dance workshops for kids and teens alongside showcase performances

## BrainFools

took over York Gardens with Community Circus capitating audiences with free performances and circus skills workshops

## A Piece of Mind

an inclusive, immersive dance piece by The Baked Bean Charity performed at Battersea Reach following The Weeping Woman from Picasso's famous painting

## Garry Roost's Take on Andy Warhol

A darkly witty performance exploring the life of Andy Warhol and the woman who shot him at The Exhibit in Balham.

## The Golden Tent

A day of calm and reflection, with talks, crafts, and music at All Saints Church, Tooting



Arts of Sanctuary at All Saints Church,  
photo by Tasha Best



# WAF Associate Producers Programme

**The WAF Associate Producers Programme supported the creation of new work and helped attract audiences and artist networks to the fringe.**

Three Associate Producers – Rosie Wilby, Martin Willis (Objectively Funny), and DODOMU – were selected to develop local collaborations, grow audiences, and support emerging talent.

DODOMU, a new partnership between producer Tom Sergeant and community theatre practitioner Nataliya Kharina, took over The Arches at St Mary's

Church in Putney, curating shows and workshops that centred on LGBTQ+, women's and marginalised communities' voices. Hosted highlights included: Birthday Fish by Birthday Fish Theatre, a show that explored the tumultuous highs and lows of being in your 20s, Dylan Dodds: Groundodds Day by Torn to Ribbons, a stand-up show about the dangers of obsession, and The Popess: Instructions for Freedom by Elena Mazzon, an interactive, dark-comedy solo-show set in 13th century Milan.



Midsummer Nights Rave,  
photo by Rebecca Cresta



## WAF Associate Producers Programme

“It just felt really good to be part of a community with DODOMU, as their programme is full of amazing acts and a lot of variety. It’s really nice to be part of something which is welcoming new artists and championing experimental work. And the space is great. We’ve never come to Putney, so it was really nice to experience the area.”

**Erin and Steph, Birthday Fish, Birthday Fish Theatre**

“It was great to come back. This is my second year in a row, and it was wonderful. The venue was so great, and the tech was amazing. It’s one of the ones that really felt like it was a proper sort of venue. Really good. Really nice audience interaction. I was trying out lots of good ad-libbing, so the stuff I wouldn’t normally do. It was lots of fun.”

**Dylan Dodds, Dylan Dodds: GroundDodds Day, Torn to Ribbons**

“It [the fringe] is definitely a platform to start doing something that you have on the cards for a while that you need to further develop and bring on stage. It’s been a great experience because it was really accessible in terms of finance. The people have been really friendly and helpful, and the venue is perfect for what I’m doing. So, it allows me to film it and use the material later to grow my audience. So, it’s been really important for me.”

**Elena Mazzon, The Popess: Instructions for Freedom**

“It’s not something you can usually see. It’s quite unique. And the venue is really cool as well, being in that tight space. Yeah, so brave of the performers to be in that tight space, baring their souls. So, really cool.”

**Audience member, Birthday Fish, Birthday Fish Theatre**

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**Audience member, Birthday Fish, Birthday Fish Theatre**

Rosie and Martin’s programmes entertained audiences with cutting-edge comedy at local pubs in Balham and Putney. Highlights included Perverse Verse at the Exhibit, an eclectic night of spoken word presented by psychotherapist and comedian Liz Bentley, performances by cabaret sensation Ade Campe and comic Vix Leyton at the Bedford, and new work from Taskmaster winner Sophie Duker at the Half Moon in Putney.

“We had a lot of fun. It was really funny. Very clever jokes. Very relatable. We used to [go to comedy], but we just had a baby. We haven’t been out much. It was really, really funny. We had an amazing time. I would thoroughly recommend it to anybody. Ade’s songs are very funny and very well written. It was just all around very, very funny. Very good. Come along [to WAF]! Lots of variety. Lots of different stuff.”

**Audience members, Antihero and Big Duck Energy,  
Vix Leyton and Ade Campe**

All of the associate producers worked closely with the WAF team throughout the fringe to ensure their programmes resonated with local audiences and enriched the local cultural offer. Collectively the associate producers reached a total audience of over 1,000 people.



