

The Irene Taylor Trust

in partnership with

National Youth Theatre

At

HMP YOI Bullwood Hall

‘FAIR’

Final Evaluation Report

“this has been one of the best experiences of my life and to have it happen in this place was amazing, totally amazing..”

YO participant

The Irene Taylor Trust gratefully acknowledges support from The Wates Foundation

April 2006



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Preface

There are few people who would admit to being untouched by music in some way. It has the power to inspire, to express emotion and to motivate. Music, in a number of ways, can serve as a powerful outlet for pent-up emotions, a tool for communication. It can open up a range of therapeutic and life enhancing benefits.

Participating in arts activities can provide prisoners with skills and new experiences. Music is just one art form that offers a powerful means of self-expression. It can work successfully alongside other art forms in the criminal justice system and has the unique ability to bridge gaps between different cultures and ages. Music can provide alternative forms of education and learning to the vast number of people held in UK prisons today for whom conventional methods have seemingly failed. The Irene Taylor Trust ably provides these opportunities and each year positively affects the lives of prisoners.

It is on the premise of life enhancement that this report is based. This summary of a music theatre project that took place 2 years ago at HMP YO1 Bullwood Hall looks at the immediate and longer-term effect of participatory music and other associated art forms on women prisoners and prison communities. It looks at ways in which music can be used to express aspirations for the future as well as reflecting on the past, to communicate ideals to the outside world, as well as within prison communities and to provide a focus for rehabilitation and self-development.

I am indebted to Sara Lee, Kate Lewis, Angus McLewin and the rest of the team of musicians and artists who have allowed me to work with them on the 'Fair' project and join them in subsequent projects. I have learnt a great deal from them all and am in awe of their total commitment and dedication. Without a doubt I believe the work they do is vital and really does positively change the lives of offenders. I aim to ensure that the knowledge I have acquired will be used to inform and enhance my current and future work.ⁱ

Georgie Goddard May 2006

Project partners

The project and researchers would like to thank the following for their support:

The governors and staff of HMP YOI Bullwood Hall and most importantly the women who took part - for their achievements, hard work and enthusiasm.

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The Wates Foundation – Evaluation
PRS Foundation for New Music
Lloyds TSB Foundation
Youth Music Foundation
The Tubney Charitable Trust
The Tudor Trust

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For sharing information on similar projects, for providing a platform for this research and opportunities to share findings with a wider audience:

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Jenny Hughes – Unit for Arts & Offenders Applied Theatre Research
Lucy Perman - Executive Director, Clean Break

Abbreviations :

ACE - Arts Council England
DCMS - Department of Culture Media and Sport
DfES - Department for Education and Skills
DTOs- Juveniles on Detention Training Orders

HMP – Her Majesty’s Prison
HMYOI – Her Majesty’s Young Offenders Institute
ITT – Irene Taylor Trust – Music in Prisons
NYT – National Youth Theatre
NTCACJ - National Training Consortium for Arts in Criminal Justice
OLSU – Offenders Learning and Skills Unit
SEU – Social Exclusion Unit
YJB – Youth Justice Board
YOs – Young Offenders

For the purposes of this report the following definitions apply:

The Arts includes; music, theatre, visual arts, dance, literature, creative writing and composition.

Cross arts refers, in this context, to the application of music with any of the above other art forms.

Young offenders (YOs) are aged between 18 – 21 years.

Juveniles (DTOs) are aged between 14 - 17 years.

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May 2004 an original music theatre production entitled 'Fair' was the result of an intensive period of workshops, rehearsals and a production. Within just three weeks a mixed group of women prisoners and young offenders had signed up for, what was for most, a completely new creative experience. 18 women and young offenders successfully completed an intensive music, drama and dance project, culminating in three performances of an original piece of music theatre. Audience figures exceeded 200, consisting of fellow inmates, family members, prison staff, friends and supporters of ITT and NYT, members of the judiciary and local dignitaries.

The immediate effects of the project and the results of evaluation and tracking over a 24-month period are summarised in this report. The task is by no means complete. Instead the evaluation process may be viewed as a springboard for sharing the successful outcomes of many more music and combined art form projects in UK prisons. The short-term effects are demonstrated through the voices of participants, project workers and audiences. The emerging models are flexible and kaleidoscopic and are a simple way to depict and describe changes in attitudes and turning points. These too are experimental and open to change. The initial project lasted 3 weeks - the positive effects, the lessons learnt, the unlocking of creative potential - hopefully far longer.

1.1 Key findings - the wider impact of 'Fair'

- The project and the work of ITT has attracted interest from groups within the Criminal Justice arena and other arts organisations.
- The findings of 'Fair' have been discussed at forums and conferences that support this sector.
- A handbook of courses for offenders and ex-offenders has been produced by ITT that will serve as a tool kit for signposting young people towards arts organisations on release.
- The project formed the primary research for an MA Thesis by ITT researcher Georgie Goddard at University of Sussex.ⁱⁱ
- BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour programme generated national interest.
- Arts Professional published an article 'The impact of Arts on Offenders' issue no.89 17th January 2005 which has subsequently attracted much attention.
- The International Festival of Music Theatre expressed an interest in reproducing the show as part of its future programme of events.
- The evidence amassed to date points overwhelmingly to the fact that in introducing inmates to new opportunities there is a demonstrable need to provide an on-going programme of activities at Bullwood Hall in order to capitalize on these new-found skills and personal confidence.
- ITT has been invited to regular meetings at HMP YOIs Holloway and Bullwood Hall and in June 2006 will be running projects specifically deigned for self-harmers. (see appendix)
- 'Time Well Spent - Lessons learnt from the Irene Taylor Trust Music in Prisons' evaluations of music programmes in prisons.' Compiled by Angus McLewin Associates in collaboration with ITT.ⁱⁱⁱ
- One of the participants of 'Fair', due to be released April 2006 has been awarded a place on 'First Stage' run by Clean Break Theatre Company.^{iv}

1.2 Research

The Research was based on a Grounded Theory approach, providing the researchers with the opportunity to immerse themselves within the intervention and to engage with everyone taking part in the project. This approach was felt to be highly relevant to research of this nature, lacking pre-conceived ideas and based on: *“a concerted effort to analyse the data and to generate theories from the data”*. (Denscombe M 2003)

During the course of the project the researchers' evaluative approach was *‘largely based either on direct observation in the session or reflective interviews.’* (Hirst E & Robertshaw D 2003) The researchers used five key methods to gather and analyse information:

- Observation
- Questionnaires
- Focus Groups
- Interviews
- Diaries

The hands-on approach to the research unearthed hitherto ‘taboo’ aspects of prison life, for example although we generally understand that self-harming is an inherent and all too common part of prison life it is one seldom discussed. As a result of the 3-week project and by working alongside the women, the participants and other prisoners felt able to share their thoughts with the researchers- a testimony to the power of working together as a team and sharing ideas and values.

1.3 Objectives

ITT believes that women in prison are under-represented in prison statistics and they hope that this project and others like it will add to the body of evidence to support women held in UK jails; to provide appropriate education and training during their custodial sentences and thereby better opportunities for them on release.

There are currently 4,370 women in UK prisons (07/04/06). According to *Women In Prison*^v:

- 70% of women prisoners have mental health problems.
- 37% have attempted suicide.
- 27 killed themselves in prison in 2003/4.
- 20% have been in care as a child compared to 2% of the general population.
- At least 50% report being victims of childhood abuse or domestic violence.
- Nearly 40% lose their homes as a result of imprisonment.
- 65% re-offend on release according to Home Office figures released in December 2005.
- The most common offences for which women are imprisoned are theft and handling stolen goods.
- The women's prison population went up by 173% in the decade to 2004.

(Information from www.womeninprison.org.uk 14.04.06)

1.4 Recommendations

New models of evaluating the effect of the arts are beginning to emerge, influenced by observation and anecdotal evidence as much as by hard measures and formulaic ground rules. For example, using some aspects of the engagement matrix (Dart 2003)^{vi} ITT intend to develop a similar tool for use in future music interventions in criminal justice settings.

ITT is now building evaluation models with their existing and newfound partners; models which are primarily relevant to measuring the positive aspects of arts intervention based on:

- Previous artistic experience
- Expectations
- Ability to communicate
- Increased confidence and self-esteem
- Education targets
- Language
- Future aspirations

The less tangible and often taboo aspects of prison life, including mental health and self-harming issues can then, if relevant, be discussed once a good rapport is established - led by the participants rather than the researchers.

As researchers we believe evaluations based on prison statistics and scientific yardsticks are of limited value and should be used with caution and within a more holistic context. Prison statistics rely on complete cooperation between parties and, in this instance proved virtually impossible to achieve.

1.5 Conclusion

The 'Fair' project was intended to be inclusive – open to as many women as possible. Invariably though, when working in prisons and YOIs, a variety of 'in-house' commitments make it impossible to be totally inclusive. Such was the case here. It was suggested that more in-depth discussion in the planning stage might have avoided excluding prospective participants and would in the future help the artistic team to plan together and thus include all those wishing to take part.

However, a post- project focus group with the participants undertaken by the researchers demonstrated the following outcomes one week after the last performance:

- **100%** of participants said they had learnt a new skill.
- **100%** felt they had made new friends.
- **100%** said they would like to participate in future artistic opportunities.
- For **11** of the women this was their first performance experience.
- **2** participants welcomed friends and families to a performance.
- All participants were given certificates from ITT and NYT (plus copies sent to family.)^{vii}
- All participants were given a CD and DVD as a reminder of the project.
- **9** completed diaries earned participants accreditations in Exploring Performance Level 1.

In addition, for many of the inmates this was a unique opportunity to work with not only mixed offender categories but across an age range of 17 to 48 years.

It is clear that there are numerous positive effects of this arts intervention. But of what use is a longitudinal project? Two years has provided opportunities to keep in touch with both the prison community and with some of the participants. It has instigated new projects, new partnerships and has allowed a sufficient time-lapse to respond to the positive outcomes and influence future projects.

2 INTRODUCTION

The Irene Taylor Trust (ITT) believes that one of the key issues for the arts in criminal justice work is to address and, where possible, provide demonstrable results in terms of prevention and re-offending. It is the aim of ITT that:

- Prisoners are offered meaningful routes into learning.
- Offending behaviour is challenged.
- Participants leave prison with new skills and positive experiences.
- Participants develop a sense of pride in being involved in meaningful activities.
- The projects serve as an outlet for creativity and positive personal development.
- The skills and experiences developed through participation assist in lessening re-offending upon release and facilitate the route to meaningful lifestyles.

