

Audiences North East

Connecting people and culture

Trading Places Evaluation Report Traces & Graces Extract

Audiences North East Limited

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1. Background

Audiences North East was commissioned to evaluate Trading Places, a series of free performances based on cross artform collaboration led by creative movement bringing dance to unique locations across the North East region. The site specific performances were developed by local artists and included collaboration with local communities and national and international artists. The commissions were supported by Arts Council England, North East and Dance City, the National Dance Agency for the region.

The six commissions included in the evaluation are as follows:

Turning on a Sixpence, 27 June 2009, Crisis Skylight, Newcastle upon Tyne

Taking inspiration from the stories of homeless people, refugees and asylum seekers currently living in the North East, this performance explored the simple humanity of people on the margins of society – allowing them a voice to express themselves.

SEARCH, 4 July 2009, Gateshead Central Library

SEARCH celebrated King Cyrus's Cylinder, which was created in 539 BC in clay and is the first known declaration of human rights. Developed by professional artists and performed by a community ensemble, this promenade performance took place in and amongst the aisles of Gateshead Central Library – revealing secrets and uncovering forgotten truths.

Traces & Graces, 10 – 13 September 2009, Whalton Manor Gardens, Northumberland

Inspired by stories and memories of a rarely seen Lutyens House and Jekyll garden this promenade performance featured historical dance, sculpture and live music and created an intergenerational vehicle for local people to celebrate their environment and share it with visiting audiences.

Broken Times, 18 – 20 September 2009, Scrogg Road, Walker

Broken Times featured a promenade performance within a disused shop using dance, digital imagery and music. The performance drew on the death of a local woman in mysterious circumstances in the 1950s.

Flagrant Wisdom, 21 – 22 November 2009, National Glass Centre, Sunderland

This commission was inspired by the 1,300 year-old history and culture of glass making in the North East, National Glass Centre's hot glass production studio and the 2,000 year tradition that sees Chinese acrobats transform ordinary domestic vessels with daring feats of skill. A series of vignettes were performed throughout the National Glass Centre alongside hot glass demonstrations.

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Cassop and Coal, 2 – 4 December 2009, Cassop School

This performance revealed the tremendous impact coal had on the lives of people living in Cassop, County Durham and surrounding communities. Based on research and enquiries collated from interviews with individuals, families and historians connected to the past, present and future of coal, the performance journeyed from the local public house on a 1950s coach to Cassop School and back.

2. Research methodology

The following criteria were used to evaluate Trading Places:

1. Creation of new artwork
2. Creation of site specific artwork – exploration of the interrelationship between the artwork and the location
3. Creation of new audiences for dance engaging in a new way
4. Creation of high quality artistic product
5. Skills development for artists
6. Mentoring and partnerships
7. Funding
8. New work platform – raising the profile of local artists and dance regionally, nationally and internationally
9. Establishment of a legacy for dance in the region
10. Contribution to the Trading Places themes – environment, human rights, Olympics, young people, digital, festivals
11. For the programme as a whole – range of dance genres; geographical spread; gender; ethnicity; age and disability

The following evaluation methods were used:

- Audiences:
 - Electronic questionnaires
 - Face-to-face interviews
 - Analysis of audience comment cards
- Collaborators:
 - Electronic questionnaires
 - Review of income and expenditure accounts
- Artists:
 - Face-to-face interviews
 - Electronic questionnaires
 - Attendance at feedback meetings
- Observation at rehearsals, workshops and performances
- Analysis of data provided by the commissions
- Review of press coverage achieved

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3. Executive summary

3.1 Creation of new artwork

Six new artworks were created for Trading Places:

- **Turning on a Sixpence** featured a group of artists and community-based performers in a site specific performance piece in the quadrangle behind Crisis Skylight, Newcastle upon Tyne. The performance took its inspiration from the stories of homeless people, refugees and asylum seekers living in the North East who are classified as destitute, many of whom have been tortured and persecuted themselves.
- **SEARCH** celebrated King Cyrus's Cylinder, the first known declaration of human rights. It took place in Gateshead Central Library and was performed by a community ensemble.
- **Traces & Graces** was inspired by the stories and memories of a rarely seen Lutyens house and Jekyll garden, Whalton House and Gardens in Northumberland. The promenade performance also drew inspiration from Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and included both professional artists and community performers.
- **Broken Times** took place in a disused shop in Walker and was an intimate performance piece inspired by the real life murder of a Walker woman by her husband in the 1950s.
- **Flagrant Wisdom** featured a series of vignettes which took place at the National Glass Centre, Sunderland and drew on two ancient artforms – glass making and contortionism and explored the links that could be formed between them.
- **Cassop and Coal** explored the personal collective meaning and experience of coal in Durham. Professional artists and community participants performed a promenade piece which started in the local public house, moved via a 1940s coach to Cassop School and returned to the local public house.

3.2 Creation of site specific artwork – exploration of the interrelationship between the artwork and the location

The programme overall featured some really diverse interpretations of site specific artwork. There was a mix of indoor locations used such as Gateshead Central Library, Cassop School and Victoria Inn, Walker Print Shop and National Glass Centre and outdoor locations eg Whalton Manor Gardens and the quadrangle behind Crisis Skylight. Cassop and Coal also included a performance on a coach.

Commissions featured both urban and rural locations including Newcastle city centre, Walker, rural Northumberland and County Durham.

