



SEPTEMBER 2019



CREATING FOR COMMON GOOD

Opus believes we can live in a place where everyone works to make things better for each other. 'Better' to us means fair, diverse, accessible, independent and heard.

That's why we champion social causes, independent business, not-for-profits, emerging talent and healthy debate.

Since 2008, we've run projects such as Now Then magazine, Opus Distribution, Wordlife, and Festival of Debate - they connect us to each other and to music, arts, culture, ideas, action, and conversations that will make change. We also take on a variety of bespoke commissions and funded work.

And more than anything, that's what we're here for: to make it easier to contribute to change for the better - and to have fun doing it.

“

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

”

Margaret Mead

CONTENTS

- 2. INTRODUCTION
- 3. ABOUT OPUS
- 7. OUR IMPACT: LOCAL ECONOMY
- 12. OUR IMPACT: ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP
- 15. OUR IMPACT: ARTISTIC & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- 18. CASE STUDY: WORDLIFE - POETRY & LITERATURE
- 20. OUR IMPACT: 3RD SECTOR



ABOUT OPUS

NOW THEN MAGAZINE

Now Then is a free magazine distributed to over 1000 locations across Sheffield and the Peak District, lovingly produced by Opus Independents for over ten years.

Now Then is a full-colour, content-led magazine featuring articles, interviews and contributions from citizen journalists on local and national politics, culture, independent trade, art, music, film, poetry and satire.

We work exclusively with local traders, community groups, local government and charities, creating and sustaining strong networks and shared ideologies of independent

NOW THEN IS READ BY 30,000 PEOPLE EACH MONTH.

NOW THEN APP

The Now Then App is an app-based version of the print-based Now Then Magazine, which hosts additional content, along with independent trader business profiles, offers, discounts and loyalty cards, encouraging active spending in the local economy.

It is a unique directory of independent businesses in Sheffield with an interactive map helping individuals and businesses connect at the right time and the right place.

INNOVATING FOR THE FUTURE

The average person in the UK checks their phone over 10,000 times per year. A third of people in the UK check their phones 25 times per day. The Now Then App is an innovative response to this fundamental shift in how we consume media and ensuring positive, independent culture have a platform in our tech-driven future.

NOW THEN APP HAS HAD OVER 27,000 INSTALLS OVER ITS LIFETIME. CURRENTLY RATED 4.5 OUT 5 STARS ON THE GOOGLE PLAY STORE.

OPUS EVENTS

Opus runs or supports approximately 200 events every year, from ten-person workshops to public lectures, 800-capacity live music events and festival stages. We promote a wide variety of art, music and live performance, from intimate acoustic gigs to frenzied festival stages.

Opus is committed to providing great cultural experiences that bring people together. We achieve this by providing the space and platform for artists to present their most exciting work in an environment that maximises the potential appreciation and inspiration of performance. We want to make these shared cultural experiences accessible to as many people as possible.

We have vast experience in programming, marketing and event delivery, including the booking acts, licencing, pop-up bar installs and AV equipment.

We run events through projects including Festival of Debate, Wordlife and Opus Presents.



Festival of debate



Festival of Debate is a non-partisan, city-wide programme of events curated by Opus. It asks audiences to explore the most important social, economic, environmental and political issues of the day through panel discussions, debates, Q&As, artistic responses, keynote speeches and other public events.

We believe in the need for a public forum to generate and share ideas, discuss and refine them, whilst providing engagement points for institutions in the city and the wider public.

The Festival runs every year over a six-week period and since 2015 has hosted high-profile writers, politicians, campaigners, comedians, artists and thinkers, including:

Yanis Varoufakis, Ed Milliband, George Monbiot, Shami Chakrabarti, The Guilty Feminist, Reni Eddo-Lodge, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Grayson Perry, Owen Jones, Julian Assange, Steve Bell, Martha Spurrier, Paul Mason, John Pilger, Melissa Benn, Prof David Nutt, Peter Tatchell and Akala.

FESTIVAL OF DEBATE HAS GROWN OVER FIVE YEARS TO BE ONE OF THE LARGEST NON-PARTISAN FESTIVALS OF POLITICS IN THE UK, WORKING ON OVER 80 EVENTS & WITH OVER 70 ORGANISATIONAL PARTNERS IN 2019.

WORDLIFE

Wordlife has evolved into one of the leading advocates of poetry, spoken word and creative storytelling in the North of England.