ITT actively supports prison education departments to meet their key performance targets and consistently strives to devise high quality artistic activity for inmates. To this end, it is the aim of ITT that prisoners leave prison with more than the stigma of having been there.

ITT places enormous value on positive relationships with funders and over the past 10 years has been fortunate enough to receive ongoing support from a number of funding bodies. Working closely with funders to plan programmes of work allows ITT to gain from the funding partners' broader experience and awareness whilst giving funders an important insight into the mechanics of running projects. It also allows ITT to ensure that both its goals and the goals of their funders are achieved synonymously.

With support from the Wates Foundation ITT was commissioned to evaluate the effects of the arts through robust longitudinal research, based on clearly laid out objectives, which took as its focal point a long-term project with young women at HMP YOI Bullwood Hall.

Since 'Fair' ITT has worked in a number of other prisons. The project in HMP YOI Holloway from 15th –22nd June 2005, working with a mixed group of female prisoners and women on remand most closely emulated the 'Fair' project:

"I was so impressed with their dedication, professionalism, and the positive impact it made on the women that I invited them into HMP Holloway to continue their great work. Their work promotes teamwork, helps the women develop relationships, and lets the women understand about commitment, whilst raising their self-esteem. What also impressed me was their willingness to work with some of our more difficult, damaged, and vulnerable women, who have on occasions been excluded in the past."

Tony Hassall, Governor HMP YOI Holloway October 2005

This therefore is a candid account of the project and the effect on its participants, spanning a two-year period. We hope it can be shared with all those involved, including ITT's new partners. We hope that prison education staff will use it as evidence that art in prisons is not a luxury but a necessity. We also hope that it will act as a reminder for prison staff that arts interventions are an effective way of learning new skills and gaining confidence, reflecting on the past whilst looking more positively to the future, altering attitudes and ultimately – ostensibly - tackling crime at a grassroots level.

ITT believes that the research needs to be ongoing to continue to amass results and useful information. This report reflects on the value and long-term effects of a music and drama project at HMP YOI Bullwood Hall and celebrates the end of a research project funded by the Wates Foundation. The initial project lasted 3 weeks - the positive effects, the lessons learnt, the unlocking of creative potential and ways of evaluating the positive side - hopefully far longer.

2.1 Rationale

“We walk back on the unit singing songs – it is very unusual to hear singing on Life unit. Being on the Life unit the project provided an unusual relief to prison life where self-esteem and self-confidence is generally very low. Some time ago I lost all my confidence and self esteem and never imagined singing again and doing what I am doing now.”

(see case study 4)

It is becoming widely acknowledged that the arts can play a vital role within the criminal justice system – a role which, by engaging people in creative activities, can offer meaningful routes into education and learning, team-working, skill building and, ultimately, in preventing re-offending. The Youth Justice Board (YJB) works in partnership with a number of bodies including Arts Council England (ACE) and smaller arts providers to use the arts as a tool for rehabilitation and crime prevention. The first national conference ‘Including the Arts-preventing Youth Offending’ offers a clear indication that the arts can play a vital role in Young Offenders Institutes and in the community.

“Finding new ways of motivating young people to learn, using a range of exciting and practical activity, including the arts, as a way of capturing the interest of young offenders and making them see the value of learning as a bridge to achieving their ambitions”.

Lord Norman Warner, Chair YJB (Randell. N 2002)

The aim of both the artistic intervention and the research for ‘Fair’ was to gain a greater understanding of the role of music and associated art forms in the rehabilitation of offenders and in particular with women, who are under-represented in Prison Service findings on resettlement and re-offending. The platform of intensive music/theatre workshops and performances over a three-week period was used to assess the impact on the attitudes and behaviour of the participants and on the wider prison community.

Partnership working is a key element of successful arts projects within the criminal justice arena. The music theatre intervention took place two years after the YJB conference and demonstrates successful partnerships on a number of different levels. Whilst firmly upholding the principals of the YJB it was able to further develop the principles of successful partnership by promoting the benefits of mixed categories of offenders in one project – from young women on Detention Training Orders (DTOs) Young Offenders (YOs) and adult prisoners.^{viii} This added a new dimension to the research.

2.2 The impact of art on offenders

Engaging prisoners in high quality, innovative arts activities is always going to be exciting, productive and hopefully a rewarding experience for inmates, prison staff and artists alike. But how can long-term effects of these types of projects really be measured? How can organisations like ITT and the many organisations working in criminal justice settings today demonstrate that, apart from the immediate impact of producing quality work of artistic merit, the arts can and do?:

- Provide meaningful routes into learning.
- Challenge offending behaviour.
- Help participants to leave prison with more than the stigma of having been there.

The questions burn as the Prison Service currently strains to incorporate the arts alongside basic key skills provision without running the risk of a public backlash if taxpayer’s money is seen to be being used to support so-called ‘soft options’.

Pivotal to the research was that ITT's formerly more flexible approach to measuring outcomes should aim to tie in with developments in applying more robust research methodologies as pioneered by the fledgling REACTT. ^{ix}

By working in tandem with REACTT, ITT aimed to ensure a clear understanding of the expected outcomes between all parties including the project participants, prison governors, education staff, officers and artists from ITT and the NYT. Broadly, these anticipated outcomes were:

- To help a group of mixed aged women prisoners cope positively with their period of confinement through learning new skills and by providing a range of creative experiences.
- To help prepare the women for resettlement in society.
- To produce a quality production to benefit the prison, inmates' families and other community groups.

But, however committed a host prison is to building the arts into their educational remit, researchers are bound to be caught up in a range of conflicts of interest. Prisons do not naturally lend themselves to creativity - anything can and does happen within them - and creative researchers soon learn to use tact and a wholly pragmatic approach to make full use of their presence. For the 'Fair' project a grounded theory strategy therefore proved to be the most relevant approach, allowing researchers to embed themselves within the creative process and utilize their own learning to record and demonstrate results as they arose.

Conducting longitudinal research proved to be both beneficial and frustrating. The good rapport developed between the participants, the prison and researchers, coupled with some positive and unexpected outcomes of the project, has facilitated a correspondence with some of the participants keen to build on their artistic skills and newfound confidence.

'Fair' has thrown up a number of unexpected outcomes and new avenues to explore. And yet, 23 months post project ITT are still waiting for the much needed prison statistics and prison information believed so vital to the research. These challenges demonstrate that new models of research are needed which can be effective without an over-reliance on prison statistics. The lessons learnt to date are being shared with partner organisations carrying out similar works and with similar objectives, to inform the development of future research.

Whilst embarking on this period of research other outcomes have also been uncovered. Amidst the questionnaires, project diaries, video diaries and interviews a more private and poignant avenue was disclosed, at once testimony to the benefits of an arts organisation immersing itself in the research process.

Whereas robust methods, such as control groups, 'number-crunching' and psychometric testing became a barrier to the research process, post-project focus groups with project participants revealed that throughout the project period there had been a distinct reduction in cases of self-harming. All who contributed to this spontaneous strand of discussion felt that this behavioural shift was directly attributed to their participation in the project.

2.3 Artists

2.3.1 The Irene Taylor Trust 'Music in Prisons' (ITT)

The Irene Taylor Trust 'Music in Prisons' (ITT) is renowned for providing unique opportunities for adult prisoners and young people in custody throughout the UK. It was founded in 1995 and has run over 80 projects in prisons and young offender institutions across the UK, ranging from one to three week intensive projects to long-term projects of up to 3 months. ITT has devised several highly acclaimed pieces of original music theatre in

conjunction with project participants. Project leaders working with prisoner groups assist participants in devising, rehearsing, recording and performing new music.

2005 marked a decade since ITT was first set up to carry out high quality music based projects as well as to raise the profile of music in prisons as part of existing education and rehabilitation programmes. Over 80 projects later and ITT has worked directly with hundreds of prisoners and has built up a beguiling archive of award winning publications, CDs, original music theatre scores and project evaluations that all underline the fact that talent is rife in prisons today. This artistic evolution can often only be unleashed as a result of professional artistic interventions that are able to surmount the hurdles of working in distinctively non-arts settings.

ITT works to encourage and establish the use of music as a tool in the rehabilitation, education and therapeutic process of individuals held in UK prisons. ITT strives to devise high quality artistic activity for inmates and working in partnership with prison staff actively helps prison education departments to meet key performance targets.

Their projects are tailored to the needs of individual inmates and the requirements of the wider prison community. They aim to be of benefit to the participating groups, and also to non-participants as audiences, during time spent in custodial care. In the longer term it is hoped that the projects will form a valuable role in the rehabilitation process. 2004 saw the development of partnerships and collaborative working with a number of organisations including the NYT, the newly formed Think Tank REACTT, Arts Council Wales and Aldeburgh Productions.

2.3.2 The National Youth Theatre of Great Britain (NYT)

NYT provides opportunities for young people - aged 13 to 21 - to develop creative and social skills through theatre and drama. Their training ranges from acting, devising and directing to scenery building, lighting and sound, and stage management - all the disciplines associated with the performing arts.

Their extensive programmes for young offenders are therefore based on providing opportunities for participation and creativity using drama skills and techniques of role - play, group improvisation and performance, devising scenes and plays from experiences, stories, issues, concerns and fears which the participants bring to the workshop from their own lives.

Inmates are expected to take on responsibility for the structure, content and direction of the resulting work. Theatre workshop directors and company members receive regular training and refresher sessions looking at the particular skills and qualities beneficial to working with young people in custody

2.3.3 HMP YOI Bullwood Hall

HMP YOI Bullwood Hall is a female Young Offender and Juvenile prison. Originally built as a Borstal in 1963, it is situated on the outskirts of Rayleigh, a town near Southend in Essex.

The prison governor invited ITT to return to the establishment to devise a music theatre project which would involve a larger number of women.

HMP YOI Bullwood Hall were cited as a suitable working partner because of the prison's high regard for the role of the arts. The inclusion of the arts in its ongoing educational programmes receives maximum support and encouragement from the regime. The Governor and staff also believe that access to independent organisations should be given wherever possible. ITT has previously run two successful projects at the Prison – working in partnership with the Education Department - delivering music-making workshops, recording opportunities and innovative performances, which included families, friends and other inmates. ITT and Bullwood Hall look forward to building on this good working relationship.

At the start of this project the regime at HMP YOI Bullwood Hall included full and part time education classes and evening classes, workshops, training courses, farms and gardens, and a works department. Running concurrently with educational courses were various types of offending behaviour groups e.g. drug importers' group. Other special features available include fashion and hairdressing courses, and the support unit which has been set up on E Wing to help those who have difficulty in coming to terms with prison life (information taken from the HM Prisons Website). The project is part of an ongoing relationship with ITT and other arts organisations currently working with inmates at Bullwood Hall.