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Turning on a Sixpence, Traces & Graces and Broken Times in particular displayed really strong exploration of the interrelationship between the artwork and the locations used. Turning on a Sixpence was rooted in and transformed a space used by homeless people to present a very moving account of what it felt like to be homeless or persecuted. Traces & Graces used the gardens of Whalton Manor to stunning effect to reflect on the past history and stories of people living in the Manor House. Broken Times transformed a derelict shop into the broken debris of married life with the chilling story of the murder of a local woman.

3.3 Creation of new audiences for dance engaging in a new way

Overall, audience numbers were low due to the intimate nature of many of the performances which meant limited audience numbers.

Commission	Audience numbers
Turning on a Sixpence	73
SEARCH	80
Traces & Graces	233
Broken Times	90
Flagrant Wisdom	244
Cassop and Coal	184
Total	904

New audiences were engaged for dance in the following ways:

- Use of unusual settings eg outdoor space used by homeless people, 1940s coach, hot glass studio, library, village garden
- Combination of different artforms to create performance pieces eg glass making and acrobatics; feral singing and creative movement; digital imagery, holograms, dance and pre-recorded music
- Intimate nature of performances eg audience members stepped into the performance space for Broken Times and had to move out of the way as the dancers performed
- There were varying levels of dance attendance exhibited by audience members - in particular there were lower levels of regular dance attenders amongst Cassop and Coal audience members
- Use of community participants alongside professional artists eg Turning on a Sixpence, Traces & Graces, Cassop and Coal
- The performances really explored the interpretation of what 'dance' could encompass eg acrobatics, creative movement, historical dance, Black and White Minstrels

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3.4 Creation of high quality artistic product

Overall the commissions were of high artistic quality. The earlier performances eg Turning on a Sixpence and SEARCH suffered from lack of development time. There were some technical difficulties during the Turning on a Sixpence performance with lighting, sound and video footage. SEARCH suffered from lack of rehearsal time within the actual venue and audience navigation within the space needed to be strengthened. Traces & Graces and Broken Times in particular displayed really high artistic quality with well choreographed dance performances which were fully integrated into the performances pieces.

3.5 Skills development for artists

Trading Places provided huge opportunities for artists, both professional and community participants, to develop new skills. These included:

- Skills integral to their craft as an artist and/or performer such as different singing and dance techniques, adapting songs to fit movement, writing poetry, voice projection, warm up techniques, improvisation techniques
- Production skills eg learning new software, finance, sound designer recording, use of external power supplies and lighting
- Softer skills such as communication techniques, management skills, working with professional/community participants, confidence building

3.6 Mentoring and partnerships

Mentoring:

Formal mentoring relationships were developed during Traces & Graces and Broken Times. Darren Royston, Artistic Director of NONSUCH History & Dance mentored Cinzia Hardy. Darren provided critical feedback during the development of Traces & Graces and attended one of the performances. Joelene English was mentored by Mark Elliott of Digital City Business (DCB). Mark advised on the film/digital aspects of Broken Times and supplied resources as and when requested. DCB also provided light touch mentoring in terms of more general creative aspects. Joelene felt that Mark really pushed her as filmmaker and was a constant voice that enabled her to gain alternate perspectives on the storyline.

There was a lack of clarity over the role that Dance City played in terms of mentoring with two producers feeling that this had been offered and that either through misunderstanding or lack of capacity this was later withdrawn. During the period in which the Trading Places commissions took place there were senior staff changes at Dance City which meant that capacity to support the project was not as high as originally envisaged.

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Partnerships:

There was evidence of really strong partnership working throughout the programme both within and outside the cultural sector, in this region and beyond. For example Alan Lyddiard worked with Crisis Skylight for a year to gain the trust of potential participants before development of Turning on a Sixpence. ZENDEH developed a new partnership with Gateshead Council and Gateshead Central Library. Cinzia Hardy developed really strong relationships with the local community, her mentor Darren Royston, Woodhorn County Archives and Whalton Manor House. National Glass Centre worked with a Shanghai Acrobatic Troupe and international artist Rose English. Cassop and Coal forged closer links with the local community including the local public house and primary school. Joelene English made strident efforts to engage the local community in Walker with her work but unfortunately faced an uphill battle in trying to combine this with producing and choreographing Broken Times on limited human resources.

3.7 Funding

Whilst there were high levels of in-kind support provided to all commissions two productions in particular were successful in raising external funds for their projects during the programme. These were Traces & Graces who raised c£38k from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Cassop and Coal who raised £20k from Metamorphosis. Whilst Alan Lyddiard was unable to raise additional funding for Turning on a Sixpence during the programme, subsequently Newcastle City Council awarded funding for further development of the project.

Commission	Trading Places cash support £	Producers' own cash support £	Other cash support £	In-kind support £	Total £
Turning on a Sixpence*	10,000	0	0	5,500	15,500
SEARCH	8,000	200	0	3,600	11,800
Traces & Graces	7,000	1,000	38,817	0	46,817
Broken Times	8,000	0	0	6,782	14,782
Flagrant Wisdom	5,000	9,000	0	0	14,000
Cassop and Coal	8,000	0	23,000	3,200	34,200
Total	46,000	10,200	61,817	19,082	137,099

*Draft figures

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3.8 New work platform – raising the profile of local artists and dance regionally, nationally and internationally

During the Trading Places programme, Dance City encountered capacity issues and this impacted on marketing of the programme. Although high media coverage was not a desired outcome due to the limited capacity at venues, there was a general lack of awareness of the programme. The marketing materials were not available for the first commission *Turning on a Sixpence* and the microsite was also not available for the start of the programme. 2,000 programmes were printed, of which 100 was given to each producer, 700 were mailed out to Dance City's distribution list and the remainder were distributed at Dance City. No web statistics were available for the Trading Places microsite, although Dance City's website was visited by 23,909 unique visitors during the time of the programme. Dance City also sent regular eblasts about Trading Places to its email database.