Providing creative commissioning opportunities, platforms and networks for writers, promoters and audiences, our events series, publications and bespoke projects are designed to bring new audiences to literature. Wordlife is an Opus project.

Wordlife has hosted some of the best-loved poets and spoken word performers in the UK, including: Kate Tempest (Mercury Prize-winner poet and rapper), Hollie McNish (viral spoken superstar championing women and mother's voices), Linton Kwesi Johnson (Creator of 'Dub Poetry' and anti-racism activist), Buddy Wakefield (International Slam Champion), and Roger McGough (BBC Radio 4, 'the Patron Saint of Poetry').

“

One of the purveyors of the new literary night out ”

The Independent



Salena Godden, Poet

OPUS DISTRIBUTION

Opus Distribution provides unique distribution opportunities exclusively to independent traders, community groups, arts organisations, charities and local government.

We distribute brochures, flyers, booklets and posters to over 4,000 public locations in Sheffield, North Derbyshire, Manchester, Leeds, Nottingham, Barnsley, Doncaster, Chesterfield and Rotherham.

Our regular clients include Sheffield Theatres, The University of Sheffield, Sheffield Doc/Fest, Off The Shelf Festival of Words, Sensoria Festival, Showroom Cinema, Chesterfield Theatres, Barnsley Civic and many others.





Kev, Fairness on the 83 Interviewee

BESPOKE PROJECTS

Opus has been active in the third sector on bespoke projects that we feel fit with our core values of 'Creating for the Common Good'. This might mean commissioning interactive multimedia content which engages audiences creatively or providing organisational support for projects that show the promise of lasting positive social change. Here are some of our recent projects.

UBI LAB

UBI Lab Sheffield is a collaboration between multiple organisations and individuals, seeking to explore the potential of a Universal Basic Income and the possibility of a pilot in the city.

Opus was a founding member of UBI Lab and provides organisational support to UBI Lab Sheffield, as well as having a day-to-day involvement in the group and its activities. Other partners include Sheffield Equality Group, the University of Sheffield and the Centre for Welfare Reform.

FAIRNESS ON THE 83

During 2013, the Sheffield Fairness Commission Report found that average life expectancy falls by 7.5 years for men and almost ten years for women across the length of Sheffield's 83 bus route, which links Millhouses in the south with Ecclesfield in the north. Fairness on the 83, part of the University of Sheffield's Festival of the Mind in 2016, interviewed members of the public along the bus route about inequality in the city. The outputs were an interactive website and a photographic exhibition at Castle House.

OUR FAIR CITY/MAKING SHEFFIELD FAIRER CAMPAIGN

The Sheffield Fairness Commission was established by Sheffield City Council to look at the nature, causes and impact of inequality across the city and to make recommendations for tackling them. Opus played the lead role on the public facing elements of the campaign, known as 'Our Fair City' and later the Making Sheffield Fairer campaign, from 2016 to 2018.



Fairness on the 83 Exhibition, Showroom

OUR IMPACT: LOCAL ECONOMY

CHAMPIONING INDEPENDENT TRADERS & ORGANISATIONS IN SHEFFIELD FOR OVER TEN YEARS.

We work exclusively with local traders, community groups, local government and charities, creating and sustaining strong networks and shared ideologies of independent trading. We are a firm believer in keeping our local economy strong enough to fulfil the needs of the community. We will therefore not accept work from multinational corporations and chains.

INDEPENDENT TRADERS BENEFIT THE SHEFFIELD ECONOMY & COMMUNITY.

For every £1 spent at a local trader, up to 70p goes back into Sheffield, as opposed to just 5p from the corporate High Street. (Source: New Economics Foundation)
Independent traders are more likely to employ people locally, providing much needed jobs. Independent traders provide vital points of connection and opportunities for residents to meet one another within communities.
Independent traders often bring diversity and difference to the public realm.



“

“Now Then is a great magazine which is strongly supportive of independent venues in the city. It’s also different from any other magazine in Sheffield and its quirkiness is appealing to readers and traders alike. Now Then as a consequence is held in high regard by the local community, which means that it’s a perfect publication to reach our target market.”

”

**Adrian Bagnoli - Owner,
Cubana Tapas Bar & Restaurant**

HOW WE ARE SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

PRINT

Now Then magazine is a high-quality, content-led magazine with a readership of over 30,000. Now Then provides a platform for independent business to reach its readers in the following ways:

- Advertising space exclusively for independent businesses.
- Featured content and previews local independent businesses.
- Listings for events and venue information.
- Directory of local independent businesses.