In May 2004 the prison housed 175 inmates:

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Adults serving life sentence | 30 |
| Young Offenders | 105 |
| Juveniles (DTO) | 40 |

2.3.4 The Prison Education Department

The work of the Education Department at Bullwood Hall is based on rehabilitation and resettlement. Their work for Juveniles, Young Offenders and adult inmates is designed to teach skills and to provide experiences which will support resettlement:

“To help the women to prepare for their return to the community through personal development, strengthening family ties, and acquisition of qualifications that will help them to get a job and to develop interests that will encourage the women to spend their leisure time constructively upon release.”

(Sue Saxton -Head of Learning and Skills at Bullwood Hall)

The education staff at Bullwood Hall believe that creative activities can contribute to all of those aims *“and is not a soft option!”* They reinforce those positive aspects to participating in the arts that assist in the development of concrete skills. These include:

- Learning to work together.
- Problem solving.
- Decision-making.
- Acquiring self-discipline.
- Commitment to tasks.

Alongside the social impact of the project, it was also anticipated that it would help to meet Key Educational Targets and Educational Accreditation and help to address communication skills, group and team work, decision making, problem solving, and key skills in writing - via diaries. Other areas in which it was hoped it would add to existing education and accreditation of inmates was through theatre management, food technology, costume design and hair dressing and make-up, all of which currently exist as accreditable subjects within the prison.

2.3.5 Artistic activity at HMP YOI Bullwood Hall

Outside arts organisations that visit Bullwood Hall include:

- Irene Taylor Trust ‘Music in Prisons’
- Dance United
- Comedy School
- Writers in Prison Network

The staff and Governor of HMP YOI Bullwood Hall welcome visitors to the prison and to attend performances, believing this allows prisoners and prison staff the chance to be seen in a more positive light.

The Governor encouraged prison staff to attend performances as it was felt that this had a significant impact on staff/prisoner and prisoner/staff relationships. However, the Governor has since moved to HMP YOI Holloway where the invitation to enhance a programme of artistic activity has been extended to ITT.

2.3.6 Prison rationale

The prison governor Tony Hassall invited ITT to return to Bullwood Hall to devise a 3 week long music theatre project which would involve a larger number of women, giving both ITT and the prison an excellent opportunity to undertake an in-depth evaluation of the work itself, the longer term effects it has on the women taking part and the prison community as a whole. It was intended as a celebration of the success of ITT's partnership with the prison and to provide a large group of women with a positive and creative outlet for their ideas.

"I want something that is going to complement the core curriculum that we do daily and can deliver very well ourselves. These complementary skills are what I call the 'soft skills' and include interpersonal skills like having an understanding of what it is like to be an active member of society and the confidence to help the women to develop on a personal level. For the young person, this is an opportunity to experiment and be safe in the learning environment and experience herself in a way that she might not had a chance to try before. Exactly what a teenager's life is about - experimentation and finding an identity. We encourage that they go in and try to learn from the experience and hope that they might possibly come out of it a better person at the end."

Tony Hassall, Governor of Bullwood Hall

Tony Hassall believes that participating in arts projects provides team working skills, self-discipline, motivation, commitment and a range of practical skills. He strongly upholds the belief that arts interventions can change attitudes to re-offending by:

- Making prisoners more aware of their own abilities.
- Offering participants a deeper insight into their creative skills; thereby allowing self-expression in a positive way.
- Additionally, he encourages creative projects as alternative routes to literacy, numeracy and opportunities to access education to provide work skills.

As with all their work with offenders ITT respect confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Therefore all participants were asked to give informed signed consent for participation in the project and to sign disclaimers to allow researchers access to their prison records (and to be interviewed by a BBC Radio 4 reporter from Woman's Hour).

The women understood that they could withdraw from the project at any time. Transcribed data would be anonymous and all information of a personal nature would be kept within the prison. Participants would be given a code and identified by first name only, and a summary of the research would be sent to Prison Project Team.

3 RESEARCH

This section looks at:

- The methodologies used; those which were felt to be most appropriate and those which were inappropriate (and reasons why they were difficult to implement.)
- Creating new models of change for future studies.

The findings from the first phase of the longitudinal research for 'Fair' uses the following research evidence:

- Comments and anecdotal evidence.
- Questionnaires from participants, control groups, prison staff and audiences.
- Diary notes from participants, the project team and the researchers.

The table below summarises this evaluation approach.

| Approach | Area of focus | Methods of measuring outcome |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| 1) Practice | Creating a musical through: workshops, performances, making a DVD and CD and post project opportunities. | Engaging with and recording feedback from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participants. ✓ Non-participants. ✓ Prison staff. ✓ Families. ✓ The local community. ✓ Other arts organisations. ✓ The media. |
| 2) Engagement | How the participants and prison community responded to the intervention. | Using questionnaires, observation, informal conversations & focus groups for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participants. ✓ Project workers. ✓ Prison staff. |
| 3) Achievement | Skills & positive achievements of participants. Reduction in recidivism. Avoiding self-harming. Working with all ages and categories on a project. Continuing with artistic activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Accreditation, educational attainment. ✓ Successfully working with mixed age/categories of offenders. ✓ Identifying new areas of concern (e.g. self-harming) as premise for future arts interventions. ✓ Less prisoners on 20:52. ✓ Forming new partnerships within and outside prison, sharing outcomes via media, reports, publications. ✓ Outcomes measured through tracking over 12-month period. |
| 4) Changes | Perceived behavioural and attitude change within prison community and with individual inmates. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Diary notes. ✓ Observation and anecdotal evidence. ✓ Reports and comments from education staff, project workers and relations. |
| 5) Values | The holistic role of the arts in prisons both short and long term. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tracking –forming long-term relationship with inmates and prison community. ✓ Measuring levels of uptake of arts activities within Bullwood Hall, other establishments (for long-term prisoners) and with outside organisations for those released into community. ✓ Designing new ways to measure effects. |

During the preliminary research stage ways in which the project could be shared “as a way of reflecting and learning from experience” (Moriarty 2002) were discussed. The research thus became an integral part of the project. We aimed to include the inmates and staff in the evaluation process, which necessitated forming good working relationship within the community from the outset, and enabling the sharing of information, through informal discussions, focus groups and diary notes. Where there were language barriers and literacy problems we encouraged older participants to assist with diary writing, discussions and in working alongside younger participants.

As researchers we believed that developing good relationships with inmates, staff and the artistic team was key to the research. It provided a means of reflecting on the issues and challenges that arose from the research and adapting the methodologies on a day-by-day basis within the boundaries laid out in the preliminary stage. This personal approach enabled the researchers to acquire a variety of information, both qualitative and quantitative. Where permission to look in prison records was not granted it allowed for personal information to be given verbally and thus researchers had the chance to explain the nature of the research and the value of its longitudinal element for informing future projects and devising new research models. For individual inmates who expressed an interest in further developing their skills it will provide an open door for future artistic activities both in custodial care and on release.

3.1 Research challenges

The original plan, to work with REACTT and conduct quantitative, scientifically based tests, was carefully considered. Members of REACTT benefited from visiting the ‘Fair’ project, discussing aims and objectives with Bullwood Hall’s personnel, and comparing this intervention to others within similar establishments. REACTT’s feasibility study on the impact of arts in criminal justice settings^x is on-going and ITT looks forward to the publication of its 5-year study in 2008. The researchers are in no doubt that their current findings have influenced REACTT ideology with respect to the use and value of a social scientific approach to evaluation.

Meanwhile there have been opportunities to collaborate with dynamic partner organisations and individuals at conferences and forums and through publications (Hirst E and Robertshaw 2003) and multi-media presentations (Dance United, Koestler Trust). These partners share the frustrations of working within, and experiencing (James E 2003)^{xi} the constraints of, the criminal justice system. They appear unanimous in their collective aims – using a variety of art forms to create opportunities to prisoners and young offenders to positively affect both short and long -term influences on patterns of behaviour, learning and recidivism.

That there is a possibility that this project, and others like it, has the ability to impinge on mental health issues leads the research into more hard-hitting territory, which must and needs to be taken up further by the Prison Service. For therein may lie the key to perhaps a more base argument for the arts, one that answers the inexorable aforementioned question ‘at what cost to the tax payer?’^{xii} If the financial costs of caring for the increasing number of prisoners who are harming, who are at risk of harming or attempting suicide in Britain’s jails today were dramatically slashed and could be balanced against the costs of making adequate provision for long term arts interventions, then surely the benefits to the individual and to society would be considerable.

As many arts organisations working in criminal justice setting today may testify, it is never quite enough in itself that, beyond the recording of numbers acquiring arts qualifications and key skills accreditation, beyond the existing amassed evidence which demonstrates that artistic involvement supports personal growth, team work, boosts to morale, or points to a reduction in re-offending rates, this type of research is still unable to trigger long-term public support.

3.2 An emerging research model

The research process for 'Fair' provided the researchers with a developing model for plotting the process and progress of this and similar projects. It is intended as a way of defining the stages during the arts intervention, and as a way of setting down markers for the research. This model is based on 4 stages:

1. **Background:** The initial focus of the project; gauging the interest of the participants and looking at how barriers to engaging could be addressed. This phase is likely to occur during a 'taster' session and during the early stages of the project; the time for researchers to be available to talk to participants, to hand out diaries and explanatory letters (on the nature of the research) and questionnaires.
2. **Curiosity:** Observing the initial reactions of the participants and prison staff. This is often seen as a critical time for artists and researchers – the first step; a time when participant hesitance and initial reluctance can turn into early signs of engagement – or when participants decide to opt out. For those that wish to continue it is a time when researchers can begin to build a rapport with the participants and the prison staff. This is sometimes the time when the prison community becomes actively aware of the project and the potential effect on the participants.
3. **Involvement:** Observing the participants' immersion in the project. The learning of skills - artistic, educational and social; forming relationships with artists, prison staff and with fellow participants and working as a team. This is the time for researchers to capture the initial changes in attitude and for them to become more involved in the process.
4. **Acceptance:** This phase might be seen as the counterbalance to Phase 2. A time when participants become fully absorbed in the project, a chance to reflect on the challenges, the issues and emerging outcomes. At this point it should be easier for researchers to communicate with participants and to gather information.