Media coverage was achieved by the individual producers for *Traces & Graces*, *Flagrant Wisdom* and *Cassop and Coal*.

Cllr John Shipley, Leader of Newcastle City Council, attended one of the performances of *Turning on a Sixpence* and wrote to Alan Lyddiard commending him on the performance.

3.9 Establishment of a legacy for dance in the region – creating new partnerships and encouraging future repeat attendance by audiences

As mentioned previously, there was strong evidence of partnership working throughout the programme. All partner respondents felt that they had really benefitted from taking part in Trading Places and were keen to work together in future. Patrick Kelly of Dance City felt that the commissions had raised the profile of dance and the dance agency in the region. There is now a really crucial role that Dance City can play in building on the successes and addressing the challenges of this programme to build a legacy for dance in this region.

All of the producers are actively involved in continuation of their commissions in a variety of ways and in challenging the notion of the performances being site specific. This includes development of larger projects (*Turning on a Sixpence*), presenting a commission originally developed for outdoor locations in a traditional theatre (*Traces & Graces*), exploration of whether the film used in a performance being screened in a planetarium (*Broken Times*).

There was a mixture of low, medium and highly engaged dance audiences at the commissions. There was little evidence of cross over of audiences between the commissions other than those audience members directly involved in Trading Places on a professional level.

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The majority of audience respondents were willing to attend similar dance performances in future.

3.10 Contribution to the Trading Places themes – environment, human rights, Olympics, young people, digital, festivals

The commissions responded to the following Trading Places themes:

- **Turning on a Sixpence** – human rights
- **SEARCH** – human rights
- **Traces & Graces** – environment
- **Broken Times** – digital
- **Flagrant Wisdom** – festivals
- **Cassop and Coal** – environment

3.11 For the programme as a whole – range of dance genres; geographical spread; gender; ethnicity; age and disability

Dance genres:

The programme as a whole displayed a really wide range of dance genres including hip hop in Turning on a Sixpence, creative movement in SEARCH and Broken Times, historical dance in Traces & Graces, acrobatics in Flagrant Wisdom and community-led dancing in Cassop and Coal.

Geographical spread:

The performances took place in County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, Northumberland, Sunderland and Walker. Out of the four sub regions in the North East, there were no performances in the Tees Valley and few audience members from there. Whilst most artists and performers were from within the region, national and international artists also took part, notably for Turning on a Sixpence, Traces & Graces and Flagrant Wisdom.

Gender:

Due to the high level of community participants in two of the performances (Traces & Graces and Cassop and Coal) from whom limited responses were received, it was not possible to obtain a definitive percentage of the gender split for artists. But from visual observation it appeared that there were higher numbers of female artists.

The majority of audience respondents were female, ranging from the lowest 69% for Traces & Graces to the highest 88% for Turning on a Sixpence.

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Ethnicity:

The majority of artists and performers were White British. Three of the commissions exhibited much higher representation of artists from a non-White British background ie Turning on a Sixpence, SEARCH and Flagrant Wisdom. The majority of audience respondents were White British with SEARCH having the lowest percentage of White British audience members (68.8%) and Cassop and Coal having the highest percentage of White British audience respondents (100%).

Age:

There was a spread of age ranges across the artists who performed during the programme. In particular, Cassop and Coal and Traces & Graces were intergenerational performances with performances by children, young adults, middle aged and retired people.

There was a spread of age ranges across audience respondents across the commissions. Traces & Graces attracted higher levels of older respondents (45-54 years 33.3%). Broken Times attracted higher levels of younger respondents (25-34 years 36.2%). Cassop and Coal attracted higher levels of respondents aged 35-44 years 32.6%.

Disability:

One community performer (Cassop and Coal) considered himself to be disabled. Amongst audience members there was a small percentage of people who considered themselves to be disabled (5-6%).

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Evaluation findings

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6. Traces & Graces

“As with a swan, we don’t see the furious work that goes into such productions – but they are unforgettable.” David Whetstone, The Journal.

6.1 Creation of new artwork

Traces & Graces was inspired by some of the stories and memories of a rarely seen Lutyens house and Jekyll garden owned by the Norton family in the small and picturesque Northumberland village of Whalton. The principal dance genre was social and historical dance. Landscape architect and sculptor Julia Barton worked closely with the dancers, actors, Musical Director Katie Doherty and Director Cinzia Hardy, to create a performance with live music that brought the property to life and created an intergenerational vehicle for local people to celebrate their environment and to share it with visiting audiences.

At the start of the performance audience members assembled at the front of the Manor House where they were met by an Estate Agent who explained that whilst the property was for sale, today’s ‘viewing’ was of the grounds only. Audience members were led on a tour of the grounds by the Estate Manager and encountered staff and children of the Manor House in a promenade performance. Whilst the performance piece drew on the stories of the Manor House, the text used in the production also drew on Lewis Carroll’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland and Elizabeth Aldrich’s From the Ballroom to Hell.

The performance piece was part of a much larger project which will result in collecting and archiving the deeds of the Manor House.

Workshops with local pupils culminated in a performance by the children and Deputy Head Teacher on 11 June 2009 at Whalton Manor Gardens which was attended by an audience of 62 adults and children.

