

SeaChange Audience Development Project (Case Study)

Audience development is at the heart of Coasters - we'd like to share the successes and challenges of our own audience development project, 'Graffiti in Motion'.

Our audience development plan for year one was centred on the formation of a local community focus group to facilitate grass roots consultation and enable us to gain an understanding of, and be able to better respond to local audiences and a participatory digital arts project working with teenagers and young adults from diverse communities.

Inspired by the work of VJ Suave, Brazil-based digital animation artists and one of the Coasters funded artists programmed in the Out There festival, we ran a series of free workshops for local young people lead by local animation artist, Matthew Harrison. These sessions culminated in a masterclass with VJ Suave the evening before the first night of Out There and the animations produced over the course of the workshops and the masterclass were projected large-scale in outdoor public spaces.



To reach our target audience we partnered with a local community group, [Reprezent Project](#), whose aim is to engage local young people in the arts, with a particular



focus on urban and street arts. Reprezent's core team are local residents, well connected to the community so an ideal gateway organisation to work with as 'ambassadors' for Coasters. In the spirit of reciprocation, we allocated part of our audience development budget to Reprezent to help support their first ever public event, Parkt, a day-long free

celebration of street arts bringing the diverse communities of Great Yarmouth together.

We launched 'Graffiti in Motion' at Parkt, inviting people to have a go at traditional stop motion animation and also 'Tag Tool' the digital animation application VJ Suave use in their own work.



Further workshops took place over the following weeks where over 50 mostly 14-25 year olds took part. The final workshop was quite special, the Drill House was humming with pre-festival activity late into the evening, the air was balmy and our cohort of budding animators were perched at wooden tables outside the building learning from the masters, Cecilia and Ygor of [VJ Suave](#). The animations were projected onto the walls of our neighbour's house and the spectacle drew out other neighbours along the street to watch.



The professional and resident artists then walked together to the Britannia Pier on Great Yarmouth's 'Golden Mile' to see their work beamed on the moonlit sandy beach below, for the enjoyment of the delegates from SeaChange's International Symposium on Circus and Street Arts. A glow of tranquil joy and satisfaction rose from the community of participants that night on the pier.

Local artist Matthew Harrison has found he has come away from the project with his technical skills and knowledge increased, new professional connections developed locally and internationally and he has been inspired to create a further community-based digital animation activity. *'It was a pleasure to be involved in the project and to be part of the Out There festival. It was great to help*

deliver workshops inside and outside the drill hall and also to project the work to the symposium participants from the pier. Meeting and establishing a good relationship with international artists definitely opened my eyes to new ways of working and also made me reflect on my own practice.’ – Matthew Harrison

Reprezent Project have gained insight into how to deliver a community arts project and are keen to continue a relationship with Seachange Arts and be involved in Coasters. They were fully committed to making the project a success, attending the workshops and making promotional films and live broadcasts to



promote the project. *‘I believe working on this project gave us another level of experience and vision. I enjoyed it as I was learning new things.’ – Ruben Cruz*



There were challenges to the project, primarily attracting and retaining interest from people in the targeted group – young people from diverse communities. Despite the very cool and accessible work and medium of VJ Suave and the strong links the Reprezent crew had with local young people, masses of youth did not knock our doors down craving to take part in the workshops. Reprezent were also surprised with how difficult it was to persuade their friends and acquaintances to get involved. Matthew was most successful in involving a diverse range of people, reaching both our target audience and outside of that category. His success lay in using his established links with the local college, maritime cadets and homeless hostel to deliver workshops in their premises.

Through our collaborative evaluation we have learned that much more street level engagement with face-to-face conversations are required to generate strong interest,

and that to appeal to young people other urban art forms, such as street dance, graffiti and music making would probably appeal more than digital animation.

Building on the success and learning of this project we want to reach more local residents with longer-term arts activities that engage street-based communities with SeaChange Arts and each other in a meaningful and lasting way. We look forward to working with Matthew and Rezent again, both as creative collaborators and in a mentoring and supportive capacity.