# WAF24

## Participation and Reach

**WAF is emphatically inclusive and welcomes participation from across all art forms. Artists outside of London gain access to London-based audiences. Local artists deepen their connections with people and places they want to build an audience with.**

WAF provided a space to showcase the talents of performers from culturally diverse backgrounds and with disabilities and encouraged creativity and positive LGBTQIA+ representation. The fringe engaged 112 lead artists and involved a total of 1,276 creative participants, of which 453 were pupils or young people, 297 were from a culturally diverse ethnic background, 210 identified as disabled, 14 as D/deaf, 174 as LGBTQ+, and 139 as having been eligible for free school meals.



A Piece of Mind,  
photo by Tasha Best

Many audience members discover WAF events through the artists and production companies, highlighting the importance of creative partnerships and shared marketing efforts between venues, artists and the Council.

Approximately 17,434 audience members and visitors attended WAF events this year.

The majority are local and live in Wandsworth. Many travel to events from other parts of London, and a minority from other parts of the UK.

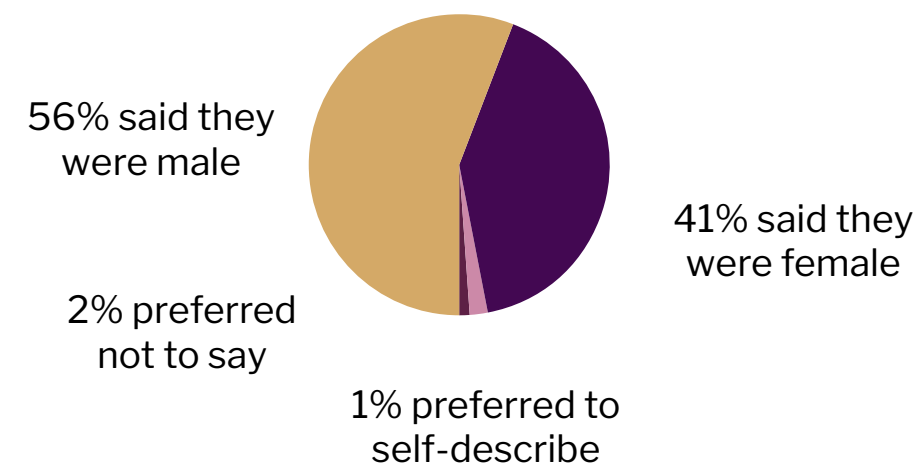
WAF 2024 reached a slightly higher proportion of male audience members this year. 56% of survey respondents said they were male, 41% female, and 3% preferred not to say or self-describe.

The profile of WAF audiences continues to be broadly representative of the total Borough population.