A dress rehearsal was held on 9 September 2009 and five 70-minute performances took place between 10 and 13 September 2009. In total there were 233 audience members. 70 people visited the garden the following week to view Julia Barton’s sculptures.

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6.2 Creation of site specific artwork – exploration of the interrelationship between the artwork and the location

The Manor House dates back to the 17th century and was altered by renowned architect Edward Lutyens in 1908. With the help of Gertrude Jekyll, the leading light of the arts and crafts gardening movement, he designed three acres of magnificent walled gardens around the house. These have been developed since the 1920s and include a rose garden, listed summer houses, pergolas and walls festooned with rambling roses and clematis as well as magnificent herbaceous borders.

Traces & Graces was created by the November Club in response to people's stories and memories of the Manor House and gardens and to the architectural detail of the property. Local people and school children were invited to contribute to the narrative of the piece through a series of workshops.

Overall, there was very positive feedback on the relationship between the performance piece and the setting. Comments included:

"The location was spectacular and the narrative fitted that setting perfectly. The amount of the gardens used and the way the piece was structured felt as though it used the space well... There were moments of sheer beauty with the dance (frames on the croquet lawn, looking up from the old ballroom)." Patrick Kelly, Dance City.

"I thought the performance was perfectly suited to the location and was written and performed with great sensitivity to the house and garden." Penny Norton, performer and present owner of Whalton Manor House.

"Perfect! Although perhaps some of the links between the history of the gardens and what the audience was seeing before them could have been emphasised." Tamsin Lilley, Greater Morpeth Development Trust.

"The garden became a very magical space as we began to move and work within it. This inspired us to start thinking about the parallels between our ideas and Lewis Carroll's ideas in Alice in Wonderland – shifting and fixing time, moving around a garden where things that should be inside are moved outside, characters appearing in different locations without any real explanation... This informed how I played the Estate Agent in particular and I borrowed strongly on the character of the White Rabbit." Richard Bliss, performer.

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“As ‘rustics’ we did feel the isolationism at being mainly excluded from the formal gardens and revelled in being able to show some ‘free spirit’ during our early scene. In the finale when we were able to enter the confines of the inner courtyard there was the impetus of trying to inspire the other participants out of the rigid format imposed on them – by the script and the surroundings.” Dick Thompson, performer.

“Brilliantly well thought out – mise en scene layered perfectly and enhancing the surroundings.” Audience member.

“Wonderful ambience. Just another example of their site specific work.” Audience member.

“Added greatly, nice sense of place, interesting to see different bits of show relating to different parts of garden.” Audience member.

There was only one note of discord regarding the setting of the performance piece. This was in relation to a dance by rustics followed by a conversation between them and Penny Norton, the present owner of the Manor House who was seated on horseback. This took place at some distance from the audience and at times it was difficult to hear the conversation. It was unclear whether it was necessary to hear the words or whether this was a tableau being acted out and that it was unnecessary to hear the words spoken.

One audience member commented:

I personally had an issue with the scene in the paddock – mainly around sound issues. Visually it was stunning but aurally I was frustrated. Because of my hearing, I felt as though I was missing dialogue or key things being said that I would need to know about that story. Patrick Kelly, Dance City.

6.3 Creation of new audiences for dance engaging in a new way

Whalton comprises a mixture of social classes, young and old, an established farming community and more recent incoming professionals. There is a small primary school and a village hall and pub as well as the Manor House and gardens. There is no village shop, older members of the community and young families do not travel to Newcastle for cultural activities and the village hall is the focus of the community. Development of Traces & Graces involved a community engagement programme with the local school and the village hall. As a result of the commission, community members from different social classes and generations learnt historic dances and worked with professional dancers.

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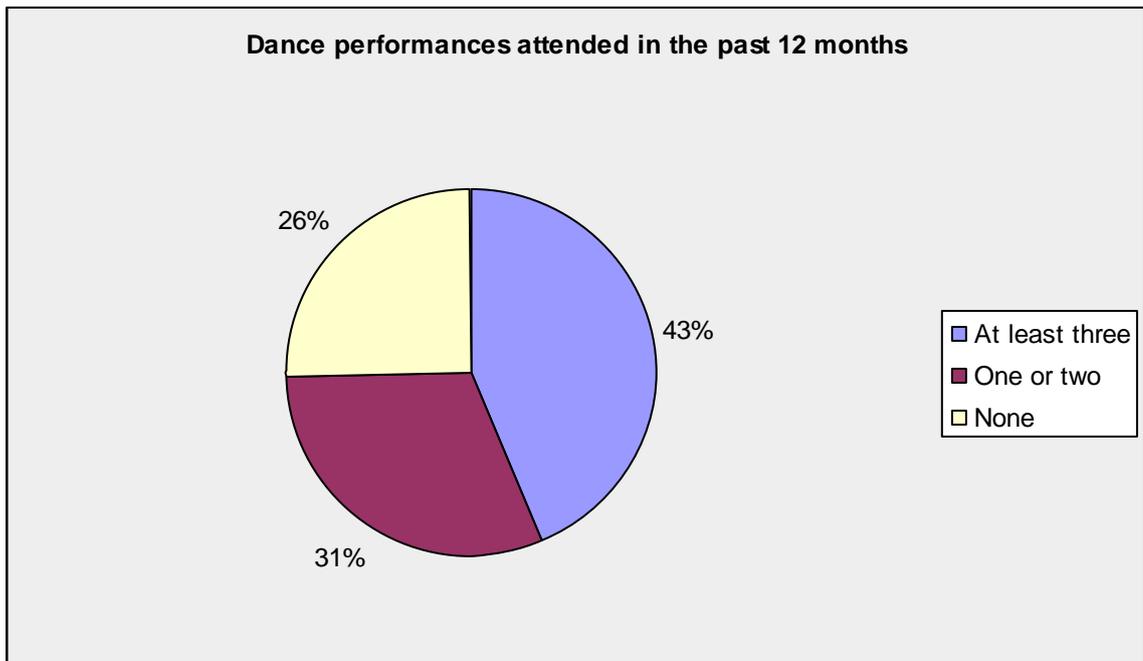
Whilst some audience members were familiar with November Club performances, it was clear that an outdoor promenade dance performance piece was a new experience for many audience members. Just under half of audience respondents had not been to anything like Traces & Graces before.