Cycle of engagement:¹



¹ Cycle of Engagement model inspired by Hirst E and Robershaw D (2003) Breaking The Cycle of Failure

4 'FAIR' IN ACTION

"It involves a caller – like the mysterious child catcher in Chitty-chitty Bang-bang -'lose yourselves, find yourselves' - it is about relationships and about helping the parts come alive... there's an air of excitement - a form of escapism and a lot more..."

Robert Chevara, Artistic Director

4.1 Background

Taster Day - In April 2006 a group of 39 women responded to an advert placed around the prison, informing them of a music theatre project. Two groups of women came together to a workshop designed jointly by ITT and NYT.

PREPARATION DAY – *Because of the initial interest in the project the prison split the participants into 2 groups of 18, the idea being that the project team ran a 'taster' session lasting an hour and a half for each group to introduce them to all the dramatic and musical elements of the project.*

Group 1 - a fantastic mix of young offenders and lifers. Everyone was up for the dramatic improvisation exercises and for vocal improvisation and composition.

Group 2 – a really tough mix of young offenders and detention training order girls. It quickly became apparent that they are 'conditioned' and told they shouldn't mix with each other so we encountered a huge amount of resistance as 2 distinct groups emerged. The project team wanted to mix the groups mainly to see what individuals' strengths were and also to see how people functioned without the safety of always being with their mates. We got there eventually but it was really tough going. The group was more distant, antagonistic and there was clear evidence of in fighting.

Post session, there was some incredibly positive feedback from staff who had been involved in the session – their opinion was that the girls were buzzing and really looking forward to the start of the project and all it had to offer them.

Sara's Diary Thursday 22nd April

"The first thing we did was split into 2 groups. I didn't like the warm ups at all- I thought they were stupid"

YO Participant

Under the direction of project director Robert Chevara they undertook a range of drama and rhythm based exercises. Teamwork, creativity and imagination were the main themes.

The first group was a mix of young offenders and adults (all serving life sentences) who responded well to the demands of the session. The second comprising YOs and DTOs were, in comparison, challenging and demanding on the team. By the end there was very positive feedback:

"The girls were buzzing and really looking forward to the start of the project and all it had to offer them."

Prison security staff

At the end of the sessions diaries and questionnaires were handed out by the research team to all who expressed an interest. The diaries formed an important part of the research and were used by the prison education department for assessing and accrediting their work.

4.2 Curiosity

***"Monday pm fun" Divided into smaller groups - Of twos and threes or fours;
Acting out domestic scenes, Some people are such bores.***

***The fairground is a magic place- For having lots of fun;
Waltzes ghost train, fun-filled stalls - A future foretold when nobody won.***

***The wheel of life encircles us- Jump on and take a ride;
With tarot cards and crystal ball - Will luck be on our side?"***

Adult G Wing

21 of the 39 women turned up for the start of the project, which ran from 26th April – 14th May 2004. Of these, 19 stayed for the duration.

My god, the resistance!! Many of the girls we had met the previous week were not there, maybe because they had commitments in other areas of the prison, maybe because they decided it wasn't for them. We never really found out. There were 23 girls in all plus a couple of people who had not been able to make the taster day.

There were so many people it was difficult to learn their names so the interacting was initially a bit difficult. So was trying to work out who was there and who wasn't. In the afternoon the girls from the kitchen arrived (they were allowed only limited access to the project due to work commitments) plus a few we had originally met on the taster day afternoon. These girls were great though they quickly got annoyed with the small percentage that weren't concentrating at all.

"I can't do it and I won't do it 'cos it's shit"

The session was a struggle for the project team and also for some of the girls too, mainly those that wanted to throw themselves into it and who couldn't quite understand that some of the others were not yet at that stage. The factions were still there and showing a real unwillingness to mix, though saying this it was a distinct improvement on the taster day.

J is a delight! It was her first day and she offered to sing by herself and quite obviously gave the others a wake up call, as they had been quite unwilling to do anything at all up until then. Some good strong acting was emerging but unfortunately during one of the small performances, one group was booed loudly by the other. It was good-natured but it deflated confidence and several girls sat out by the wall and wouldn't take part in anything for the rest of the morning.

The team noticed that the stronger girls were not always using their strength in good ways, often using it to sap rather than lead.

They want to do everything now now NOW! Everyone knows it can take ages to write songs but they want it NOW. And they want it done for them. When they say, "we want rap and R&B" we help them but they won't sing. Hopefully that will change. Maybe it's nerves; maybe they just can't do it?

One girl said, "you lot should read what's on the posters!" (Re. acting, singing, dancing). The team couldn't possibly combine all the different disciplines at this early stage but they obviously wanted to! They clearly need to know exactly what they are doing as possibly all this new stuff is scary for them.

We can get no eye contact with some of them which is fine because we know we'll get there. Others are up for asking questions all the time. Constant extremes!

It was a long day with no refreshments which we must sort out as it's a priority of theirs! There are real bursts of energy then complete silence. We have to drag them back and then you realise just how exhausting it all is.

It seems that we will have a completely new musical score by the end of the project as many of the girls were very dismissive of something we tried to teach them. Not all of them by any means but enough for it to be distracting for us and the rest who wanted to try it out. Perhaps they just don't understand it? Musical warm ups are so necessary but to get them to do anything is difficult if they are not 'in the mood'.

The staff that had been seconded to us for the project were very supportive of the work and the project team, and it was clear they would always be there to help if necessary.

Some of the girls were not always willing to let us into their groups, they were distantly polite when absolutely necessary but not warm towards us. It's amazing how you have to work so hard on all levels, i.e. the music/theatre and the personal. You constantly have to drag them back from their apathy.

Encouraging people to think for themselves in this situation is not always easy. Their routine is so fixed and in the main they are told what to do and when to do it. Giving them choice is not always a good thing for them and they don't always know how to deal with it. Whether it's a lack of practice or just laziness is the difficult thing to fathom out.

Sara's Diary Monday 26th April

4.3 Involvement

The project was based on a musical - theatre production originally developed by women at HMP Askham Grange in 2000 entitled 'Fair's Fair'. However, it soon became clear that the original production was not going to be reprised, as the participants were adamant that they told their own story within the given theme.

"Today there was certainly a whiff in the air of what it could be and how good it could be..."

Sara's Diary Wednesday 5th May

It was intended that, using a co-educational approach i.e. prisoners of mixed age and ability, adults, YOs and DTOs would take the piece and develop it thematically and musically.

"Well – I didn't want to join this drama thing. I thought it was going to be quite crap to be honest! But once I started getting into it it was really great. We had to do plays and show to the group. We also had to work with YOs and some of the DTOs and as we've never worked with YOs before they chilled out and enjoyed it a lot!

This course is really making me more confident and able to believe in me. And people laugh at me whilst I'm doing anything and I don't care as I'm proud of myself for breaking out of my shell. Maybe I always had my own confidence deep down inside - I just forgot it was there."

DTO

The project provided a mixed group of women with a positive and creative outlet for their musical, drama and dance abilities.

"I am very tired after the first day and have enjoyed it. I think once we get into it and everyone settles and gets serious we will do a very good end performance. It is certainly a different experience to normal prison life."

YO

"It was a bit embarrassing doing the first exercises but once the first one was done I felt fine and didn't want to stop. Can't wait to get stuck in on Monday!"

Adult G Wing

Regardless of stage experience or musical ability the group was trained in a variety of music and theatre skills.

"I think we needed a few more weeks doing workshops with the tutors first so we knew more of what was going on. Saying that though if everyone had done what they were supposed to do in the beginning we'd have got things done a lot more".

Adult G Wing

The rehearsals took place in the prison gym and classrooms, coming together in the last week for the final rehearsals for the three performances.

A really bitty day. We only had half a morning with the group and it was music only. We managed to get the skeleton for a Hall of Mirrors song down which came from a riff from J and R (adult serving life sentences) who were singing beautifully. The lifers are so diligent and have grasped the opportunity they have been offered with both hands. They are quick, competent and thoughtful. M got very angry early on as she hated the song and was not the centre of attention, F then came out with a classic line – “ I would just like to say that this has been the most boring morning of my life” – and went back to reading her copy of ‘Heat’.

Many of them are being very defensive about everything and there has been some really ugly behaviour. In contrast, L and C (adult serving life sentences) said how they were going to cancel a course they were on as they are both loving it and finding it much more therapeutic than anything else they do.

The difference this morning was that those who didn’t want to do it allowed space for the others to carry on without crashing in and complaining. It seems as though they are slowly seeing that they are part of a process that is happening and are quietly enjoying it...

Sara’s Diary Thursday 29th April

4.4 Acceptance

“Several people who contributed to the piece decided not to take part in the final show but asked other members of the company to perform their work”

from the ‘Fair’ Programme notes

The theme of ‘Fair’ was based on stories developed over the three weeks around issues of teenage pregnancies, drugs abuse, infidelity and imprisonment.

“A very exciting piece of work and given the chance I would do it again!”

Tony Hassall Prison Governor

With trepidation we started the final rehearsals and there was a marked difference in some of the more difficult girls. The diaries, which had made regular appearances throughout the project, were full to overflowing with words they had yet to learn, their thoughts of the day were merely a description of what had happened but at least they had kept them... They left the stage after they had done their bit and sulked at the edge but we still had the strong feeling that they knew something exciting was about to happen. Most of the costume problems had been sorted out and they looked a right mishmash to say the least. However, the costumes, whatever they were and whatever they looked like were making a difference to the way they acted which is GOOD.

Sara’s Diary 13th-14th May

After a three-week intensive project period, three one-hour performances were given, to which the prison Governor and invited guests, prison staff, inmates, selected inmates’ families, partner organisations and research partners and the local press were invited.

Participants' Quotes

"In the beginning I wasn't really too sure what was going on, I wasn't really too interested but thought I'd stay on 'til the end to see what would happen. And I really enjoyed it! I really enjoyed the performance and we got a really good reaction from the crowd. My favourite part had to be my MCing part in the middle. I liked the dance as well and its good for everyone to work together, the lifers mix with the YOs and the DTOs. It was just a good experience and I got to know new people that I'd never talked to beforeI just really enjoyed that."

Young Offender

"Yeah I'm in the drama group in the prison but its not as hard work as doing this performance though. This production was all right even though Robert was a pain in the butt but he came through. Robert came through in the end and he was alright. And Keith as well. Sorry Keith ...we've been a pain the last few weeks but you're safe and Sara, Graham, Nick and all the rest- they're lovely and I hope they come back soon."