PRINT MARKETING IS IMPORTANT FOR SHEFFIELD BUSINESSES

Recent research by NHS marketing shows that messages need to be seen through a variety of mediums to be most successful. A mix of marketing mediums, including social media and print advertising, is the key to successfully conveying your message - and this is what we offer.



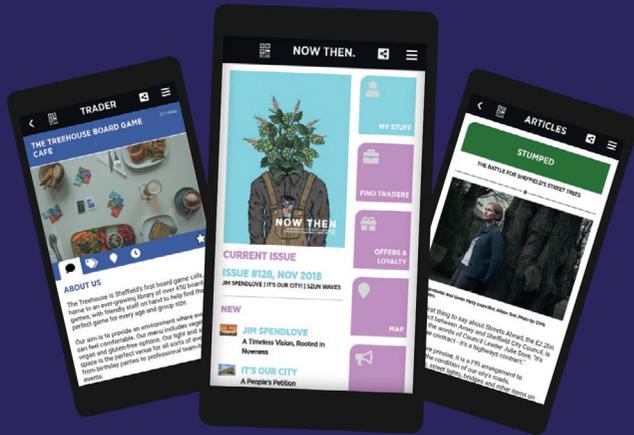
OVER 1,000 INDIVIDUAL ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS PRINTED FROM INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES IN SHEFFIELD LAST YEAR.

WE PRINTED CONTENT, EDITORIAL, FEATURES, REVIEWS, AND PREVIEWS FOR OVER 250 INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES IN SHEFFIELD LAST YEAR.

84% OF OUR READERS SAY THAT NOW THEN MADE THEM MORE LIKELY TO SPEND MONEY WITH LOCAL INDEPENDENT TRADERS.

99% OF NOW THEN ADVERTISING CLIENTS BELIEVE THAT NOW THEN IS AN IMPORTANT PLATFORM FOR INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES IN THE CITY.

100% OF OUR TRADERS IN A RECENT SURVEY SAID THAT THEY CONSIDER BEING PART OF A COMMUNITY AND SHARED VALUES TO BE KEY REASONS FOR PARTNERING WITH NOW THEN.



ONLINE CONTENT & ADVERTISING

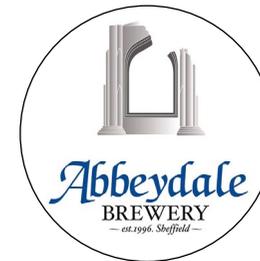
The Now Then App features independent trader business profiles and a platform for these businesses to provide offers, push notifications, discounts and loyalty cards, encouraging active spending in the local economy.

It is a unique directory of the independent businesses in Sheffield with an interactive and live map helping individuals and businesses connect at the right time and the right place.

Each campaign is tailored with a variety of online content like reviews, blog posts, retweets, competitions and general social networking support on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, to build brands, profiles and promotional films.

86% OF NOW THEN ADVERTISING CLIENTS SAID THAT ONLINE/SOCIAL MEDIA SUPPORT FOR THEIR CAMPAIGNS WAS VERY IMPORTANT (65%) OR MODERATELY IMPORTANT (21%).

FOR THIS REASON WE HAVE DEVELOPED AND MAINTAINED A STRONG ONLINE PRESENCE WITH OVER 30,000 SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS & OVER 40,000 VISITS TO OUR WEBSITE ANNUALLY.



“

Not only are you buying advertising with Now Then Magazine, but they work with us on many fun, content-generating projects, from collaborating on special one-off beers to videos to access to the Now Then App.

The marketing spend with Opus is also quantifiable, so you know where your budget is being spent due to the analytics and feedback data they can provide.

”

**Dan Baxter, Sales Director,
Abbeydale Brewery**

PRINT DISTRIBUTION

Opus Distribution provides unique distribution opportunities exclusively to independent traders, community groups, arts organisations, charities and local government.

We distribute brochures, flyers, booklets and posters to over 4,000 public locations in Sheffield, North Derbyshire, Manchester, Leeds, Nottingham, Barnsley, Doncaster, Chesterfield, Wakefield, Kirklees and Rotherham.

OPUS DISTRIBUTED OVER 750 INDIVIDUAL CAMPAIGNS FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES IN 2018.

WE DELIVERED CAMPAIGNS TO A COMBINED TOTAL OF OVER 180,000 DIFFERENT LOCATIONS ACROSS 2018.