To what extent do you agree with the following statement - from strongly agree to strongly disagree?						
Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Response Count
I have never been to anything like this before	16	2	3	15	3	39

Whalton Manor Gardens is rarely open to the public. This year they were opened during the Heritage Open Days for Traces & Graces and attracted some audience members whose primary interest was access to a private garden. For them Traces & Graces provided an opportunity to explore such a garden through the medium of a dance performance piece.

The intimate nature of the performance meant that audience numbers across the six performances was relatively small (233). A larger audience number would certainly have affected mobility across the site and audience enjoyment.

26% of audience respondents were infrequent dance attenders and had not been to a dance performance in the past 12 months.



Base: 39

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6.4 Creation of high quality artistic product

Audience members were asked to rate their enjoyment of the performance and to assess artistic quality. Respondents enjoyed Traces & Graces and rated the artistic quality as high.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements - from strongly agree to strongly disagree?						
Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Response Count
I enjoyed Traces & Graces	33	5	1	0	0	39
The performance was of high artistic quality	33	6	0	0	0	39

“Whole thing so interesting and fun, lots of little snippets to see – great to have been included in this.” Audience member.

“Excellent, very good use of stage and very imaginative, well produced.” Audience member.

“Very entertaining, music excellent, dance well choreographed, music very appropriate.” Audience member.

“Really interesting and intriguing, enjoyed the journey, surprised by the dancing.” Audience member.

“Really, really different, interesting, really professional, would actually pay to see this.” Audience member.

“Love Julia Barton’s phytoforms. Interesting amalgamation between sculpture and dance.” Audience member.

6.5 Skills development for artists

Director and Creative Producer Cinzia Hardy started her career in the arts as a young actor/dancer but has for some years worked in arts administration. Trading Places gave her the chance to take the lead and create a project using dance and movement.

“Making this performance has renewed my confidence in my own artistic practise.” Cinzia Hardy, Director and Creative Producer.

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Other members of the production team identified the following skills development: learning to collaborate with people of different disciplines, community engagement, intergenerational work, developing new strategies for audience participation and immersion in performative events, creation of sculptural costumes for dancers and composing for a specific setting.

“As a visual artist who usually works alone, the most important skill I have begun to develop is in learning to collaborate with people of different disciplines. Mainly the need to clearly communicate your ideas and to listen to what others require... Re-learning and adapting dress making techniques. Observing and understanding how costumes need to work with dancers and the effect that costume construction has on how dancers can move. Also gaining insight into theatrical processes.” Julia Barton, Landscape Architect and Sculptor.

The performers identified the following skills development: performing in a large open space, voice projection, warm up techniques, opportunity to work with dancers, Scottish dancing and promenade dancing.

“I had not worked professionally with the dancers before and as a result I am hoping to work with one of them on a training project for professional dancers... I feel far more confident in my ability to act with conviction in any kind of setting. I also observed at first hand how to create an effective partnership (without hierarchy) between professional and non-professional performers.” Richard Bliss, performer.

“Cinzia Hardy is one of the most generous, intelligent and capable artists working within this region. I regard her as an equal and a mentor and her experience has untold benefits on my personal development and work.” Jane Arnfield, performer.

“Apart from the dramatic improvement in our Scottish dancing, we gained the experience of repeated performances and the participation in a larger production than we have done before. Knowing when to ‘star’ and when to be silent or to take a minimal role is very important.” Dick Thompson, performer.

“It was the first time I was involved in a promenade performance of scale. It will help me to more deeply consider an audience’s experience of a show in future.” Wayne Summerbell, dancer.

Margy Tasker-Brown, Deputy Head Teacher of the local school felt the benefit for school pupils was immense.

“They learned new ways with words and created their poems for the tree.”
Margy Tasker-Brown, Deputy Head Teacher, Whalton First School and Longhorsley School.

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6.6 Mentoring and partnerships

Mentoring:

The initial proposal for Traces & Graces identified Dr Geraldine Stephenson as a potential mentor for the commission. Geraldine is one of the leading authorities on the historic movement and social dance and is President of the Early Dance Circle. Due to ill health, she was unable to act as mentor for the commission. Instead contact was made with Darren Royston, Artistic Director of NONSUCH History & Dance whose repertoire spans all historical periods from the 12th to the 20th century. Darren provided critical feedback during the development of the commission and attended one of the performances. Cinzia regarded Darren's mentoring as a fantastic opportunity:

"The opportunity to make contact with my Mentor, Darren Royston, has created opportunities for me to make more work directly and has also allowed my November Club colleagues, Maurice O'Connell and Alison Andrews, to experience me being at the helm artistically." Cinzia Hardy, Director and Creative Producer.