Young Offender

"The piece I'm doing in the performance is the Ghost Train, I feel a lot of women could connect to that as its about this girl who got arrested and she has to tell her mother about taking care of her baby. From the feedback I got, a lot of people really connect to the piece and felt emotionally attached. I mean it wasn't exciting and it wasn't funny or anything but it had the emotional feeling and that was great. There was some days when everyone was really hot-headed but as time went by ... like yesterday, the performance was excellent and I got a buzz from it – I just sat in my cell thinking, I can't believe it... this has been one of the best experiences of my life and to have it happen in this place was amazing, totally."

Young Offender

"I loved it - I mean I'm very outgoing n that and I thought the performance was proper good, yeah. And we got to meet people and Robert I think is excellent. I hope in the future I can be a director like him cause he's cool you get me? Proper cool. I like the way he told everyone what to do n all that --it was proper."

Young Offender

"I'm part of the G wing drama group here but we've only done one performance so far but obviously we hope to do more. Apart from that it's only a recent thing as there was only drama for young people. That's something the governor has only worked out. So it's quite a different as we can show as adults how we can actually work together. It's been great it really has. It's nice to work with a mixture of all ages as there isn't a limit to what you can perform. With this show you can portray lots of different characters from having youngsters to people of my age."

Prisoner serving life Sentence

On the Friday afternoon between performances we had a chance to do the acoustic numbers again to at least get some of the words in there so the CD would contain something other than muffled screaming. The energy certainly picked up (nerves/excitement?) and the last performance was a riot, very 'out there' and quite unfocussed but with an amazing energy you rarely see from professionals. This is why this work is unique.

Sara's Diary 13th-14th May

"We learnt a lot, we improved our skills and got to work with new people...To take part in this means I can say I've worked with these people and this can be part of my work portfolio. This will be my third experience – and I loved it."

Young Offender

4.5 Radio 4 Woman's Hour broadcast

At the dress rehearsal reporter Angela Robson spent a day with the project team, participants and researchers. In August 2004 Jenni Murray from BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour introduced a feature on the 'Fair' project. She suggested that although it has been common practice for the prison service to invite artists and performers into penal establishment it was as yet unproven how effective the arts could be as either therapy or education and whether it could in the long term have an impact on the reduction of re-offending rates.

The excerpts from interviews with project leaders and the participants are self-explanatory:

"Many of the women and young girls at Bullwood Hall have suffered low self esteem and many had had no previous opportunities to discover their skills. The women wrote and devised the play themselves."

Adult participant, G Wing

"I mixed with different people around prison."

YO

"Working together as a team - It's made me feel we are all individuals with skills."

Adult participant

"It's good to mix with all ages, people around the prison and not just on our wing. Prison takes away individualism."

YO

"It's good working with YOs. The arts can see lifers and get closer."

Adult participant

"Using creative activities to introduce them to learning – it is about family ties and real life situations. We aim to increase confidence and skills that can be transferred to other things."

Project worker

"Everything you see today we've done ourselves- we are proud of ourselves - we are treated not like criminals."

YO

"The whole structure is about writing songs, acting, dancing - there is an air of excitement about it all – where is it going to go? Suddenly to realise we have other skills and that make us feel alive and well again."

Adult participant, G Wing

"The mature ladies brought gravitas, they were really focused – they gave everything a try even though originally they weren't sure that it was going to work. It has been fantastic having a mixed group."

Robert Chevara

5 EVALUATION AND POST-PROJECT VISITS

5.1 1st follow-up visit to Bullwood Hall

Re-visiting the prison a week after the project provided opportunities to continue the research in an informal but structured way via focus groups and interviews. This provided anecdotal evidence with interesting and unexpected outcomes.

The focus groups also facilitated open discussion about the inmates' own observations on the project, including their initial reservations on working in mixed age groups. Issues relating to depression and related problems thought to be associated with prison life were discussed in a participants focus group and three inmates volunteered information that, although they regularly self harmed, the project had steered them away from negative thoughts and hurting themselves. The possibility of a reduction in self-harming through working on arts projects is one that could be measured using the social accounting multiplier and could be included in helping to measure the financial as well as the social impact of prison projects. ^{xiii}

The table below provides a summary of the informal post –project evaluation

| Question | Responses |
|---|--|
| What were considered to be the positive elements? | Performing All of it Team work The fact we wrote it together – ourselves Improvisation Confidence building |
| Valuable Learning Points? | Working with different people Learning to compromise Working with the artistic team Learning something new Getting to the end |
| What could we do differently next time? | Longer time to do it – 3 weeks too short Too much singing/too little singing Wish it were a weekly on-going programme Take it on tour to other jails There is already a chance to do drama but nothing musical |
| Would you feel confident doing it again? | Yes – unanimous! |
| What would make it better next time? | Knowing each other We would like to do it on a regular basis Have a theme presented so that we could work on songs, words etc Would inspire ideas A chance to write songs – maybe 2 projects a year, especially at Xmas which is a low point |

5.2 2nd follow-up visit to Bullwood Hall

One month later a meeting was arranged to allow participants and staff to view the DVD and present the CD's of Fair to all the women who took part. It also offered an opportunity to discuss the project, the challenges faced and discuss how it met with the overall aims and objectives.

All the women who took part were invited to the first viewing of the project DVD. It provided an excellent opportunity for the participants, prison staff, artistic team and researchers to reacquaint themselves and discuss life post-project. There was an atmosphere of good humour and excitement at seeing themselves and each other, especially in the more vulnerable and poignant moments where tears had clearly been shed. For the researchers this meeting was a strong contrast to early meetings. Overall the participants seemed pleased to be together again as a group and share their thoughts. There was a marked difference in the behaviour of the young offenders compared with the taster day and the group elders seemed relaxed and at ease in their company, a far cry from the fledgling interactions.

After the showing there was a short question and answer session facilitated by the project workers.

Researcher's Observation and Comments from Focus Group

- The women were accustomed to us and keen to share their thoughts and feelings post-project.
- They appeared more confident and were proud of their achievements and were keen to discuss them – keeping the project 'alive' for longer.
- It was observed by staff in the Education Department that all inmates left the focus groups happier than when they arrived.
- All the participants were aware that, for them, the research would possibly enable further projects through positive publicity leading to funding opportunities in the future.
- It gave the women the opportunity to discuss ways that the project could lead to further musical opportunities, either on release or during their stay in other establishments – the chance to discuss further accreditation and learn more about similar projects in women's prisons and the possibility of extending performing opportunities of Fair 'alive' at a Festival.
- All participants were issued Irene Taylor Trust certificates for their portfolios and copies for their families - which opened up new discussions on the importance of music projects and how they could build on what they had learnt.
- Many of the women presented us with their diaries- which also provide evidence for accreditation from the Education Department.

5.3 Post-project control group

A control group was formed consisting of six young offenders who were in residence throughout the project period but who for various reasons were unable, or wished not to take part in the project. They agreed to come to a meeting and be interviewed by the researchers:

- Many of the women (including others not at the meeting) were unable to take part due to work commitments.
- Some had attended the 'taster' session and had decided not to take part.
- 6 would probably consider taking part in future artistic opportunities of which 2 would prefer to assist with the production element only.
- They all attended a performance of 'Fair.'
- Some would like to have taken part but were unable to for various reasons including: insufficient notice; work commitments; therapy sessions.
- 1 participant was left waiting on the wing on the taster day and was therefore prevented from attending.

5.4 10 month post-project follow up

10 months post project – March 05

- 16 remain in Bullwood Hall.
- 10 responded to the last mail out in December 2004.
- 3 participants had been transferred to other prisons to serve the second part of their life sentence.
- 1 has since been released and has visited the ITT offices in Brixton.

5.5 Self-harming (code 20:52)

"What also impressed me was their willingness to work with some of our more difficult, damaged, and vulnerable women, who have on occasions been excluded in the past."

Tony Hassall, Governor HMP YOI Holloway October 2005

During a post project focus group discussion two prison 'Listeners' (Samaritans), both adult participants, raised the issue of self-harming². They opened the discussion by commenting on their observation that several of the participants, and in particular young offenders, had stopped self-harming during the course of the project. On subsequent discussions two YO's spoke openly about this sensitive issue and felt that their confidence and self-esteem had increased as a result of taking part and this had impacted on their ability to stop self-harming.

5.6 15 month post-project visit (August - October 2005)

ITT was invited back to HMP YOI Bullwood Hall in April 2005 to work with 12 DTOs and 12 YO's on a weeklong music project. Two of the original 'Fair' participants took part in this project and their case studies are included within this report.

² Self-harming is a particular problem amongst young women, thought to affect (in some way), at least two thirds of women under 21 held in detention.

The original premise for the research was to look at the long-term effect of the music/theatre project on its participants. Therefore, the research team valued the opportunity to visit the prison and hold informal interviews with three of the 'Fair' participants.

The main aims of the visit were:

- To develop case studies based on 4 original 'Fair' participants including:
 - 2 Adults Serving a Life Sentence.³
 - 1 Young Offender serving a Life Sentence.
 - 1 Young Offender.
- To understand more about their musical experiences, performing opportunities and aspirations.
- To ascertain if taking part had led to new educational or artistic opportunities.
- To understand if participating had altered their own attitudes in any way and/ or provided any social benefits to prison life.

And-

- As a way of keeping in touch with participants who were still held at the prison to offer information on courses and musical opportunities both in prison and after release.

³ One of the adult prisoners was interviewed at HMP Send 2005.

6 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Research models

The project's researchers had the opportunity to immerse themselves within the project which they felt was a vital part of the evaluation. It gave them ideas for designing research material, including questionnaires and templates for focus groups and individual discussions.

The Cycle of Engagement provides a simple model for observing and monitoring participants' reactions at each stage of an intervention. It is a flexible model which could be used by the artists and prison personnel as a baseline for plotting reactions throughout an intervention and to record the attitudinal turning points that so often occur. These observations can then be used to reflect back on the intervention and the short-term effects

The participant diaries, handed out at the 'taster' day (Appendix 3) proved to be very popular with some of the participants, especially the younger ones. They were used by the diarists to write songs, share ideas and record their (at times quite in-depth) thoughts. Additionally they provided information, which demonstrated the attitudinal changes, were used by the Head of Learning and Skills for in-house accreditation and importantly were used in focus groups for discussion with other inmates.

6.1.1 Future projects for young offenders

As a result of the discussion with participants on self-harming it was felt that a future music project focusing specifically on the complex and much stigmatised issue of self-harming could offer vital opportunities for young women to begin to address this difficult issue.