WE PARTNERED WITH OVER 50 INDIVIDUAL DISTRIBUTION CLIENTS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HELPING THEM REACH A WIDER AUDIENCE.

THE NEW SHEFFIELD BID'S CAMPAIGN, BRICK-ROPOLIS, WAS DISTRIBUTED TO OVER 4,000 INDIVIDUAL PUBLIC LOCATIONS BY OPUS DISTRIBUTION.

“

“Opus Independents are integral to the distribution of our print in and around Sheffield. The expertise and knowledge displayed about the services on offer is greatly appreciated and we look forward to working with them in the future.”

”

SHEFFIELD CITY HALL

Supporting independent business reach the right people.

Over many years of service, Opus Distribution has achieved a lasting relationship with local businesses, but also a deep local knowledge of places of high public footfall in these locations. Clients are able to draw on this experience to tailor the right marketing to the right districts and demographics, allowing independent businesses to focus their resources where it matters most.

We provide comprehensive, detailed feedback and reporting on the specific outlets that each client's print has been distributed to, along with approximate number of each outlet so businesses can target their marketing geographically and track its impact. Recycling excess product as an essential part of our distribution service. When a campaign has run its course, we collect it and recycle it. The vast majority of excess print is collected up during subsequent distribution runs.



“

It was really useful to work with a business who understand Sheffield, we were able to select exactly the audience we wanted to target. We benefited from Opus' experience in terms of their understanding of our business, of Sheffield and also the challenges that Independent businesses face. This served as an education for us, as well as giving our campaign the best chance for success.

”

**Abi Golland, Owner,
Street Food Chef**

OPUS EVENTS

The impact of a thriving events programme in any city provides widespread benefits to the local economy outside the direct, positive and shared cultural experiences between artists and the public. These include their contributions to the night-time economy, boosting regional tourism and income for creatives, engineers and the cultural network.

CONTRIBUTING TO THE NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY

“Live music contributes to the ‘night-time economy’ in urban areas. The Music Venue Trust told us that “for every £10 spent on a ticket in a grassroots music venue, £17 is spent elsewhere in the night-time economy.” House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, Live Music (Ninth Report of Session, 2017–19)

BOOSTING REGIONAL TOURISM

The total direct and indirect spend generated by music tourism in Yorkshire & the Humber is £262 million.

“Cities [in Yorkshire] have all contributed to the growth and depth of the sector as well as acting as testing grounds for new talent to break through. In 2015 there were 670,000 music tourists that visited the area, generating £262 million and supporting over 3,000 jobs. These festivals and venues not only bring money and tourists into the region, but also help entertain the local communities where music plays such an important role.” UK Music Wish You Were Here: The Contribution of Live Music to the UK Economy

INCOME FOR CREATIVES, ENGINEERS & CULTURAL NETWORK

“Gigs and festivals are an increasingly significant source of revenue for performers, and support the careers of the thousands of engineers, touring crew and promoters who work behind the scenes. The UK’s first live music census, published in February 2018, identified that live music forms a greater proportion of consumer spend than recorded music does, and that on average live performances account for 49% of professional musicians’ income—compared to just 3% from recording.” House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee - Live Music (Ninth Report of Session, 2017–19)



Opus Events, Abbeydale Picture House

OPUS RUNS OR CO-RUNS APPROXIMATELY 200 EVENTS EVERY YEAR, FROM TEN-PERSON WORKSHOPS TO PUBLIC LECTURES, 800-CAPACITY LIVE MUSIC EVENTS AND FESTIVAL STAGES.

75% OF OUR FESTIVAL OF DEBATE EVENT PARTNERS RATED OUR EVENT MARKETING AS ‘EXCELLENT’.

OUR IMPACT: ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

“Active Citizens don’t wait around for change to happen [...] they drive the change themselves. Because change can happen through us, and not just to us. Active Citizens are people who feel inspired. They are people who feel motivated and empowered to make a difference. People who have the drive and the know-how to make sure ideas don’t just remain ideas.” The British Council

Projects like Now Then, Festival of Debate and our work in the third sector, like UBI Lab, rely on an active citizenship. By developing these projects with active citizens at the core, they are stronger, more impactful and have a greater sense of shared ownership.

“Nothing About Us Without Us Is For Us”



How We Can Work Together To Improve Fir Vale, 2019

HOW WE SUPPORT AN ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

FACILITATING PUBLIC FORUMS

The Festival of Debate is a non-partisan, city-wide programme of events, coordinated by Opus, with the aim of increasing public engagement with politics and encouraging active citizenship.