Partnerships:

Partnerships were formed with:

- Whalton Village Hall Committee – community workshops and performers
- Whalton First School and Longhorsley School – pupils' workshops and performers
- Woodhorn County Archives – researched history of Whalton Manor House and Gardens, in particular research into Gertrude Jekyll's involvement with the Gardens
- Whalton Manor House – lead contact Penny Norton, present owner – provision of site and performer
- Greater Morpeth Development Trust – Open Heritage Day co-ordination
- Dance City – funding and promotion

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6.7 Funding

Traces & Graces received £7k funding from Trading Places. This commission was particularly successful in raising funds from other sources ie £39,817.

Income	£
European Players	1,000
Trading Places	7,000
Northumberland County Council	1,000
Heritage Lottery Fund	37,817
Total	46,817

“Really impressed with how Cinzia took the little money from us and pulled in other partner funds. Well done in these tough times.” Patrick Kelly, Dance City.

6.8 New work platform – raising the profile of local artists and dance regionally, nationally and internationally

Traces & Graces achieved media coverage as follows:

- Dance City’s website, www.dancecity.co.uk
- News Post – preview
- Heritage magazine – preview
- The Morpeth Herald - preview
- The Journal - review
- The walled garden blog – <http://thewalledgardenblog> – review
- www.whatsonnortheast.com - review

6.9 Establishment of a legacy for dance in the region – creating new partnerships and encouraging future repeat attendance by audiences

Director Cinzia Hardy is interested in developing some of the dance sequences into an indoor dance-theatre performance, and is working with Katie Doherty (music) and Julia Barton (dancers’ costumes) on this. She has secured a one-week residency at Northern Stage and is working with Newcastle College to develop some of the themes within Traces & Graces to establish if the performance could transfer to a stage setting. She has also received several enquiries about restaging the production in other smaller gardens in Northumberland. Plans are being made for a follow on project for Whalton. Mentor Darren Royston and Director Cinzia Hardy are considering working together in the future.

Performer Richard Bliss is hoping to work with one of the dancers on a training project for professional dancers.

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Musical Director and Composer Katie Doherty plans to use the music composed in future recordings and projects.

Patrick Kelly, Dance City, considered that the commission helped to raise the profile of Dance City and dance in the region.

Landscape Architect and Sculptor Julia Barton intends to keep in contact with the dancers and musicians taking part in the commission and hopes to collaborate with them in the future. She also intends to look for further opportunities to work with dancers and choreographers and to explore the potential for exploring costume construction. She is specifically looking to devise an installation to show the costumes off in a way which links them to the dance notation of the period and specific dances they were designed for. This could potentially include an exhibition of the costumes at Dance City. She also intends to collaborate with Musical Director and Composer Katie Doherty in an animation project.

6.10 Contribution to the Trading Places themes – environment, human rights, Olympics, young people, digital, festivals

Traces & Graces responded to the theme of ‘environment’ by using stories and memories of Whalton Manor House and Gardens as the inspiration for the performance piece. The performance enabled audiences to visit a magnificent garden rarely open to the public and explore its history through the medium of dance.

6.11 For the programme as a whole – range of dance genres; geographical spread; gender; ethnicity; age and disability

Artists:

Gender:

64% of artist respondents were female, 36% male.

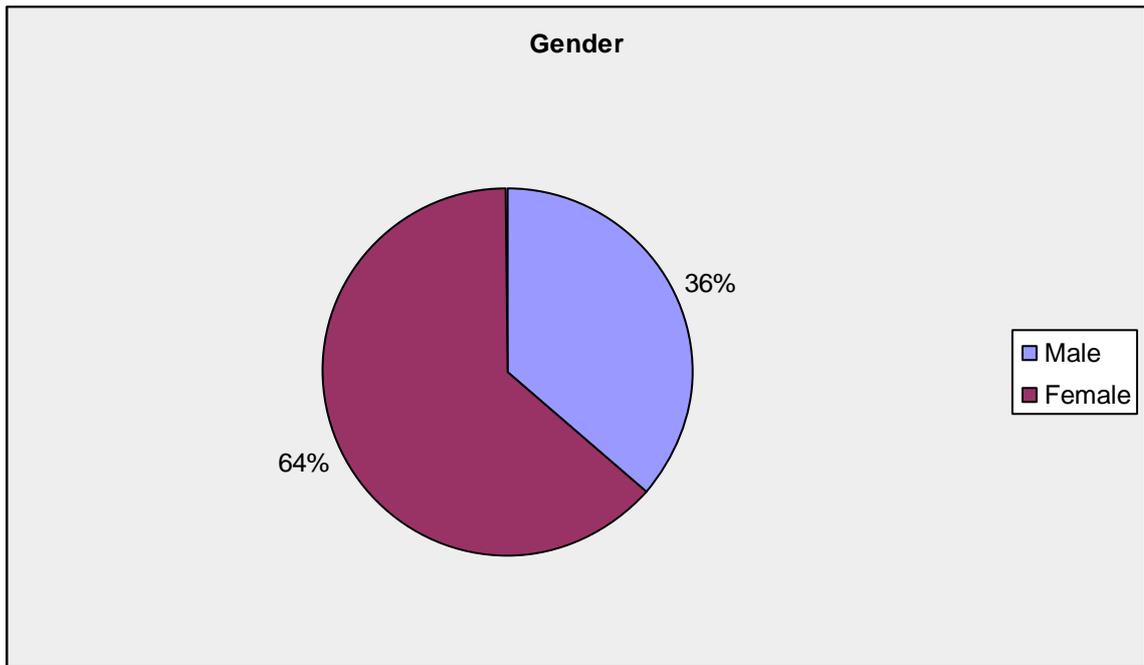
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Base: 11

Ethnicity:

81.8% of artist respondents were White British with the remainder White Irish.