The Governors of HMPYOIs Bullwood Hall and Holloway have therefore invited ITT to develop a joint project, working with young female prisoners, all deemed to be either self-harmers or at risk of self-harming. It is planned for two week-long creative arts projects to take place in May and June 2006 aiming to:

- Work with a total of 44 young women at HMP YOIs Holloway and Bullwood Hall over two weeks.
- Create a music, writing and photography project focused at providing the women involved with an outlet for the many difficult feelings and emotions they might have connected with the issue of self-harming.
- Develop a CD and book, which will be produced collaboratively by the women to be used as a tool for other organisations working with self-harm issues.
- Raise awareness about what is often a highly stigmatised area, whilst providing the women involved with an opportunity to not only benefit themselves, but create something positive for others.
- Address the personal experiences of participants and build confidence and artistic opportunities to address this issue in a positive way.

ITT will use tracking and evaluation to closely monitor the effects of the project specifically in relation to the issue of self-harm. They will work closely with key prison staff, to monitor the incidence of self-harm amongst project participants before, during and after the project. Whilst it is believed that there is a shortage of support directed at women offenders, this would enable ITT to continue its successful relationships with both HMP YOIs Holloway and Bullwood Hall.

6.2 Planning future projects

To be as effective as possible a common understanding and clear lines of communication need to be established between the visiting artists and the host prison (or YOI). This communication should be in place from the outset, identifying potential beneficiaries, the staffing necessary, the best means of advertising the project and details of any work commitments or programmes that might coincide with the artistic intervention at any time during the course of the programme.

Discussions with the artistic team and prison staff at Bullwood Hall post-project revealed the need for a number of considerations to be factored into projects from the outset and for these to be discussed and agreed with prison staff and the project team:

- Allowing sufficient time between sending out recruitment information and the start of the project
- Recruitment publicity should clarify the need to commit to the project for the whole period.
- Participants will not be excluded because of other commitments providing these are known about at the start,^{xiv} to allow for artistic planning.
- The research objectives should be clearly stated to participants to avoid concerns regarding accessing prison records.

Where consent to access prison records is not granted alternative methods should be considered which would be equally valid.^{xv}

The following points were raised and discussed after the project:

- Decide an ideal time commitment for such a course bearing in mind artistic requirements and how these could work around on-going prison visits, rehabilitation programmes, prison employment and education programmes.
- Different levels of project commitment, depending on these factors, should be discussed pre-project with all concerned so all the artistic team know in advance and are able to plan and allocate roles accordingly.
- Artistic Director Robert Chevara was not aware that some of the women would have attendance problems due to prior commitments and in hindsight felt he could have been more accommodating had he known previously. This could be addressed with advance warning and better communication with prison personnel. To achieve this, a longer lead in time would have been helpful. This would also have enabled the researchers to meet with the women, artistic team and prison staff and initiate focus groups and questionnaires - as had previously been planned for research purposes.
- The six YOs who were unable to attend were interviewed post project and it was generally thought some had been disappointed to be excluded for various reasons.
- Mixing adult offenders with YOs and DTOs was experimental but proved to add a very positive dimension to the project. The positive team work, and in particular the support and patience of the older women to the younger members, was applauded. Artists noticed how many of the older women had acted as mother figures for younger members. Although there were demonstrations of frustration at times this simply increased the need for them to take on a motherly role and encourage the younger participants to persist, even when morale flagged. This relationship was sustained long after the project ended.
- The Artistic Director mentioned the importance of the mixed age/category group. It allowed a mixed group to work together and share a range of experiences.

- Careful planning from the outset is required to ensure participants are involved from the beginning of the project. Robert Chevara mentioned how difficult it would have been to accept a new member to the group once the project was underway i.e. by end of the first week when a group dynamic had been established.
- The women who agreed to be interviewed by Angela Robson for Woman's Hour had spoken candidly about the way the project had helped to raise their self esteem and had empowered them.

The following ideas were discussed with the Head of Learning & Skills which could help to inform future projects:

- Smaller groups of approximately 15 people.
- 2 lead-in days to ensure commitment and discussion.
- Shorter project.
- Mornings only to allow for visits, work, therapy etc.
- Longer overall time – i.e. 3 days a week over 5 weeks.
- Staffing issues - the possibility of an allocation of core of staff throughout the project.

6.3 The research – barriers and bonuses

There were a number of challenges concerned with conducting research on the 'Fair' project. These were predominately associated with the short time- scale within which the project was run, especially regarding the recruitment of the inmates, the taster session and the start date, which all took place within four days. These challenges however proved to be a useful part of the research itself, demonstrating the ways in which projects in prison typically have to fit in with the very demanding prison regime and the need to access information on the inmates taking part - necessitating their co-operation and understanding of the research objectives.

The aim of the research was to gain a greater understanding of the role of music and associated art forms in the rehabilitation of offenders with women. Nearly 2 years on and at the end of this research period ITT is in contact with many of the participants.

As the project progressed the project researchers recognised that the partnership with REACTT was unsustainable. This was due to the different approaches each party was able to bring to the study. REACTT's approach was based on a scientific approach, accessing prison statistics, using psychometric tests and finding a suitable control group. It also required the skills and consent of a trained psychologist. Detailed prison statistics were not available to the researchers, and many of the women participants did not give their consent to the accessing of their files. This method was therefore felt to be unsuitable for the project.

The researchers decided instead to conduct an action research approach - one that would work with rather than against the artistic and social aims of the project. Observation and informal interviews, backed up by questionnaires and diaries became a more acceptable and sensitive alternative, although, not without its own set of logistical problems.⁴

Members of the artistic team were frustrated by a number of problems they faced in delivering the project.

- Head of Education and Skills Sue Saxton said that unfortunately on-going educational and rehabilitation programmes take precedence over extra-curricula programmes and time was not negotiable on this occasion.

⁴ Visiting the project, handing out questionnaires and conducting interviews was at times a problem for the artistic team who had to work to a very tight schedule.

- The prison psychologist explained that the domestic violence programmes were an important part of the prison's programme and as they were often so emotionally draining, had conflicting interest with an intensive arts project. She did however comment that, although she had not been actively involved in the project, she was particularly impressed at how many women had kept going until the end of the project and the value of this on self-esteem.

The post project meetings also demonstrated the following:

Results of questionnaires and interviews with prison wing staff, education workers and prison visitors suggest the commonly held view that any activities, including non-arts activities, which would help offenders cope with life on release would be advantageous. These included mental health provision, education and training in a number of areas. Activities which could induce feelings of self-respect and respect for others and would teach disciplines in areas including dealing with work situations, housing and friendship groups would all be highly valuable. Activities that develop links with the community outside and prepare prisoners for their return to it and anything that treats the prisoners as adults who, given the opportunity, may change their offending behaviour were also considered valuable.

6.4 Conclusion

Two years after the 'Fair' project and ITT continues to provide music projects in prisons of the highest standards. Their work is influenced by findings from previous projects and, as one of the leading arts organisations for work in this field, they continue to share their findings with other organisations, funders and policy makers. This project will certainly add to their bank of information and ITT believes that the 'Fair' project has been a useful and important learning exercise.

It was agreed that the overall success of 'Fair' was attributed to an excellent team effort - a remarkable sense of achievement felt by all of seeing the project through to three highly successfully performances.

The rapport that the researchers developed enabled participants, other inmates and staff to discuss issues surrounding the project, including the positive effects on the community. This became a valuable part of the project and has proliferated future artistic interventions both at HMPYOI Bullwood Hall and at other establishments.

Two years, however, is a relatively short time for prisoners, especially the adult women who still have a long sentence to serve. So it remains to be seen if this intervention, and similar ones, will really affect recidivism. But already we have seen what can happen; a DTO, the youngest member of the group, speaking out confidently at a YJB conference packed with government officials; a young offender being released and starting, what is hoped will be, a new career in the theatre; the idea that projects of this kind might offer a solution to some aspects of the mental health problems so much a part of prison life and the cost saving implications this could have; a number of women having the newfound confidence to sign up to a range of courses on offer within the prison education department and on release.^{xvi}

"An excellent way of including offenders into real life experiences, raising self-esteem, confidence and opportunities to continue something on release."

Prison Officer

And as a way of demonstrating to all the women, many for the first time, that they all have something positive to offer and CDs, DVDs and certificates to prove it.

"Absolutely brilliant! I can't believe how good it was and don't know why we were all so nervous. We were great. I felt so good and proud out there – I don't think I've ever felt like that before- we all just bounced off each other!"

Adult participant

7 APPENDIX 1 Case Studies

7.1 Case Study 1 – Young Offender aged 19

...She found Robert's disciplined and demanding approach initially difficult to cope with...

Sara's Diary 11th May

M is interested in songwriting, musical production, vocals and MCing. She had taken part in a musical production about a fairground at school aged 13 which she very much enjoyed. She likes garage and underground music and her favorite artists include Dizzee Rascal, Miss Dynamite and Craig David.

Observation: At the taster day for 'Fair' M stood out as ringleader and a prominent member of the group of YO's. Her behaviour was challenging and she was one of the most argumentative within the group, both to her peers and the project workers. However, her diary notes are positive and upbeat throughout, not hinting at the anger and frustration which seemed so obvious during rehearsals.

M thought Robert was having a go at her and she shouted that she was the only one that has been there all the time. This may be true but the point she misses is that, more often than not, it is her that drags the sessions down with her strops and sulkiness.

Sara's Diary 11th May

Diary Week 1: *"I am very tired after the 1st day and have enjoyed it. I think once we get into it and everyone settles and gets serious we will do a very good end performance. It is certainly a different experience to normal prison life."*

Prior to 'Fair' M had played keyboard and drums but is not especially interested in learning a musical instrument, preferring to develop further skills in MCing and vocals which she learnt on the 'Fair' project. *"We had to do an improvisation of a very important moment in our lives – real or fiction. At first I felt uncomfortable about doing it by myself but I finally plucked up courage. I acted a star singing and winning an Oscar."*

M is currently taking GCSE Psychology, Business Administration NVQ levels 1&2 and Hairdressing and she was one of the 12 YO's who took part in ITT's project in Spring 2005.

She believes that 'Fair' gave her more confidence. The best aspects were performing, especially in front of her mates.

Diary Week 2: *"It's amazing-we've had only a little time working on the performance and already we've come up with some really good songs and acts. I'm really looking forward to the end performance."*

She admitted to feeling very proud of the show and loved the first performance when the crowd cheered and clapped. The downside initially was the arguing and stress of the rehearsals and she found Robert's disciplined and demanding approach initially difficult to cope with. Although she was very nervous before the shows she felt it was a great way to prove she could do something positive and make new friends, especially as she was new to prison.