It asks audiences to explore the most important social, economic, environmental and political issues of the day, via panel discussions, debates, Q&As, artistic responses, keynote speeches and other public events.

FESTIVAL OF DEBATE HAS GROWN INTO ONE OF THE UK’S LARGEST POLITICS FESTIVALS, INCREASING FROM 20 EVENTS REACHING 2,000 PEOPLE IN 2014 TO OVER 80 EVENTS REACHING OVER 10,000 IN 2018.

WE WORKED WITH MORE THAN 70 PARTNERS TO CURATE, DELIVER AND SHOWCASE A RANGE OF VIEWPOINTS AT EVENTS ACROSS THE ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF DEBATE.

96% OF OUR EVENT PARTNERS AGREED (46%) OR STRONGLY AGREED (50%) THAT THE FESTIVAL OF DEBATE HELPED THEM REACH NEW AUDIENCES/PARTICIPANTS.

83% OF OUR EVENT PARTNERS AGREED (50%) OR STRONGLY AGREED (33%) THAT THE FESTIVAL OF DEBATE HELPED CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL CHANGE.



INSTIGATING CHANGE IN DEPRIVED COMMUNITIES



“

We have already seen some fantastic outcomes of these events. [2018's] Festival of Debate event in Darnall led directly to the creation of the All Darnall Groups process, which has seen a joining up of the VCF sector that has been long-needed.

[2019's] Tinsley debate around food has led to the creation of a local steering group who are planning to undertake a food mapping project as a result.

Most impressively, the Page Hall debate that was hosted by Fir Vale Community Hub was so successful that FCH are working on how they follow it up – which is amazing considering how sceptical they have been to date.

”

Colin Havard, Sheffield City Council

“

[The Festival of Debate] was a great opportunity for us to speak to, but also listen to what members of our community have to say.

What I was so pleased to see was how people from all different communities; Roma, English and Pakistani, all sat together and chewed the fat about Fir Vale. I have been to so many events where communities don't come together or even speak to one another, something vital to integration and understanding cultural differences.

Phil Mackey, Acting Inspector for the North East Neighbourhood Team, South Yorkshire Police

”





Yanis Varoufakis, who spoke at Festival of Debate 2018

SHARING NEW IDEAS & NEW THINKERS

The Festival of Debate runs every year over a six-week period and since 2015 has hosted high-profile writers, politicians, campaigners, comedians, artists and thinkers. Bringing new ideas to the city has helped inform the public and developed a deeper understanding of some of the issues of the day. Here are some of the headline thinkers over the years:

Yanis Varoufakis, Ed Milliband, George Monbiot, Shami Chakrabarti, The Guilty Feminist, Reni Eddo-Lodge, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Grayson Perry, Owen Jones, Julian Assange, Steve Bell, Martha Spurrier, Paul Mason, John Pilger, Melissa Benn, Prof David Nutt, Peter Tatchell and Akala.

The Festival also includes a wide range of community panel discussions and Q&As, artistic responses, workshops, music, spoken word, theatre and comedy.

Case Study: In 2019's programme we invited Guy Standing to Festival of Debate, the co-founder of the Basic Income Earth Network and economic advisor to John McDonnell, Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has been leading a working group exploring the feasibility of a Universal Basic Income (UBI) in the UK on behalf of the Labour Party.

His insights were then debated in a public forum run by UBI :Lab and helped inform their approach and frameworks. UBI Lab is a group of active citizens seeking to explore the potential of a Universal Basic Income and the possibility of a pilot in the city.

A UNIQUE GATEWAY FOR VOLUNTEERING & SOCIAL ACTION OPPORTUNITIES

The Now Then app enables charities and social organisations to offer volunteering and social action opportunities to Sheffield, allowing them to connect in a new, cost effective and innovative ways. The 27 000 installs of the Now Then App over its lifetime are supplemented by a 30,000 reach on our social media channels. These platforms are restricted to independent organisations and allow them to reach the right people in a very cost effective way.

Organisations like Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS) provide volunteering opportunities for the Sheffield residents. In the last three months we have connected almost 1,000 individuals to current VAS opportunities.