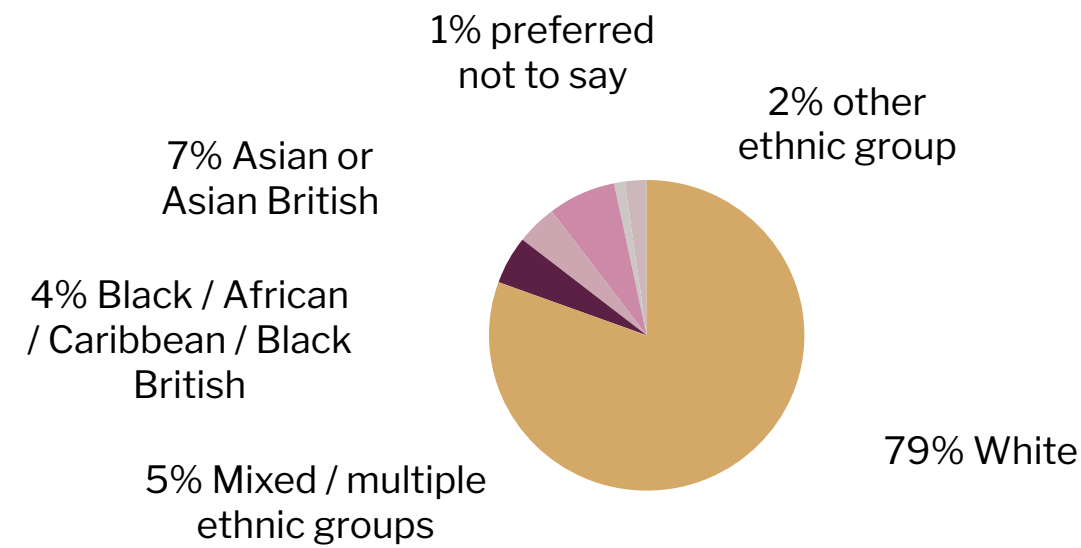


WAF 2024 Participation and Reach

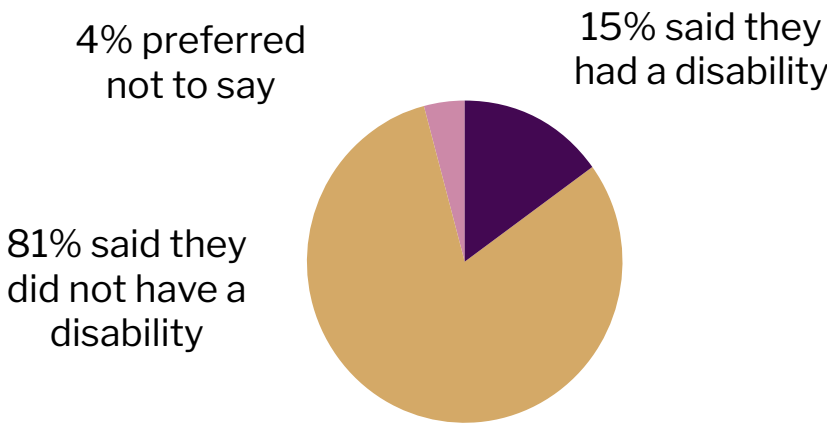
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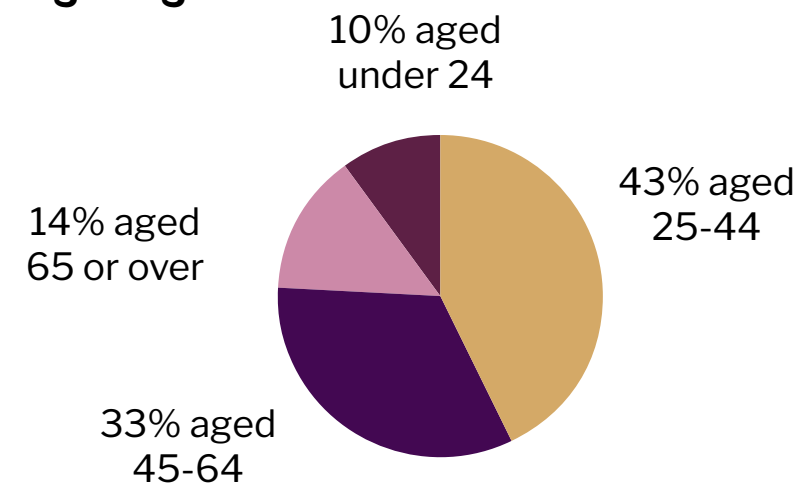
Ethnic groups:



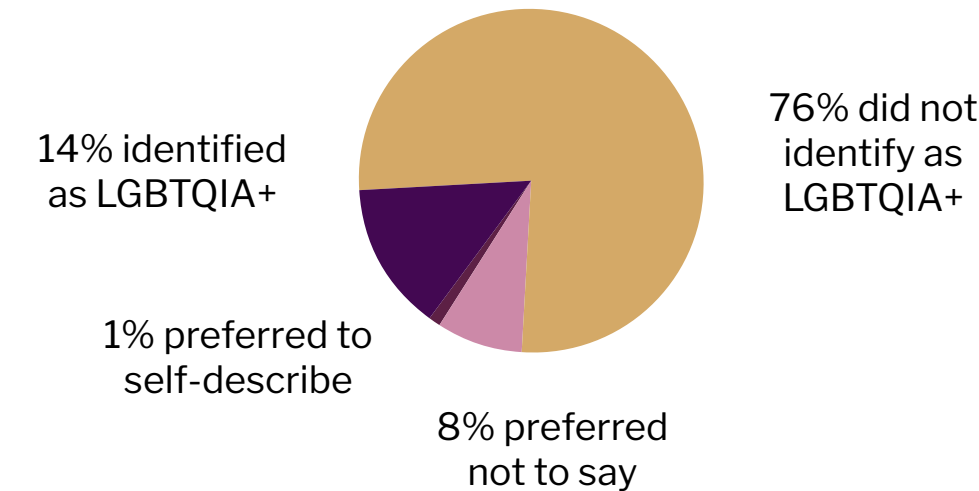
Accessibility:



Age range:



Sexual Orientation:





# Benefits for neighbourhoods and residents

**Audience satisfaction and enjoyment with the fringe continue to be very high; 96% of audience members rated the events they attended as very good (82%) or good (14%).**

Audiences expressed an appreciation of WAF's contribution to the Borough's image and sense of community. There was widespread enjoyment and enthusiasm as audiences leapt into WAF events.

People enjoyed being part of the fringe atmosphere, appreciated the diversity of artistic talent and felt strong ties to local venues and the community. Some were inspired to explore their own creativity or continue engaging in creative activities.









# WAF24

## On Winstanley

**WAF on Winstanley** was a programme of arts and cultural activity by and for residents living on the Winstanley and York Road Estate in Battersea. Highlights included:

## COMMUNITY CIRCUS DAY

Contemporary circus company BrainFools captivated audiences with a mix of circus performances, taster sessions and workshops in York Gardens. The day culminated in a performance of Lucky Pigeons, a one-hour show set on a unique circus structure and bird house. After the show children and their grown-ups got a chance to meet the pigeon puppets.



“Amazing. It was brilliant. I love the circus. We’ve actually been looking forward to this show in particular with my children. My daughter, in particular, because she loves the circus. It was amazing. It’s really nice to have an outdoor show. I like the structure and the choreography. It’s very interesting to see how you can take the circus to another level and also make it more accessible. I think in a park like that it’s nice because it’s accessible.”

**Audience member, Community Circus Day, BrainFools**



## REBIRTH

A fashion event in York Gardens which showcased the designs of local community members who took part in upcycling workshops. Led by local resident and designer Fée Uhssi, Rebirth celebrated sustainable fashion practices and the link between fashion and healing.



FéeUhssi, 'Rebirth',  
photo by Tasha Best

“Yeah, positive things... that these young people are doing something positive. My daughter, Simone, Real Culture London, that’s her business [fashion design business involved]. I like the idea of what they’re doing here. It’s something different, and to me, it’s a good look for the place. I think the Council should promote it more, and they should get more involved.”

**Courtney, Audience Member, Rebirth**

“If people don’t see it [events like Rebirth] then they don’t realise what’s on their doorstep. They might not have been aware that the library and facilities are there for them to use. And it brings people together, doesn’t it? It’s an event that wouldn’t otherwise be happening, so it’s really nice.”

**Nicole, Audience Member, Rebirth**

## YOUR BAY, MY BAY, OUR BAY

An interactive workshop helped children explore and reimagine their neighbourhood streets as playful, accessible, and fun spaces.







## ANSANSI AND THE LOST SUN

by Swallow's Wings Puppetry, a family-friendly puppet show in York Gardens Library which celebrated African Caribbean culture. After the show, children and their grown-ups took part in a puppet-making workshop.

## I'M A BIG FAN!

by Silvia Ziranek celebrated the value of friendship, community, and kindness by encouraging local residents to recognise and thank their 'Wandsworth Wonder', a neighbour or community member who made a difference in their lives.

"It's been absolutely fantastic. WAF and Winstanley have been so supportive. Jade, the project manager, has been great – so enthusiastic and supportive with lots of projects going on."

**Silvia Ziranek, I'M A BIG FAN!**



Ansansi and the Lost Sun,  
photo by Tasha Best

"It's been really interesting to see what the residents are receptive to. Because a lot of the people are local, it gives everybody a chance to know who's in the area. Part of this whole project is about connecting with the community and being creative. Creativity, arts, and culture can bring people together. It's about breaking down those barriers [to accessing the arts] and demystifying it, making it seem fun and cutting down the jargon."

**Jade Morgan, Arts Events Manager for Winstanley and York Road Estate**

Collectively, the programme reached a total audience of over 1,669 local people.