"We did our first performance at 6.30. It was wicked. We got a great response from the crowd and it was a real buzz. I was, in fact, really nervous when I started but the reaction we got gave me confidence and I can't wait to do it again. All the rehearsals were worth it."

The main long-term benefit for M is increased confidence and the knowledge that she can enjoy performing so much. She would certainly take part in other performance based projects and would say to a prison mate *"don't worry about feeling self-conscious performing in front of your wing – just do it and enjoy it"*.

M would consider taking up music as a career and hopes ITT will keep her informed of other projects both inside and out of prison.

7.2 Case Study 2 – Aged 20 serving a life sentence

C had never attended a music workshop before the project and decided to sign up hoping that it would be a good experience- an opportunity to perform for the prison and for her own benefit. She enjoys R&B, reggae and garage music and is most interested in songwriting and vocals. She had performed in school plays and had had a chance to “mess about on drums and things at school.” She would love the chance to learn a musical instrument now, especially the violin and piano.

Within the Education Department of Bullwood Hall C is currently undertaking Business Administration and Level 2 English and Maths. She would consider a future career in music but is pragmatic about her long sentence (a further 9 years) and would therefore like further musical opportunities in prison.

C also took part in the music project in Spring 2005 and was especially pleased to work with Sara and Nick again and to meet Rex. She found them all encouraging and supportive although she was initially very nervous.

As a young person serving a life sentence at Bullwood Hall C found the ‘Fair’ project gave her the chance to get to know the older women on her wing in a different capacity. She spoke candidly about being one of the youngest members on G (‘Lifer’) wing where conversations are generally centered on the crimes committed “who has done what” and the drug culture and not about what each of their lives was like before imprisonment. During and after the project she had the chance to get to know some of the older members of the group, to write songs together, support each other and share something more positive and enjoyable. C felt that the storyline to ‘Fair’ was relevant, in some way, to all their lives and it provided a chance to share experiences of pre-prison lives. She felt the teamwork and performing in front of an audience (especially the Mayor!) were the most beneficial aspects of the project. The downsides included the arguing and strong opinions which became unnecessary obstacles to the workshops.

C is not sure if there will be any long-term benefits to the project. Being realistic and seemingly overwhelmed by her long sentence she is focused on the present and aware of the positive aspects of taking part – mainly team work and opportunities to do something different.

She does not think that taking part in the project necessarily inspired her to get more out of prison life because she was already keen to learn and make the most of her time. She wants to take part in as many activities as possible. She believes the best aspects of the project were team working and performing. Her own contribution changed when she realized there was only a short time to learn her part and make the best use of her time on the project. At the beginning she was not sure if it would work out but after the first rehearsal she was confident that it would.

“There is no way I would have dropped out”.

C signed up for a Christmas arts project with Keith and Robert, but with a lot of other things on her mind at the time she decided not to continue (a decision she regretted when she attended the performance). She really hopes there will be another ‘Fair’ project and is grateful for the chance to have taken part. She is particularly grateful to her boss (David) in the laundry department for his encouragement - allowing her time off work and continuing to pay her and, importantly, for coming to see her perform. She believes his support and the support of other prison staff makes a big difference and boosts self-esteem.

7.3 Case Study 3 – Aged 39 serving a life sentence

L is serving the first part of her life sentence in Bullwood Hall. She is a mother of 4 children and when I met her for the interview she was delighted to have learnt that she was now allowed to make contact with her 2 younger children.

A dynamic and helpful participant of 'Fair' from the outset L enjoyed the opportunity to take part in a musical theatre production for the first time in her life. She had never acted or played a musical instrument before and this was an opportunity to perform in front of an audience. She was very much looking forward to it but an accident just before the first performance prevented her from taking part. This has made her all the more determined to take part in other projects and since 'Fair' she has taken part in a prison drama production and has recently assisted NYT project workers on a comedy play with YOs. Although lacking musical experience L would like to continue with theatre/drama studies if opportunities arise both in prison and on release.

L believes that the 'Fair' project was valuable to her and other prisoners in a number of ways, not least in building self-esteem and confidence – something very lacking from her own youth. She feels it gave her an insight into her own ability and potential to succeed. She had a lot of support throughout the project from prison staff and her friends and was particularly encouraged by her boss (David) who gave her paid leave to attend the workshops and who was an audience member for one of the performances.

In spite of her very positive attitude to the project L was initially irritated with “...*the number of YOs with attitude – it took a long time to gel as a group*” but once this happened she felt she was on a journey of self-discovery.

“I never knew I could sing and dance and it definitely affected my time in prison – It was a great form of escapism and a way of propping me up during bad times”

L believes that the feelings of worth and self-confidence will continue in the long term. It was unusual to bring adult prisoners, YOs and DTOs together on a project and there was an apparent concern amongst the older women that this would be difficult.

“But it really does work. I have kids about that age and am young at heart and we were there to encourage them”.

L was concerned about what they (the YOs) would think of the long-term adult prisoners but feels it is more true to real life to mix ages and therefore very beneficial for them all. The friends she has made in prison enjoy watching her perform – she doesn't need to explain anything to them - they just know now that she loves music and drama and they see a more positive, happier person.

The researchers and project team continue to keep in touch with as many of the participants, some of whom have since been released or transferred to other establishment. They have all received copies of CDs and many participants have expressed an interest in taking part in other music and performing arts projects.⁵

⁵ The recently published book 'Music Out' has been developed and will be continually updated to provide information on accredited courses throughout the UK.

7.4 Case Study 4 – Adult serving a life sentence

“It gave me something to get out of bed for and gave me an interest. I felt energised.”

CK, aged 46, is serving a life sentence and was moved to HMP Send in 2004. CK is in regular contact with ITT.

The chance to visit her at Send also provided an opportunity to meet the Education Manager and other staff at the prison who are all keen to invite ITT to undertake a programme there if at all possible. They understand that CK benefited in a number of ways from ‘Fair’ and believe there are many other inmates who would also benefit. Last Christmas CK wrote and performed a Christmas song to the Governor, staff and inmates of the prison, something she felt able to do due, in part, to a new found confidence and the encouragement she had received through ‘Fair’.

It seemed appropriate to follow up CK’s progress as she had been a very focused and passionate team player who had written a number of the songs, both for herself and fellow inmates to perform. She was also known to many at Bullwood Hall as a ‘Prison Listener’ and had a broad understanding of some of the problems facing women prisoners, including depression and self-harming. On a previous post-project visit (with another adult prisoner on G wing) she openly discussed her observation about self-harming; that several YO’s had ceased to self-harm whilst on the programme.

Prior to ‘Fair’ CK had not had the opportunity to take part in a music workshop although she had been active in the music industry for many years as a DJ, singer and entertainment coordinator. She enjoys a range of musical styles including R’n’B, contemporary and pop. She also plays guitar and loves singing.

Whilst at Bullwood Hall CK took her LAMDA Grade 5 in Drama which she passed with honours. She has also taken maths, literacy and IT modules and has trained and worked as a lifeguard. Currently she is training to become a fitness instructor with 3 other inmates at Send. Other courses CK has undertaken include Assertiveness Training and Healthy Living and an exam in Communications. Due to a lack of performing arts provision in Send CK has not played her guitar since her transfer.

The overall benefits of ‘Fair’ perceived by CK:

“It lifted my spirits and made me want to get more about of my time. It encouraged me to do the LAMDA exams. Personally I gained more confidence and showed myself I had capabilities I wasn’t aware of prior to that. It gave me something to get out of bed for and gave me an interest. I felt energised. I enjoyed it so much that everything else didn’t really matter.

Working with YO’s – it took until the 2nd week to gel as a team but it was the right thing to do, working with YO’s. That way you get a good cross-section.

Before coming to prison I was unable to speak without stammering and stuttering. Now I feel I am on a journey and there’s no problem standing up and talking to people. Long term it made me think seriously about the more difficult aspects of music and drama and how I might take it further. I now sing in a choir that the prison has recently set up, which is linked to the church.

If I do something I do it properly - I don’t do anything half-heartedly. It brought out my ability to be focused and I would really love more opportunities to do it again here.”

Since we last saw CK she has heard that her case is coming up for appeal, supported by Women for Justice. She knows that she will be called up anytime within the next year.

She is in touch with another life prisoner on the project who has been transferred to HMP Cookham Wood. They write to each other regularly. A continues with her arts studies and write poems and stories.

CK was pleased to have been able to take with her a DVD and CD of the ‘Fair’ project. She has shown this to the prison officers at Send so that they can see what she and the team achieved with ‘Fair’. CK hopes this might encourage the prison to host a similar project at HMP Send.

7.5 A young participant meets the Home Secretary

As a direct result of completing the 'Fair' project the youngest participant, a juvenile on a Detention and Training Order (DTO), was invited to attend the Annual Youth Justice Board Conference in London in November 2004. One week prior to the conference, she was escorted from Bullwood Hall for a pre-conference meeting with Home Secretary Rt. Hon David Blunkett MP. Together with 4 other young people on ASBOs, she was consulted about young people's responses to crime and detention and to assess 'what works?'

Broadcaster, Gillian Joseph gave the opening address and Charmaine gave the first speech of the conference prior to the former Home Secretary. She performed her own words from 'Fair' before a delegation of c.2500 people.

"You see I'm a first timer in prison. Doing a long stretch for a first timer. But when I get out, walk out them gates (for the first and last time) I'm gonna be shaking! Just being by myself for the first time in 3 years! Will be unreal! Being able to walk around with no officers around me, nothing! I'm gonna feel, I don't know what I'm gonna feel? All I know is that I'm gonna be smiling, smiling hard and I'm gonna be greeted by my friends, family and boyfriend on the other side!

And the strangest thing I'm gonna look forward to, is going into a shop and buying a can of Ginger Beer or KA! Yep, 7 more months to go and I can do all that but for now I'll keep doing what I'm doing until the day I'm free!"

Charmaine's speech was followed by the Home Secretary Rt. Hon. David Blunkett's who she joined, together with the four other young people, for a 'round table' discussion on issues regarding young people in prison or on ASBOs.

"This was an enormous experience for any young person. Her nerves before were palpable but she conducted herself with assurance and took part in the lively debate. One of her suggestions for a telephone help- line for young people leaving prison such as Childline, was seized on by the Home Secretary as being a fantastic idea. He appealed to Paul Goggins MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Correctional Services and Re-offending, to address this matter! Political lip service? If nothing else, being taken seriously surely had a profound effect on Charmaine after the event."