“

Now Then was one of my first writing gigs and thanks to them I met and lightly interrogated some of my all time pop culture heroes, the likes of Jon Ronson, Pulp (who were nothing less than the whole reason I moved to Sheffield in the first place) and Noel Fielding, as well as developing my critical stance as a reviewer. Their guidance and support helped me hone my voice and I went on to write for international titles such as Artrocker and Flux Magazine who eventually paid me for my troubles! Now Then essentially got my arse in gear to be the writer I wanted to be and gave me opportunities I wouldn't have gotten anywhere else. I owe them a lot.

”

Alex, Now Then citizen journalist

OUR IMPACT: ARTISTIC & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Opus has been providing an outlet for the arts and creative expression in Sheffield for over ten years. We believe that art has the power to inspire and unite people and is a vital part of a thriving society. We think platforms to support an active citizenship are also vital. That's why we have been pioneering the tools to help organise, reach a wider audience and share views and experiences.

“Arts and cultural activity ...bring value to individuals and society by creating the conditions for change; a myriad of spillover effects that include an openness, a space for experimentation and risk-taking at the personal, social and economic levels, an ability to reflect in a safer and less direct way on personal, community and societal challenges, and much else.”

Understanding the Value of Arts & Culture, AHRC Cultural Value Project, March 2016

JOURNALISM

We aim to support and encourage healthy democratic conversation by providing a platform for members of the public to contribute and steer the conversation via our widely-read magazine and online content.

OVER THE LAST YEAR ALONE, 80 CITIZEN JOURNALISTS HAVE HAD THEIR WRITING AND OPINIONS PUBLISHED IN NOW THEN.

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

“Now Then founding directors Sam Walby and James Lock have been offering continuing support to Journalism students at Sheffield Hallam University for the past three years. They have delivered guest lectures to final year magazine pathway students followed by more informal breakout sessions in which the students can discuss their own magazine concepts.

Now Then's industry experience is vital to the course curriculum - particularly insights into the business of aspects of running a magazine, including advertising and production. These are considerations which students are assessed on. We hope to develop the successful partnership with the magazine even further in the future.”

Carolyn Waudby - Sheffield Hallam University

LIVE PERFORMANCE

We promote and provide a platform to over 200 musicians, poets and performers each year. That involves curating a programme that is culturally relevant and interesting. It means organising the logistics to make the event a success (and safe) and it means marketing the event so that a large number of people can interact with it from as wide a background as possible.

OPUS has further assisted the development of musicians in Sheffield and the surrounding region with various compilation releases that raise the profile of artists.

OUR 'NOT WHAT YOU KNOW' COMPILATION OF SHEFFIELD'S UP-AND-COMING ACTS HAS HAD OVER 30,000 DOWNLOADS.

WE ALSO COMPILED THE BEST OF OUR 'OPUS ACOUSTICS' EVENTS SERIES AND PRINTED AND DISTRIBUTED 1,000 CDS OF THE ARTISTS WHO HAD PERFORMED OVER THE YEARS.



ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT

“

Opus' support, particularly in the first few years of the band, gave us a platform to perform in venues across Sheffield. Through their promotion, we reached a huge new audience, through performances, reviews and articles in their own Now Then magazine and other sources. This helped create a local fanbase, which supported us as we began to tour more widely. Our relationship with Opus has developed in recent years too, including a sell-out headline performance at their 10th birthday party. They form a very valuable part of Sheffield's music scene, and have supported countless bands like ourselves.

”

Andy, Renegade Brass Band



Renegade Brass Band



Jo Peel, Sheffield artist

ART

We proudly champion and spotlight local artists and their work as cornerstones of Now Then's content. A third of its pages are given over to artwork from the featured artist, alongside an in-depth interview to give context to the work. This provides a real stepping stone for any artist to showcase their work to more than 30,000 people and increase their profile.

It also showcase inspiration and skilled artists work to the wider population, providing the inspiration for new artists to share ideas and techniques.

NOW THEN TYPICALLY FEATURES OVER 24 ARTISTS ACROSS THE PRINTED MAG AND ONLINE APP EVERY YEAR, EACH SHOWCASING MORE THAN 15 OF THEIR INDIVIDUAL WORKS AND A FEATURE INTERVIEW TO PROVIDE CONTEXT.

“

“Being featured in Now Then magazine is a privilege for any artist as the high quality print production shows off the artwork and gives a platform to reach a wide audience with the work. Opus are great to work with and make the experience easy and fun. The content of the magazine is incredible every time, getting strong and important messages out with a sense of humour and style. I still receive positive feedback from the edition I was featured in and also value it as a resource to find out about other artists and happenings in Sheffield.”