Ethnic group	Response Percent	Response Count
White British	81.8%	9
White Irish	18.2%	2
Other White (please specify below)	0.0%	0
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	0.0%	0
Mixed White and Black African	0.0%	0
Mixed White and Asian	0.0%	0
Other Mixed (please specify below)	0.0%	0
Asian Indian	0.0%	0
Asian Pakistani	0.0%	0
Asian Bangladeshi	0.0%	0
Other Asian (please specify below)	0.0%	0
Black African	0.0%	0
Black Caribbean	0.0%	0
Other Black (please specify below)	0.0%	0
Chinese	0.0%	0
Other ethnic group (please specify below)	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		0
answered question		11

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Age:

Age group	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 16	0.0%	0
Age 16-19	0.0%	0
Age 20-24	0.0%	0
Age 25-34	18.2%	2
Age 35-44	9.1%	1
Age 45-54	45.5%	5
Age 55-64	18.2%	2
Age 65 and over	9.1%	1
answered question		11

Disability:

No artist respondents considered themselves to be disabled (base: 11).

Audience members:

Geographical spread:

The majority of audience respondents originated from Tyne & Wear and Northumberland.

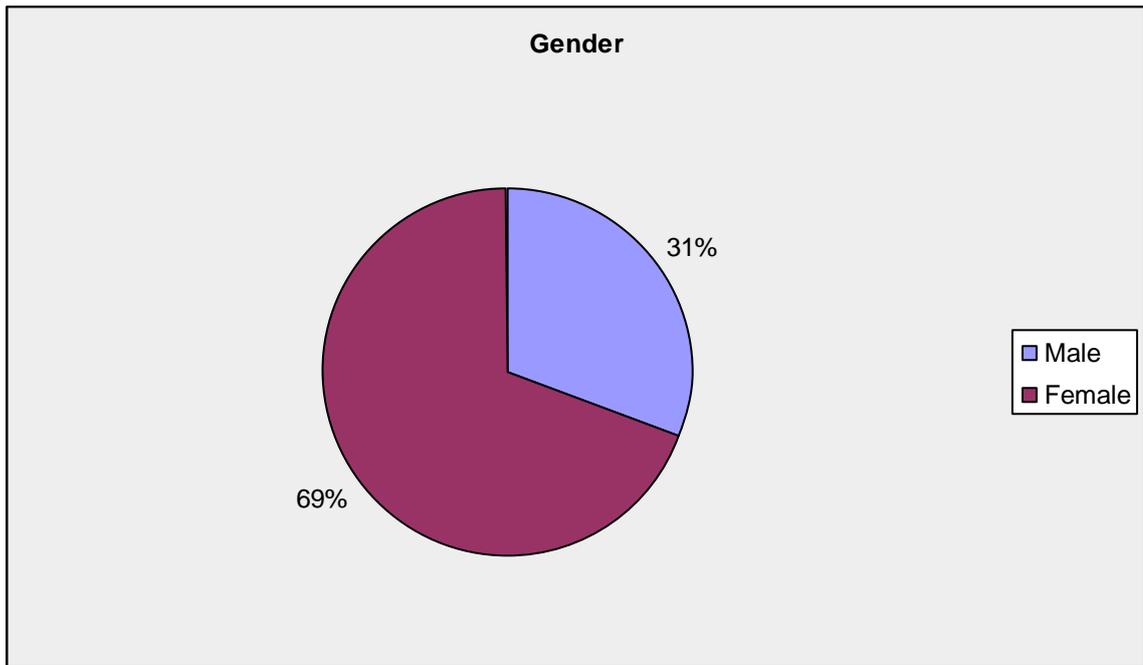
Area	No.
Tyne & Wear	17
Northumberland	14
County Durham	6
Rest of UK	6
Tees Valley	0
Total	39

Gender:

69% of audience respondents were female, 31% male.

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Base: 39

Ethnicity:

89.5% of audience respondents were White British.

Ethnic group	Response Percent	Response Count
White British	89.5%	34
White Irish	5.3%	2
Other White (please specify below)	0.0%	0
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	0.0%	0
Mixed White and Black African	0.0%	0
Mixed White and Asian	2.6%	1
Other Mixed (please specify below)	2.6%	1
Asian Indian	0.0%	0
Asian Pakistani	0.0%	0
Asian Bangladeshi	0.0%	0
Other Asian (please specify below)	0.0%	0
Black African	0.0%	0
Black Caribbean	0.0%	0
Other Black (please specify below)	0.0%	0
Chinese	0.0%	0
Other ethnic group (please specify below)	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)		1
answered question		38

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Age:

The age grouping with the highest number of audience respondents was 45-54 (33.3%).

Age group	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 16	2.6%	1
Age 16-19	7.7%	3
Age 20-24	2.6%	1
Age 25-34	7.7%	3
Age 35-44	20.5%	8
Age 45-54	33.3%	13
Age 55-64	17.9%	7
Age 65 and over	7.7%	3
<i>answered question</i>		39

Disability:

5% of audience respondents considered themselves to be disabled (base: 39).

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10. Conclusion

Six new artworks were created for Trading Places and the programme overall featured some really diverse interpretations of site specific artwork. There was a mix of indoor and outdoor locations, urban and rural venues and one performance took place on a 1940s coach. Three commissions showed really strong exploration of the interrelationship between the artwork and the locations used – Turning on a Sixpence, Traces & Graces and Broken Times.

