

“acta

## East Street Summer Arts Festival



# Bedminster Youth Theatre

## Performance

**Participants** 15

**Audience** 110

**Artists** 6



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**THE LESSER-SPOTTED BIRD OF BEDMINSTER**

A free promenade theatrical performance by  
Bedminster Youth Theatre

Meet outside the Post Office, 157 East Street  
Friday 28th July, 2pm  
Saturday 29th July, 11am and 2pm

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BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

# Bedminster Youth Theatre Performance

We recruited a diverse group of young people aged 10-16 yrs who met weekly to devise and create a promenade performance inspired by East St, called 'The Lesser-Spotted Bird of Bedminster'

The challenges for the project lay in the nature of East St itself, and on a couple of occasions the young people themselves came under some verbal abuse from other young people. We ensured their safety by having a 1-3 adult to young person policy whenever we were in situ. Additionally, due to the building work and the business of the road itself, we encountered difficulty in being heard above the noise. We utilised the spaces and places just off the main road to counter this, and added in some adult voices narrating the show to support the young people.

We delivered three performances, each one gaining in confidence and indeed in audience numbers. The final show reached a capacity of 40 audience members, although many more dipped in and out at various stages of the performance.

The young people loved doing it and we have been able to find separate funding to continue the group, who now meet as 'Griffin' at acta weekly.



*"I liked performing on the street. I made lots of friends with different people. Liked the games, loved the costumes - now I want to go into costume design when I'm older."*

- Bedminster Youth Theatre participant

Audience feedback was very positive, and it was especially positive to be able to engage with the shop owners and workers of East St who were very helpful with spreading the word, and enabling us to use East St as a performance venue.



*"Brilliant! Loved it!"*



# Bedminster Youth Theatre Performance





# East Street People's Gallery

**Participants** 400+

**Artists** 10 (including musicians for the celebration)



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**EAST STREET PEOPLE'S GALLERY**  
Pop in for free creative workshops and get your work on the walls of the East Street People's Gallery

Tuesday to Saturday,  
1st - 12th August from  
10.30am - 1.30pm  
around  
St Catherine's Place  
Join us for a closing  
celebration on the 12th  
August at 12.30pm  
All welcome!

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## East Street People's Gallery

The activity took place in front of the shutter in St Catherine's Precinct. Although dirty, it was deemed the best place to be as we weren't able to use the British Heart Foundation empty space, although we were allowed to use it as storage. In the end, this happened to be the best solution as being right next to the street, in the open air, meant we were able to engage with people walking past.

The level of engagement surprised even ourselves, especially with the range of people who took part from Mothers and toddlers, to older people, professionals and construction workers alike. They all sat round long tables together, chatting and designing jigsaw pieces for the final artwork.

Despite the weather, there was a constant stream of participants taking part in the activity, and there was a huge amount of social engagement with people discussing the changing nature of Bedminster, and also finding out about other activities in the area. It was commented on many times that there wasn't anything like this in Bedminster; activity that was free, open to all ages and providing meaningful engagement. Many people were signposted to acta's own Creative Wellbeing Café and we have seen numbers rise due to that.

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*"It's nice to have free events"*

There were certain challenges, especially with managing the people who were engaging with us who had mental health challenges and/or addiction problems. In future, the risk assessment we undertake will address this issue more robustly. It was very important that we had at least two staff on site at all times for safety concerns.

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*"Great for kids! We enjoyed the face-painting and music"*

On the final day, we had a celebration which brought together many of the participants who had made jigsaw pieces, as well as performances from the Poetry group and live music from local musicians. The final pieces were on display and have subsequently been taken away to be varnished, and then will be shown throughout the community in Bedminster.

The project was so successful that Bedminster BID asked us to replicate the Gallery the weekend after for their Bedminster Art Weekender.





# Poet's Corner

**Participants** 12  
**Audience** 150  
**Artists** 6



**EAST STREET SUMMER ARTS FESTIVAL**

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**BEDMINSTER POETRY LIVE**

Free performances from Bedminster Poetry Group plus special guest poets.  
 Every Wednesday at 1-2pm from 5th July to 9th August outside Miss Millie's, 79 East Street.

Plus:  
 Open mic slots available  
 contact [bertel@acta-bristol.com](mailto:bertel@acta-bristol.com)  
 to get a spot!

Guest poets to be announced!

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## Poet's Corner

We created a new poetry group that met weekly throughout the 12 weeks of the project. The first 6 weeks were dedicated to learning craft and creating material and then the next six weeks ran alongside the performances by professional poets. These included: Edson Burton, Angie Belcher, Beccy Golding, Danny Pandolfi and Bertel Martin.

The participants didn't feel they were ready to perform at the start of the readings on East Street, however as confidence grew, and they also saw the professional poets perform, they did take to the stage for the final two performances including the celebration of the overall Summer Arts Festival which was held on Saturday 12th August.

For the regular weekly performances, we found a space on East St next to Millie's that was set back from the road and had seating, however the noise from East St itself was often difficult to perform over. This is something we hadn't anticipated, so we invested in a small PA system that enhanced the performances as their voices were able to be heard above the bustle of the street itself.

We had difficulty bringing an audience to East St for the performances, however there was a lot of passing attention, with people stopping and listening to parts of the performances rather than staying for the full hour.

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*“It was lovely to hear the poets”*

- Audience member

The success of this part of the project has undoubtedly been the impact the work has had on the participants, many of whom had never written poetry before, and definitely had never performed spoken word to an audience before.

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*“Being a part of this group feels inclusive and has helped to alleviate loneliness, especially as I am single, senior.”*

- Bedminster Poetry Group participant

They are very keen for the group to continue at acta so we are currently facilitating them to meet monthly, unfunded, in our space alongside Bertel Martin, acta Finance and Operations Manager and professional poet and spoken word facilitator.



# Poet's Corner