”

Jo Peel, Now Then #90 featured artist

CASE STUDY: WORDLIFE POETRY & LITERATURE

Formed in 2006 as a response to the lack of live literature events in Sheffield, Wordlife has evolved into one of the leading advocates of poetry, spoken word and creative storytelling in the North of England. Providing creative commissioning opportunities, platforms and networks for writers, promoters and audiences, our events series, publications and bespoke projects are designed to bring new audiences to literature. Wordlife is an Opus project.

LAST YEAR WE CURATED OVER 150 POETS PERFORMING AT WORDLIFE EVENTS, ATTRACTING ALMOST 3,000 ATTENDEES.

NOW THEN MAGAZINE HAS GIVEN OVER 50 POETS THE PLATFORM TO SHARE THEIR WORK WITH OVER 30,000 PEOPLE IN 2018.

PUSHING BOUNDARIES – VIRTUAL & AUGMENTED REALITY

The way we consume media is changing, presenting new opportunities to both diversify and increase new audiences to literature. Wordlife has been experimenting with new technology and literature to find innovative ways of showcasing exciting writing to new audiences. Wordlife has done this through augmented reality, virtual reality and virtual maps, as well as by commissioning over 100 poetry film over the last few years.

Wordlife was the lead organisation on an international poetry and film project funded by the British Council, collaborating with filmmakers and poets from Bangladesh, Croatia, Trinidad and Tobago, Canada, South Africa and the UK.

In recent years Wordlife has been particularly active in exploring cross-platform work and the meeting points between new technology and literature. In partnership with innovative app developers and animation studios, we have led on a project that was one of the first of its kind, experimenting with poetry and augmented reality in a publishing format and new ways to experience poetry.

wordlife

An Anthology

Edited by Joe Kriss





Kate Tempest, Poet

WORDLIFE HAS PUBLISHED OVER 36 WRITERS, MANY FOR THE FIRST TIME, NEXT TO NATIONALLY-KNOWN POETS, INCLUDING BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH, KATE TEMPEST, SIMON ARMITAGE AND LOCAL ARTISTS LIKE HELEN MORT.

PROVIDING A PLATFORM FOR UNHEARD VOICES

Wordlife has promoted and used its various platforms to **champion unheard voices**, such as LGBTQ community and the voices of people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. This has enabled them to share their own experiences, hopes and fears in a safe, friendly environment.

EXPORTING SHEFFIELD TO SURROUNDING REGIONS

Wordlife is one of the leading organisations involved with the curation of events and festivals across the North. We have programmed and partnered a number of key regional events for poetry, including:

Off The Shelf Festival of Words, Wakefield Literature Festival, Hull City of Culture, Ilkley Literature Festival, Wakefield Literature Festival, Freedom Festival, No Bounds, Mad Fest, Sheaf Poetry Festival, Migration Matters, Roundhouse (London), National Media Museum (Bradford), Theatre in the Mill (Bradford), The Holbeck (Leeds) and The Drillhall (Lincoln).

ARTIST DEVELOPMENT & MENTORING

The development of poetry and spoken word as an artform in Yorkshire has been a core aim of Wordlife since its inception in 2006. We have run a whole range of event and workshop programmes, alongside artistic development projects for local poets, which have included **commissioned work, professional development and mentoring.**

Our facilitators have many years of experience delivering workshops in a range of community, professional and educational settings. From primary schools to universities and retirement homes, our facilitators have the ability to create and design their own programme of work or provide workshops to particular specifications or outcomes.

OUR IMPACT: THIRD SECTOR

Opus have been actively working in the third sector on bespoke projects that we feel fit our core values of 'Creating for the Common Good'. This might mean commissioning interactive multimedia content which engages audiences creatively or providing organisational support for projects that show the promise of lasting positive social change. Here are some of our recent projects.

“

Opus through its work and business approach exhibits strong social values and ethos. I have always valued their cultural and social advocacy around stimulating and engaging with many communities through the Festival of Debate and its long standing and well regarded Now Then magazine. ”

Richard Motley, Integreat PLUS

UBI LAB SHEFFIELD

UBI Lab Sheffield is a collaboration between multiple organisations and individuals, seeking to explore the potential of a Universal Basic Income and the possibility of a pilot in the city.

Opus was a founding member and provides organisational support to UBI Lab Sheffield, as well as having a day-to-day involvement in the group and its activities. Other partners include Sheffield Equality Group, the University of Sheffield and the Centre for Welfare Reform.