Researcher Kate Lewis - notes from the conference

8 APPENDIX 2 Holloway quotes

In July 2005 the Irene Taylor Trust worked in HMPYOI Holloway delivering a 6-day music and photography project. Below are some quotes from the participants:

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| “ | <i>The concert was amazing! I had so much fun even though I thought it was nerve racking standing up and singing. But I am glad that I took part and glad I learnt how to play the drums</i> | ” |
| “ | <i>I would like to thank everyone who helped us and supported us. It's a great project and I think other prisoners would enjoy it.</i> | ” |
| “ | <i>I think the concert was very successful. I was a bit nervous in the first performance but I was much more confident in the second. I enjoyed taking part; it was something I had never done and would be willing to do again.</i> | ” |
| “ | <i>WOW! It's almost here; I'm frightened and excited all in the same breath. Everyone's worked so hard and the pictures look brill! Really can't wait to get it over with, my mum's going to be in the audience listening to a song I wrote myself, what an achievement it will be to actually deliver it.</i> | ” |
| “ | <i>I'm so grateful for the opportunity, I'm quite sad, no that's a lie, I'm very sad it's going to be over. Not the gig but the making of the music. IT WAS SO MUCH FUN!!</i> | ” |
| “ | <i>The big day... Oh my gosh I have never been so scared. Going to court didn't even give me the butterflies I had today. I couldn't hear the music, only my heart beating in my ears.</i> | ” |
| “ | <i>I have actually performed to people, I made my mum cry and when my sisters came they cried too! I don't know if that's because I was good or because I was so scared.</i> | ” |
| “ | <i>It was an experience I'll treasure all my life AND I think I'll carry on trying.</i> | ” |
| “ | <i>Thanks so much for pushing me, for being patient, for encouraging me and having faith. I now have confidence to have faith in myself too.</i> | ” |

9 APPENDIX 3 Diary letter to 'Fair' participants

Thank you for agreeing to use a diary as part of the Music, Film and Photography project with the Irene Taylor Trust.

Your thoughts and ideas will help us with research for the project. The diaries will be an important record. This will help us to inform organisations and other groups of the value of arts activities to women, who are currently under-represented in Prison Service findings.

We are interested to know what aspects you enjoyed, or found challenging, the skills you learnt, how you felt about taking part and if it has made you want to develop these skills further. Maybe it has changed the way you get on with other inmates, or staff etc.

If you are inspired, please use your diaries for poetry, stories, song writing or drawings etc. These diaries are for you to use, as often as you like, as a record of your own experience of taking part in a music project.

We would like to borrow your diary at the end of the project but we promise to return them to you to keep as a record of what we hope you will remember as a good experience of working with us.

Thanks for your help.

The Irene Taylor Trust

10 APPENDIX 4 Staff questionnaire replies post project

| Question | Staff replies |
|---|--|
| <p>What were your opinions of prison based arts projects before seeing the show?</p> | <p>“Useful encouragement to self-expression, self-awareness, reconciliation and rehabilitation.”</p> <p>“An excellent way of including offenders into real life experiences, raising self – esteem, confidence & opportunities to continue something on release.”</p> <p>“Very impressed would like to see more.”</p> <p>“Worthwhile in the benefits they give to inmates: self-esteem, confidence, widening horizons.”</p> <p>“An excellent opportunity to develop talent.”</p> <p>“Excellent – they should be encouraged as they enrich everyone.”</p> <p>“Very valuable.”</p> <p>“I imagined it would be like school and very basic even a bit patronising of the women. I wondered what their experience of it would be but I also thought what an opportunity.”</p> <p>“Very positive attitude towards them they are incredibly valuable. I would love to have involvement and develop a project myself.”</p> |
| <p>Have these opinions changed having seen the show?</p> | <p>“No it confirms my view.”</p> <p>“No! Only re-enforcement.”</p> <p>“Have realised how professional they can be.”</p> <p>“No.”</p> <p>“No the show re-enforced my opinion.”</p> <p>“ I still wonder what it is like living in prison and this being an institution but I am very sure that having the opportunity to participate in such a project is definitely positive and can and does have big impacts on women.”</p> <p>“ No - my only question is of money? And value for money to benefit the women is very sparse.”</p> |
| <p>Do you feel this kind of project should be more widely available?</p> | <p>“Yes a part of planned sentence progression.”</p> <p>“Yes I think that arts projects should be used often and in every prison. Any sort of creativity has very positive effects in the prison and on inmates.”</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>“Very much so- the girls got so much out of it- they were really charged up.”</p> <p>“Yes it should inform part of all the inmates learning, especially those under 21.”</p> <p>“Yes of all the productions I have seen it never ceases to amaze me – the talent, professionalism, enthusiasm and the opportunity.”</p> <p>“Several long-term prisoners need the social interaction, stimulus and discovery of self-talent, as they are concerned that they have lost their social skills when released.”</p> <p>“Yes, good for building self-esteem and confidence to go further in the arts.”</p> <p>“Absolutely – I feel excited, awed, thrilled, and moved by the women’s performance so I imagine it is as powerful for women as well as participants.”</p> <p>“Yes but there is tension – financial for great performing arts professionals work in the prisons and struggle with second rate equipment and there is a tinge of sadness that one off events have such backing!”</p> |
| <p>Please describe your feelings towards the show?</p> | <p>“Pleased to see the inmates expressing themselves assertively and enjoying it.”</p> <p>“Re-enforcement of the depth of talent untapped in the prison population.”</p> <p>“Similar to watching my own children in school plays – proud and emotional of their courage and achievements.”</p> <p>“An excellent well put together, entertaining performance. A credit to those who took part.”</p> <p>“Wonderful, terrific, exciting and I wanted to join in.”</p> <p>“Pride in seeing my students performing to such a high standard.”</p> <p>“Positive, excited, involved, admiration, emotional, moved, impressed and inspired.”</p> <p>“I loved it the performing arts are my passion and to see women I have come to know well who are struggling with such deep emotional issues coming to life and having fun was wonderful.”</p> |

11 APPENDIX 5 Public Audience Questionnaire

| Question | Audience answers |
|---|---|
| <p>Do you feel this kind of project should be more widely available?</p> | <p>"If it can be done without the cost falling on the tax payer – then yes".</p> <p>"Yes I think that they should be in all prisons".</p> <p>"Yes as long as it is relevant and builds a sense of self worth and something that is achievable and well presented".</p> <p>"Yes, it gives confidence".</p> <p>"Yes I believe these projects are fundamental to the rehabilitation of inmates and therefore the reduction in re-offending and increasing positive outcomes".</p> <p>"Yes gives others the opportunity to enhance their skills".</p> <p>"Yes I feel it builds confidence and self-esteem".</p> <p>"Yes all prisons should experience the positive aspects of this work"</p> <p>"Yes! And perhaps, rather than just one off projects have ongoing / rolling workshops / sessions that regularly culminate / aim towards performance."</p> <p>"Yes it should be more systematically spread across all prisons and projects more frequent / longer term - and with public funding as they seem to really help with rehabilitation".</p> <p>"Most definitely all information available indicates the positive impact arts has on people's lives".</p> <p>"I absolutely feel that this kind of project should be more widely available. The show lifted the women and unified them and gave them a voice".</p> <p>"Definitely a challenge that the girls can enjoy".</p> <p>"Yes these opportunities are vital in offering experiences and skills that may not have been offered to inmates before".</p> <p>"Yes I feel that this opportunity for self expression and collaboration with others would benefit most prisoners."</p> <p>" Yes because it gives people a way of expressing themselves as an individual".</p> |

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- i Georgie Goddard works for Youth Music as a Regional Co-ordinator. She is currently working with colleagues on the 'At Risk' Cross-department Development Team, looking to inform and develop strategies for Youth Music's work with: '*Children and young people with difficulty accessing activities that will help them grow and progress. This means social, economic, cultural or geographical disadvantage or a combination of these factors.*' (Policy and Programmes document Feb 2005)
- ii For a copy of the paper please contact Georgie c/o Irene Taylor Trust
- iii Time Well Spent attempts to share some of the key lessons learnt from the evaluations of the Irene Taylor Trust's programmes of music projects over 6 years.
It draws on two evaluations from projects in women's prisons and refers to two further evaluations of projects in male prisons:
Fair 2004-5 – HMP Bullwood Hall and HMP Holloway
Fair's Fair 2000 – HMP Askham Grange
All in my Century 2000 – HMP Frankland
Julius Caesar 1999 – HMP Bullingdon.
- iv Clean Break uses theatre for personal and political change, working with women whose lives have been affected by the criminal justice system (www.cleanbreak.org.uk/). First Stage is the only traineeship for black and Asian women in the fields of stage management, sound and lighting and all technical areas of the theatre. It is a 2 week training course designed to go on to year-long placements at major UK theatres and theatre companies.
- v Women in Prison is a charity dedicated to making a difference to women at risk of, in and leaving custody. They work to promote their resettlement, personal development, education and training, educate the public and policy makers about women in the criminal justice system and promote alternatives to custody.
- vi The engagement matrix is currently being further developed.
- vii Many of the young women were not permitted to invite guardians or friends in place of family members, as they were non-British nationals.
- viii Adult prisoners at HMP Bullwood Hall are serving the first third of a life sentence.
- ix REACTT was spearheaded by the Unit for the Arts & Offenders in 2003 in partnership with the DCMS, the Offenders Learning and Skills Unit at DfES and ACE and its forthcoming one-year pilot project for measuring the impact of the arts in six custodial settings will mark the way to seek further support for a further three-year study which will look at more long term outcomes.
- x REACTT is working in conjunction with ACE, DCMS and the Offenders' Learning and Skills Unit.
- xi Doing the Arts Justice conference -Anne Peaker Centre for Arts in Criminal Justice 06.04.05.
- xii A question asked by one member of the audience to 'Fair.'
- xiii Whilst the idea of a reduction in self-harming and the need for being put on suicide watch is speculative, this could have financial implications regarding extra staffing levels etc.
- xiv Examples of these commitments could be drug rehabilitation or domestic violence programmes, or special visits, which are an important part of the rehabilitation process. Whilst no inmate should be excluded because of them they might require extra time off the project due to the sensitive nature of the programmes and the need for time to reflect on the programmes. Other considerations commonly include prison work which require set working times e.g. in the kitchen and exams for academic or vocational training.
- xv One participant, a woman serving a life sentence was unhappy about us accessing her prison records. However, she was very willing to provide information to us verbally regarding the length of her sentence, the time already served and her age and ethnic origin - and was very willing for us to contact her either on release or when she is transferred to another prison to track her progress post project.
- xvi Some participants have been in touch with ITT enquiring about arts courses at FE Colleges.