There were a number of ways in which audiences engaged in dance in a new way including the use of unusual locations, the combination of artforms used, the intimate nature of performances, varying levels dance attendance exhibited by audience members, use of community participants alongside professional artists and interpretation of what ‘dance’ could encompass.

Whilst there was some variation in artistic quality, with the earlier performances suffering from lack of development time, overall the performances were of high artistic quality. Traces & Graces and Broken Times in particular displayed really high artistic quality with well choreographed dance performances which were fully integrated into the performance pieces.

There was a strong element of skills development within the programme for both professional artists and community participants including development of skills integral to their craft as an artist/performer, production skills and softer skills.

Two formal mentoring relationships were established for Traces & Graces and Broken Times. The mentors provided invaluable guidance and this role should be encouraged in future commissioning programmes. Trading Places enabled some really strong partnerships to form, from both within and outside the cultural sector from this region and beyond.

Whilst all commissions received in-kind support, external funding proved difficult to achieve. Only Traces & Graces and Cassop and Coal managed to raise sizeable sums from external funders during the programme. Subsequently Alan Lyddiard was awarded funding from Newcastle City Council to further develop Turning on a Sixpence.

It was disappointing to see a general lack of awareness of the overall Trading Places programme. Individual commissions achieved some media coverage (Traces & Graces, Flagrant Wisdom and Cassop and Coal) but there was clearly a lack of capacity within Dance City to raise the profile of the programme.

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All of the producers are actively involved in continuation of their commissions in a variety of ways and in challenging the notion of the performances being site specific. This includes development of larger projects (Turning on a Sixpence), presenting a commission originally developed for an outdoor location in a traditional theatre (Traces & Graces), exploration of whether the film used in a performance could be screened in a planetarium (Broken Times).

There was a mixture of low, medium and highly engaged dance audiences at the commissions. There was little evidence of cross over of audiences between the commissions except for those who were directly involved in the commissions.

The commissions contributed to the human rights, environment, digital and festivals themes of Trading Places.

There was a wide range of dance genres displayed in the commissions. The performances took place in County Durham, Northumberland and Tyne & Wear. No performances took place in the Tees Valley and there were few audience members from this area. Whilst most artist and performers were from the region, national and international artists also took part. There were higher levels of female artists/performers and audience respondents. The majority of the artist and audience respondents were White British. There was a spread of age ranges of artists and audience respondents amongst the commissions, though specific commissions attracted higher levels of particular age groups eg Broken Times younger, Traces & Graces older, Cassop and Coal mid 30s. There was a small percentage of disabled artists and audience respondents (5%).

The following recommendations include reference to Dance City's role within Trading Places. There was clearly a lack of capacity at Dance City to lead and advocate for the programme, mentor individual producers, carry out marketing and communications and provide production support. Such issues should be addressed in considering future commission programmes.

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11. Recommendations

Issue	Recommendation
Producers liked the simplicity of the application process.	Continue with similar application process in future programmes.
Producers welcomed the pre and final network meetings for peer review and building contacts.	Continue with pre and final network meetings in future programmes.
Earlier commissions suffered from lack of development time with result that initial performances were not fully developed and experienced technical difficulties.	Review timeline of programme – extend development time.
Overuse of certain artists/performers eg Imogen Cloet, Katie Doherty and Jane Arnfield.	Dance City to provide overview role and alert producers where there is duplication of specific artists/performers. Encourage producers to share details of projects through progress/networking meetings and/or project management tools eg basecamp.
Trading Places' marketing materials 'over-promised' dance element within commissions.	Reword marketing materials to refer to dance and creative movement with some guidance on what is meant by 'creative movement'.
<p>Lack of clarity of Dance City's role within programme and its capacity to carry out that role eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership/advocacy • Mentoring • Marketing/communications • Production support <p>During the period in which the Trading Places commissions took place there were senior staff changes at Dance City which meant that capacity to support the project was not as high as originally envisaged.</p>	<p>Arts Council England and new Artistic Director of Dance City to consider Dance City's capacity/ability to carry out the following roles in possible future programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and advocate for the programme • Mentor individual producers/artists • Manage marketing and communications • Provide production support outside Tyne & Wear area
Lack of capacity within smaller producers to undertake producing role.	Review provision of support within programme specifically for producing role – either through supporting trainee producers or producers as part of the programme.
Mentoring welcomed by those	Review provision of support within

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Issue	Recommendation
producers who used mentors.	future programmes specifically for mentoring role.
Lack of sense of annual commissioning programme due to drawn out nature of commissions and lack of media coverage. Time/money spent on producing a piece of high quality print and branding but relatively small audiences, lack of audience cross over between commissions, lack of knowledge by audience members of the whole series of commissions unless 'in the know' ie part of the cultural scene.	Introduce longer development phase and shorter performance phase eg commissions performed at monthly intervals. Dance City to take the lead in establishing the legacy from the Trading Places commissions to counteract the necessarily low audience figures caused by sites used by highlighting other elements of the programmes such as producer and artist development.
In some instances dance seemed to be an 'add on' and not integral to the commissions.	Review awarding criteria and mentoring role provided by Dance City.
Lack of fundraising resource within smaller producers.	Increase availability of funding and/or reduce the number of commissions funded.
Lack of Tees Valley engagement – venue location and audiences.	Review awarding criteria.

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Audiences North East
March 2010

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