# Pride Month at WAF 2024

WAF 2024 celebrated Pride Month in style, with a sparkling line-up of theatre, comedy, and cabaret created by LGBTQ+ performers and artists, as well as daytime discussions. Highlights included:

## CABIRET: A NIGHT OF THE BISEXUAL VARIETY

Produced by Marcus Morgan, CaBiRet returned after a sell-out year in 2023 to celebrate bisexuality in music, comedy, performances, and magic. Hosted at the Bedford, an audience of over 80 people enjoyed songs about being pan or ace, laughed about biphobia, cheered on bi+ burlesque acts, and were amazed by bisexual magic.





## DODOMU NIGHTS

featured a series of events that celebrated LGBTQ+ performers and artists, including She/Her Live, a cabaret showcasing female-identifying artists, Drag King Night, which celebrated the talent of London's drag kings, queer cabaret, and a Kings VS Queens face-off. The programme reached an audience of 66 people over 5 events.

## FURZEDOWN PRIDESTRAVAGANZA!

Wandsworth Arts Fringe's Audience Choice Award for Best Event 2023 returned for a second year. A packed audience of over 170 people enjoyed drag, queer comedy and anthem music at The Furzedown. Audience members appreciated the inclusivity of the space, the LGBTQ+ representation, the community spirit and the uplifting vibe.

## THE TRANS LADY SINGS!

Gender-fluid Spoken Word Artist Alice d'Lumiere presented The Trans Lady Sings! at the National Opera Studio, a show that combined verse, comedy, new songs and even opera to tell Alice's journey of overcoming childhood limitations around singing and embracing her gender identity. Audiences appreciated the community spirit at the events.





## Pride Month at WAF 2024

“We don’t have, as a bisexual community, a lot of funds to access. We don’t have pubs and clubs. So, having a space where we can come together and give something back to the community, to give bisexual people an evening where they can be in the majority, is a really valuable thing. [...] We started off in a little club in Stockwell in 2016 with just 20 people in the audience. And we’ve grown from there. Thank you once again to Wandsworth Arts Fringe for putting us on and to Wandsworth itself.”

**Marcus Morgan, Producer, CaBiRet**

“It was absolutely brilliant to just be in the space. It was a great time. It was super fun. Everyone can be themselves and just have such a good time. [...] I just love seeing people try new stuff. I always like seeing something new. I would never have seen this anywhere else, and that’s brilliant.”

**Audience members, CaBiRet**

“So, for me, what it meant performing tonight was having a safe space to try new things find my new voice as a trans woman and decide where I’m going next. The team has been amazing, and it has been such a cosy experience. [...] Amazing. It was so good [to perform]. It’s my first time in drag as well. My friends are here. Yeah, it was so good. [WAF] it’s a celebration of the arts, and it’s very needed at this moment. [...] It’s such a community spirit that we get to be part of, and that’s so enjoyable. [...] The experience was amazing – to perform in front of such a lovely crowd and such a lovely community. It was just great. I really enjoyed just doing what I love to do.”

**Artist feedback, DODOMU Nights**

“It was amazing. Really good fun. Would recommend. Comedy, burlesque, drag. What more do you need for a Friday night? [...] Really intimate. You could see everything. Really felt in the middle of it all. Amazing. [...] There was a lot of energy, a lot of life, a lot of ridiculousness. It brought me all the way from East London to Wandsworth, so that’s something.”

**Audience feedback, DODOMU Nights**



Alice d’Lumiere,  
photo by James Tye



# ENGELCHEN

**Musician Alison Cotton presented a multimedia production inspired by the heroic lives of local residents and opera fans, Ida and Louise Cook, who used their love of music to help 29 Jews escape Nazi Germany.**

Engelchen premiered in Sunderland (their birthplace) in 2023, and fittingly, this second performance was in Balham, the place they called home for over 60 years. The production at The Bedford reached an audience of 120 people. As people arrived, a gramophone played Ida and Louise's favourite opera music, and artefacts from the Wandsworth Heritage Collection, as well as photos and letters from refugees they saved, were on display.

Local refugees participated by reading letters they had written back home, drawing a connection between past and present refugee experiences. The production coincided with the celebration of Refugee Week, a UK-wide programme of arts, cultural and educational events and activities that celebrates the contribution of refugees to the UK and promotes a better understanding of why people seek sanctuary.

