

The Fenton Arts Trust

Succurrere Artibus

Registered Charity No. 294629

Number 23

Fenton News

Just before we went to press, we heard the sad news of the demise of our Patron, Dame Maggie Smith, CH, DBE, at the age of 89. Hearing some of the tributes being paid to her, I was reminded of our late Founder, Shu-Yao Fenton. Next year will be the 39th anniversary of the original foundation of the Trust, but perhaps more significantly it will be 25 years since Shu-Yao died and endowed TFAT with an enduring legacy from her estate, which led to a major increase in our investment and grant-making activities. We have taken the liberty of keeping our Patron's name on our heading for this issue, which covers beneficiaries supported in the previous financial year.

Many have remarked upon Dame Maggie's impact on the arts, an increasingly inspirational figure in drama and comedy, on the stage, in film, and in television. Sir Ian McKellen said that she was "a giant of our profession, whose talent, generosity, and humility will never be forgotten", and younger actors with whom she worked call her a great mentor, inspiring and uplifting the next generation, "more than an actress - a beloved figure whose impact on the world of the arts will resonate for years to come". She became our Patron in 2003: we are very grateful to have had her patronage these last twenty-one years.

In a way, that is what we aim to do with The Fenton Arts Trust: we seek to be generous yet deferential, to inspire and encourage the next generation of the creative artists of the UK. This was Shu-Yao's ethos, and we hope that her legacy, like that of Dame Maggie, will be as fruitful as it is enduring.

Sue Davies-Scourfield, Chair

Gregor Logan



The Trustees were deeply saddened to lose a valued colleague in August last year, when Gregor Logan died unexpectedly aged 68 whilst out cycling near his home in Hampshire.

He was highly regarded by the Board members, for his wisdom and clarity in evaluating applications, overseeing the Trust's financial investments, and ardently attending beneficiaries' events. Gregor grew up near Glasgow attending Edinburgh University where he studied law, qualifying as a solicitor before moving

over to the finance world. After a highly successful career in the US and the UK he retired from finance at 58.

He was a keen sportsman and sailed competitively for over 25 years, winning many trophies in his yacht Highlander as well as skiing, cycling, tennis and shooting. When he and his family moved out of London, he embraced life in Hampshire, getting involved in many community activities. He was a supporter of the arts throughout his life particularly music and theatre; he very much enjoyed being part of the Trust, helping to build careers and opportunities for emerging artists across many genres.

Gregor was a devoted husband and father and he is much missed by Sue, children Ben and Tony, and all his friends, who will remember him for his generosity and kindness, as well as for his dry sense of humour and intellect. The Trust is delighted to welcome Gregor's widow and former Hon. Treasurer of TFAT, Sue Logan, back onto the Board. We have no doubt that she will continue his good work, but we will miss that dry, Glaswegian sense of humour.

Founder:
Shu-Yao Fenton

Patron:
VDE

Consultant to the Trustees:
David Tong

Trust Manager:
Christine Bisatt

Trustees:
Shelley Baxter
Paul Bayley
Sue Davies-Scourfield (Chair)
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Annual News 2024

APT & Fenton Arts Trust Mentoring Award



▲ Fenton beneficiaries at APT Gallery: Above - (L-R): Lottie Stoddart, Stanley Tilyard French, AP Nguyen, Eleni Zervou & Millie Layton. Below - Mentors Mali Morris (L) & Rebecca Harper (2nd R) with Ned Armstrong & Lottie Stoddart. Photos: Sarah Walsh.

Art in Perpetuity Trust was founded in 1995 by a group of artists whose mission is to support creative thought and artistic vision, both in the studio and beyond. In what was an old warehouse in Deptford Creek, APT provides 42 studios for visual arts, a gallery, a working sculpture yard, and performance space.

The APT & Fenton Arts Mentoring Award ran from 2020-2024, and offered the Trust a very good fit with the aims & ethos of TFAT, through APT's provision of space and support for artists during the period between education and professional life via a collaborative mentoring relationship within a working studio-community/gallery complex. Over the three years of our collaboration, the Award scheme was able to provide a safe space for exploration and interaction for six emerging artists over 2,190 studio days!



Former Chair of TFAT, Stephen Morris, said, "Three painter friends were among the founding members of APT, and I was delighted that one of them, Mali Morris (no relation!), supported this scheme from its inception, sharing her expertise and experience as one of its first mentors."

Lottie Stoddart, Year 1 Awardee, said, "The Award was a fantastic platform upon which I have been building my artistic career in subsequent years. The studio provided a space without financial worries; the mentoring, a touchstone for my developments and investigations; and the final exhibition, a launchpad from which many opportunities have since arisen. I am so grateful for everything this award has provided."

Stephen continued, "The whole project has been a pleasure for us throughout, particularly the annual shows of work, every time a fresh challenge. Long may APT and Fenton give support to each new cohort of artists; they need it, and so do we."

Beneficiaries 2023 - 2024

Lucy Mellors



▲ Production images of Lucy in her show. Photos: Glen Jevon.

The Trust supported Lucy with her tour of the South West in her one-woman show *It is I, Seagull*. Trustee Shelley Baxter attended a performance on behalf of the Trust:

"We were captivated from the start when Lucy burst into an opera aria while explaining the sequence of events in staging an opera. Her story unfolded demonstrating the marginalisation of women on the stage and her subsequent strained mental health repercussions. She had a phenomenal stage presence in her fast-pace thought-provoking soliloquy. She is a very talented actor, funny, interesting, entertaining and inventive, and skilfully wove the story of the first Russian female cosmonaut in space."

