

Africa-Cornwall Arts Exchange
1st October 2014, Krowji
MEETING NOTES

Present: TS Tim Smithies (carntocove)
AK Annet Kaigwa (Pearl of Africa)
BS Benjamin Symes (cube theatre)
NW Nix Wood (undertow)

Apologies: Amanda Harris (KEAP), Dot Peryer (Poly)

Agenda: Ideas for possible Africa- Cornwall Arts Exchange

Notes:

- Ideas for a creative exchange between Africa and Cornwall
 - Existing charity The Pearl of Africa (Molly and Paul Childcare Foundation) has suitable resources for hosting visiting creatives: Cornish companies/individuals could have residencies at Kamuzinda, Uganda. They could host up to 30 visitors at any one given time.
 - A summer school/ gap year programme that would involve a visit out to Uganda for UK students.
 - A theatrical version of The Pearl of African Children's Choir; African students deliver a performance that could tour Cornwall.
 - A performance involving UK and Ugandan students could tour in Cornwall/ Uganda/ in both countries.
 - An amalgamation of all of these ideas: gap year programme includes both training in Cornwall, and a visit to Uganda at Kamuzinda. Gap year students could be trained to deliver arts-based health/education workshops whilst in Uganda to a variety of different community groups. Performance skills could be taught to Ugandan students, and a performance could be devised/created involving both UK and Ugandan participants. This could be performed at the end of the residency, possibly within the wider community as well as within Kamuzinda. This could be either filmed to be shown at a later date in Cornwall, or streamed live to schools and CarntoCove venues.
- Development The possibility of this creative-exchange acting as a pilot project for other NRTF schemes to develop creative links with Africa. The NRTF conference is to be held in Cornwall in August 2016, this would be an ideal time to share this concept.
- Ugandan participation AK thought this project would be of the most benefit to Kamuzinda's senior students- Senior1 has an average age of 14 years. Senior 1-4 would be a target, as there are less students in Senior 5 & 6. An engagement with a larger number of Ugandan students to a lower skill grade would be preferable to an engagement with a small number of Ugandan students to a higher skill grade. The senior school runs a theatre, dance and drama competition in the second term. A residency during this second term would therefore fit well. Any residency should bear in mind that in terms of free time, Ugandan students have a built-in extra-curricular slot that could be used, and are also free at weekends. They aren't available at the end of the school day.
- UK participation 24 students, and 6 accompanying creative personnel would be the maximum for a programme. The 24 students would pay fees to take part. The package should be pitched ready for school leavers in June of a given year. The UK participants would benefit from having a gap year experience that involves not only travel and volunteering (like other international gap year opportunities), but also have the added bonus of simultaneously developing artistic skills.

- Skills Not only theatre and voice, but dance (particularly ballet), puppetry, textiles, design, and film could be of interest. A wide-ranging set of skills would be useful to mounting the final production, and documenting the process.
- Accreditation AK spoke about the importance of accreditation for Ugandan students: a certificate listing skills learnt could profoundly affect employment prospects. Accreditation would also be useful to UK participants- is there an existing accreditation system that could work for both groups of participants? Arts Award? If so, other kinds of creative-exchange opportunities might arise- for example, document and portfolio sharing between students.
- Legacy The profit (or a portion of profit) from fees paid by gap year students could be ring-fenced for a particular target. For example, a well resourced arts building at Kamuzinda, or a touring stage/vehicle. If the gap year scheme ran successfully over a number of years, Ugandan students taking part in skills workshops each year could be trained to a high level. A long term aim of this programme would be the establishment of a professional theatre company at Kamuzinda, who could tour Uganda with theatre-for-health projects that are commissioned by ministries. This would provide employment for some of Kamuzinda's students who cannot afford to go to university. It would also be hoped that the UK participants would forge lasting links with the Pearl of Africa charity.

Outcomes:

It was generally agreed that a small-scale pilot would be an ideal testing-ground for the development of a long-term, sustainable gap year programme. In order for the pilot's findings to be shared at the NRTF Conference in 2016, we have a vague timeline.

Late 2014: Further discussions and research to hone ideas for Pilot Arts Exchange.

Early 2015: Pitch complete/ attract funding.

May/June 2015: Pilot Arts Exchange package in place to approach 2015 school leavers.

Early 2016: Pilot Arts Exchange creative training in Cornwall?

Feb/March 2016: Pilot Arts Exchange visit Kamuzinda

August 2016: NRTF sharing

Actions:

NW Consolidate a proposal based on today's meeting

All Continue to engage other creatives in Cornwall to join future discussions.

All Apply for funding to enable an early R+D

TS Approach KEAP re: accreditation for participants (both UK and Ugandan participants)

NW Speak to a representative from an existing international delivery organisation

All Promote arts exchange on social media

All Research gap year websites/organisations/other ways of approaching school leavers.

/END