Free tickets to WAF events were available for refugees and recently displaced people living in Wandsworth.





# WAF 2024 Schools and Young People

**Committed to inspiring the next generation of creative and artistic talent in Wandsworth, WAF 2024 delivered a huge range of projects and programmes for schools and young people from across the borough.**



Group 64,  
photo by Rebecca Cresta

The WAF 2024 Schools Programme was a collaborative project facilitated by Wandsworth Council in partnership with 12 creative organisations from across the borough. A total of 14 projects took place, involving 438 pupils from 58 schools and 14 wards.

Showcasing this year's theme of 'Wandsworth and the World', participants were involved in a plethora of exciting projects – from learning to dance with London Children's Ballet, to improving their poetry and spoken word skills with Zohab from Apples and Snakes to showcasing their artistic talents on public banners outside Wandsworth Town Hall, facilitated by the Royal College of Art. Artists delivered a series of fantastic workshops in the schools themselves.

280 of the participants presented their amazing talents and new skills to family and friends at the Wandsworth Schools Showcase on 19 June. The Civic Suite in Wandsworth Town Hall came alive with theatre, visual arts, spoken word and dance – performances that were a true testament to their hard work throughout the programme.

100% of teachers and school staff members who responded to a post-programme survey rated the project that their school took part in as 'very good' or 'excellent'.



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# The WAF 2024 Young People's Programme

**The WAF 2024 Young People's Programme is a series of creative industry projects designed for young people aged 14-19 who live or study in Wandsworth.**

The programme successfully delivered three main projects – WAF Young Producers, WAF Young Reviewers, and WAF Young Reporters. The programme engaged with 15 young people, all living in Wandsworth, 10 of those who also go to school in Wandsworth.





## WAF YOUNG REVIEWERS

Mentored by professional writer, actor and critic, Kalungi Ssebandeke, the young reviewers had the opportunity to attend different performances in this year's WAF festival, review them, and have their articles published.

## WAF YOUNG REPORTERS

In collaboration with Riverside Radio, the young reporters learned how to conduct interviews with the incredible acts from WAF 2024, creating content for their live radio broadcast.

## WAF YOUNG PRODUCERS

Participants got to learn the skills and tools necessary to design their own event. They worked closely with artists and the WAF team to produce a live performance, gaining hands-on experience in event production.





# Connection, health and wellbeing

Many artists and creatives identified the health and wellbeing benefits of their events and activities for audiences and participants. Evidence of the NHS's steps to wellbeing – connecting with other people, being physically active, learning new skills, and giving/spending time with others – was present in the feedback and observation. Audiences being present in the moment were also more indirectly observed.





## ARTS OF SANCTUARY

**Arts of Sanctuary was a two-day multi-sensory event at All Saints Church in Tooting as part of the Fringe.**

Held on Friday, 21, and Saturday, 22 June, it featured installations, visual art, music, film, storytelling, and The Golden Tent, a space for meditation and reflection. The programme was designed to create an atmosphere of serenity, sanctuary, and welcome, with participants encouraged to explore and interact with the art forms.

The event attracted 59 attendees over the two days. From engaging in art discussions to relaxing inside The Golden Tent, visitors had the opportunity to immerse themselves in a space that blended creative expression and tranquillity. Musical performances, gongs and bells, added to the meditative atmosphere, and talks on topics like neurodiversity engaged audiences.

Revd Prof. June Boyce-Tillman reflected on the importance of

creating a sanctuary for people to be themselves: “The idea [for Arts of Sanctuary] was that people can just come in and be who and what they want to be. I thought this was wonderful that people could come in and just lie down and be still. You’ve got visual, you’ve got sound, you’ve got storytelling. Churches traditionally were places of sanctuary. It’s also been a place where lots of people who might not have met are meeting.”

A team member observed that people who initially appeared unsure or hesitant became more comfortable and relaxed as they engaged with the art and the environment. Many attendees who were simply passing through ended up staying longer, conversing with others, and taking part in the activities. The researcher noted the calming effect of The Golden Tent, where people took time to meditate, lie down, or simply sit and reflect. By the end of the event, there was a strong sense of connection and community among attendees.