“

I'd like to see a northern and Midlands town in the pilot - Sheffield have really worked hard. I've been involved in their anti-poverty campaign and they've done a lot round the real living wage... [and] would be ideal ”

Shadow chancellor John McDonnell in the Guardian, 12th May 2019.



UBI LAB SHEFFIELD IS THE FIRST AND BIGGEST CITY-BASED GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT FOR BASIC INCOME IN THE UK. THEY HAVE A RECORD OF HOSTING SUCCESSFUL EVENTS, FROM PUBLIC SPEAKERS TO FULL-DAY CONFERENCES.

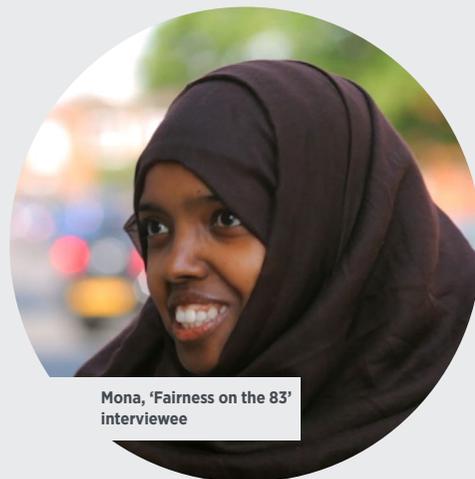
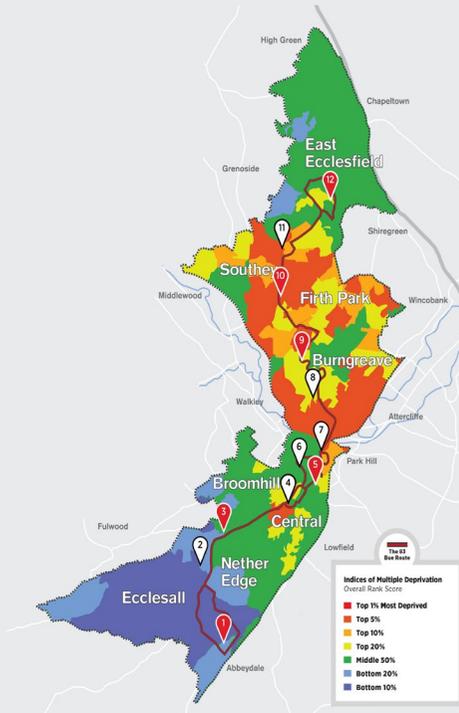
IN 2019, UBI LAB SHEFFIELD WERE SUCCESSFUL IN ENCOURAGING SHEFFIELD COUNCIL TO BECOME ONE OF THE FIRST IN THE UK TO DECLARE ITS SUPPORT FOR A UBI PILOT.

Fairness ON THE 83

During 2013, an independent report about fairness and inequality in Sheffield found that average life expectancy falls by 7.5 years for men and almost ten years for women across the length of the 83 bus route, which links Millhouses in the south with Ecclesfield in the north.

Fairness On The 83 is a film project lead by Opus Independents and the Department of Sociological Studies at the University of Sheffield, tracing the 83 bus on its journey across the city, engaging members of the public and professionals in discussion about inequality in their city, encouraging debate and discussions on important topics and exploring what can be done to make Sheffield a fairer, less divided city.

The project was seen by more than 10,000 people in Sheffield, helping to raise awareness of the issue more widely and encouraging discussion and debate.



Mona, 'Fairness on the 83' interviewee

Making Sheffield Fairer

The Sheffield Fairness Commission was established by Sheffield City Council to look at the nature, causes and impact of inequality across the city and to make recommendations for tackling them.

Opus played the lead role on the public facing elements of the campaign, known as 'Our Fair City' and later the Making Sheffield Fairer campaign, from 2016 to 2018.

SOCIAL IMPACTS

- A 'Manifesto For A Fairer Future' report produced in 2017 in conjunction with local youth charities.
- The Making Sheffield Fairer worked with communities of interest covering sustainable food initiatives, the food bank network, the voluntary sector, youth charities, Chamber of Commerce and both Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Sheffield.
- Events included 'Forging Fairness in Fir Vale', involving a panel with a local councillor and community members, and 'The Importance of Voice in the Roma Community', examining what fairness means for the Roma community in Sheffield.
- Over 40 short animations were commissioned from students on the campaign's priority areas through the Sheffield Hallam Digital Media course.



WWW.WEAREOPUS.ORG