## SPREADING THE JOY

**Spreading the Joy by Group 64 Theatre for Young People took children and their grownups on a journey through space, exploring what makes us happy and how we spread the joy to those around us. It celebrated positive mental health and was filled with puppetry, music, aliens, and more.**

Group 64 created the show by running ideas workshops with over 200 children from local Wandsworth schools and then taking all their ideas from the children's wonderful imaginations. The show was performed at Downshire Field (Bull Green), Ethelburga Community Clubroom and Wandsworth Town Library, reaching a total audience of 140 people.

The children and adults who watched the show said they thought it was useful in supporting positive mental health. They felt it provided a clear message on what to do if you are feeling low, how to be kind and polite, and how to

share emotions and be yourself. Group 64 also gave all the children a leaflet on how to spread joy to those around them. There was also signposting to where to find support.

At Downshire Field, a WAF team member observed how passers-by joined the group with encouragement from the Community Engagement & Cultural Co-Ordinator and how this type of performance offered the potential for spontaneous interaction. Being in a free public space made it very accessible and brought audiences who wouldn't otherwise engage.





# UNEXPECTED, UNEXPLAINED & TOTALLY GLITCHY

**Sisters Fabienne and Florentina Bowden wrote and performed Unexpected, Unexplained & Totally Glitchy to packed audiences at The Arches at St Mary's Church.**

This dark comedy was based on one person's lived experience of Functional neurological disorder (FND) and their journey to remission. It brought FND into the spotlight for almost 100 people across two events and also raised awareness about mental health, loss of ability, and chronic illness. Last year, one sister from the duo was diagnosed with functional neurological disorder (FND), and the show was based on her experience.

Fabienne and Florentina reflected on the process of creating the work and the purpose behind it: "We've been on the real journey

of FND together and then the creative process. We've always had that trust there. We wanted to be careful about how we approached the subject because it was so personal, and we didn't want it to be damaging or triggering. That's why we went really out of the box with the idea and the characters. We didn't just want to do this for us, we wanted to do it for others. We wanted to advocate for others with FND. I think we worked really well together."

The work was just one of many powerful examples where art and creativity created for WAF became a source of healing and collective awareness.





# Economic growth, employability and skills

## **WAF continues to play a vital role in creating employment opportunities and career pathways for artists and creative participants.**

The fringe continues to build on its reputation as a platform where creatives can experiment while gaining paid employment, growing networks, and finding future opportunities.

WAF created a total of 287 days of employment for local artists, generating an economic value of c. £30,027. WAF activities have created paid roles for artists and freelancers. Those working on events, performances and activities have benefited from improved creative, production and leadership skills.

Artists shared about the sense of achievement and personal growth that comes with production and event management. Artists appreciated the connections made to venues, local groups and other creatives, which helped them to develop their work and expand their networks.

86% of artists report being able to reach new audiences, and 61% gain the opportunity to develop new partnerships. 57% reported the chance to try new ideas, and 55% the opportunity for networking.

“I’m delighted to be part of this year’s fringe. It was very emotional because WAF was a platform to present and share our work with different audiences. We have had great audiences, very supportive. They saw something they’d never seen before and saw that it was for them. So WAF is a platform for us to share and make the bridge between us and our work and the large audience that is in London. So I’m very pleased.”

**Jose Navarro, Ritual Scissors Dance, Jose Navarro Theatre**

Over half of audience members (58%) reported going out for a drink or meal nearby or picking up a picnic in a local shop as part of their visit. Audience survey respondents reported spending an average of £30.17. This equates to an estimated total of £305,071 value in the local economy (58% of a total 17,434 audience spending £30.17).



# Sustainability

Many artists and creatives reported that their activities positively contributed to the sustainability of WAF. Practices included:

Promoting sustainable behaviours (active travel) and debate and discussion about behaviours

Helping people to appreciate green spaces

Producing outdoors saving on energy costs

Promoting ethical and sustainable fashion design

Recycling and Upcycling

Use of sustainable materials and practices

**WAF events provide a vital opening and platform for dialogue, conversation and connection about issues and causes that matter to people, including the environment and climate change.**

85% of audience members travelled by public transport (52%) or by foot (30%) or bike (3%) to WAF events.



# HAZLEFEST 2024

**Tooting-based arts and crafts recycling charity Work and Play Scrapstore (WaPS) staged its sixth free annual mini green festival on the final Sunday of WAF 2024 outside its premises on the Hazelhurst Estate, Tooting. The festival was attended by over 200 people.**

Hazelfest 2024 brought together local community groups, community artists and Scrapstore's own volunteers to help showcase upcycling and celebrate artful re-use. Visitors were welcomed by over a dozen craft stalls, football coaching from AFC Wimbledon, snacks and refreshments, and three live music performances, including the drumming group from local charity Generate, back due to popular demand.

Hazelfest collaborated with local community groups and charities, including BATCA, Summerstown Mission, Tooting Community Kitchen, Generate and AFC Wimbledon, to make the festival happen.

“It was so lovely. It’s really nice. It’s really nice to see both familiar faces from school and from around. It’s just loads of fun, a different variety of things. Child: I liked it. I had my face painted. Adult: The fact it is free I think just make it accessible. Everybody gets to see it. It’s nice”.

**Visitor and child, Hazelfest 2024, Work and Play Scrapstore**





# Learning from WAF 2024

## Diverse Programming

The diversity of programming and venue model were strengths of this year's fringe. The programming at hubs the Arches and Half Moon worked particularly well and gave audiences choices and good deals on events. There was diverse programming in the Borough's estates and a strong strand of programming that appealed to and centred LGBTQ+ audiences and creatives.

## Funding

Last year, WAF 2023 incorporated wider public programming through strategic grant commissions. The team reflected that the ideal offer would combine this with the more venue-based offering in 2024. The team acknowledged that outdoor production companies need larger funding pots to deliver community theatre and arts engagement.

## Network & Connections

Artists value the support from the WAF team, in particular being connected to venues, local partners and other artists and creatives. The team is looking at an artists' zone during the fringe where artists and creatives can access information and network.





### Producers Model

The Associate Producer model worked well, contributing to the diversity of programming. It will be developed for WAF 2025. Two of the associate producers had very similar comedy offers in the same venue zone, which could have been more spread out across venues.

### Creating Opportunities

There is a desire for more family events, visual art and music to fill gaps in programming. There is potential for more blended events and scratch nights, combining headline acts with emerging talent and creating opportunities for audiences to get involved.

### Marketing & Visibility

The team will work with venues to improve the marketing and visibility of WAF events and look at memorandums of understanding with venues. With local audience motivations and awareness of WAF closely linked to relationships with artists, the team recognise the importance of supporting more artists and venues with their marketing and PR activity.

### Young People

Children and young people involved in the schools and young people's programmes experienced a diverse range of cultural activities, from ballet to poetry to reporting and journalism. This broadened their understanding and appreciation of different art forms and helped them develop a wide range of skills. Showcasing work publicly contributed to young people's confidence and sense of community, and collaboration with creative industry partners boosted skills and inspired thoughts about future careers.

### Teacher Involvement

Teachers and staff members would like to see a greater diversity and variety of art forms, including dance, visual arts and film. Legacy activities to document and celebrate creative work are important for teachers and schools. More teacher involvement and engagement with parents in schools and public spaces is needed to increase awareness of WAF.

### Partnerships

The schools and young people's programmes have strengthened the partnership between Wandsworth Council and the borough's creative sector, leading to intent for more collaborative opportunities in the future.







# Thank you and see you at WAF 2025

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's leap into the undiscovered possible!

WAF 2025 will take place from 6 to 22 June 2025 comprising of over 100 events across over 40 venues ranging from open spaces, churches, estates, libraries, pubs and dedicated performance spaces across the borough.

The borough's 2025 flagship festival of arts and culture will be the most ambitious yet, playing a central role during Wandsworth's year as The Mayor of London's London Borough of Culture for 2025.

We hope you will join us next year,

**Wandsworth Arts Fringe Team**

Wandsworth Arts Fringe Producer - **Cath Mattos**

Arts and Culture Programme and Partnerships Manager - **Lucy Murray**

Arts and Culture Marketing and Communications Manager - **Hannah Hiatt**

Arts and Culture Marketing and Communications Assistant - **Roisin Kerslake-Sim**