The Trustees were also delighted to receive Lucy's own report:

*"...I'm so pleased with how the project has gone and how the show and workshops have been received, so a huge THANK YOU to you all for helping to make it happen. We're in the process of planning to take *It is I, Seagull* to the Edinburgh Fringe in 2025, as well as taking it on a national tour and growing our creative opportunities for women here in Gosport for the next two years. In the meantime, thanks again for helping to make this project happen - you'll see that it's having a big impact and we're keen to carry that on to a national level."*

Lucy Mellors

Photographers' Gallery

The Trust offered a third grant to The Photographers' Gallery to support its innovative *Folio Fridays*, a regular event which invites emerging photographers to present their portfolio to industry professionals and peers for critical feedback and advice about professional development.

Janice McLaren, Head of Education & Projects, shared some thoughts and a selection of recent quotes from participating photographers:

"It is rare to find a trust or foundation that supports professional development of this kind. Also impressive is that Trustees make a visit to the sessions, asking questions and showing a genuine interest in how the programme is organised and in the participants themselves."

- *Really welcoming reviewers and very interesting to talk to like-minded people.*
- *I was asked one of the best questions I've ever been asked, in relation to my work.*
- *...packed with great ideas and helpful feedback from artists and guests...*
- *The review was super useful not only in a sense of getting feedback but learning more about communicating your work verbally.*

Trustee Paul Bayley's report clearly supports the comments above:

"The reaction was overwhelming positive, many feeling that it helped them feel less isolated not least in talking to their fellow participants and that the Photographers' Gallery imprint was seen as a guarantee of quality."

CoMA



▲ Participants experimenting with alternative scoring options. Photo: CoMA.

Contemporary Music for All (CoMA) approached the Trust for support with their *Connect the Dots* project – a series of workshops for composers and facilitators, to teach inclusive collaborative music-making techniques involving musicians with disabilities.

Feedback received from the participants showed that the project had achieved its aims. As a result, two composer participants will go on to be commissioned to write for the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's disabled-led BSO Resound Ensemble and the National Open Youth Orchestra. Participants and facilitators both gained from the experience:

"The workshops were super informative. The facilitators and guest speakers were amazing and their insights on inclusive music making were truly inspiring. The project has given me skills and knowledge that I can use in my career, and I'm excited to keep promoting inclusivity in my work."

"It was fantastic to spend such concentrated time with people from different organisations, all with different approaches and perspectives. My brain is still buzzing with ideas that I can take into my own facilitation and composition work. It was also great to spend time with the cohort, and network with other composer/facilitators."

Arthur Keegan



▲ Arthur (mid.) & (L-R): guitarist James Girling, soprano Lotte Betts-Dean, & the Ligeti Quartet.

Composer Arthur Keegan asked for support with his plan to record new songs to poetry by Thomas Hardy to mark the centenary of the poet's death. The album – *The Past & I: 100 Years of Thomas Hardy* was launched in the Spring. When he wrote to invite the Trust to a performance, he said:

"Please can you pass on my own, and all of those involved with the project, heartfelt thanks. Without The Fenton Arts Trust's decisive, early support this would not have been possible. This album is a huge step in my own career and this summer I am taking the plunge, leaving my teaching job and trying to make a go of it as a freelance musician. This wouldn't be possible without your support."

Royal National Theatre



▲ Natalie's model boxes & final image from *Dear Octopus* (production photo: Marc Brenner).

The Trust was asked to support an additional position for the NT's Maria Bjornson Design Placement. Clare Taylor, Trusts & Foundations Manager, had this to say:

"We are incredibly grateful for The Fenton Arts Trust's support, which allowed us to create an additional Design Residency in our production team. This newly-created placement has the potential to launch recipients into excellent professional opportunities, due to the skills development and exposure that it affords. We invited applications from recent theatre design graduates or early career designers."

"I've been exposed to more designers, directors and production managers than I have working as a freelancer. I've sat in technical rehearsals for The Effect, been model making for Dear Octopus, provided digital art for Death of England, and even helped at an event at Downing Street with the Prime Minister that celebrated theatre and explained the design process to various MPs."

Natalie Johnson, 2023 Design Resident

Far from the Norm



▲ Joshua Shanny-Wynter & Penelope Klamert. Photos: Camilla Greewell & Paul Phung.

The Trust supported three Far From The Norm (FFTN) dance artists over the period: Larissa Koopman, Joshua Shanny-Wynter and Penelope Klamert. Lee Griffiths, Executive Producer, commented:

"With support from The Fenton Arts Trust, FFTN has been developing three Hip Hop dance artists, with the skills and experience to equip them to become professional performers. This project has been integral to building the confidence and action-based learning of promising young professionals, it has enabled FFTN to develop relationships and build our pool of performers, but furthermore, offer professional development opportunities not readily available in touring dance companies. All three of these participants are now on stage with the company, touring internationally and representing the best of British dance."

HOME (Greater Manchester Arts Centre)



▲ Images from Naomi's exhibition *Middle Moments*. Photos: Elle Brotherhood.

Naomi Harwin's sensory exhibition *Middle Moments*, supported by the Trust, captured the moments in modern life we tend to miss when we are rushing from one place to the next. Development Officer Helen Davison told us:

"Naomi invited audiences to explore her collection through cutouts and interactive, tactile installations and provided a reminder to slow down and find peace, reflection and joy in the seemingly 'invisible' times that make up the vast majority of our lives. As Naomi's first professional exhibition, it also gave curator Celina Loh her first credit in an established gallery and was the first time that sensory artwork had been featured in HOME's Granada Foundation Galleries."

UPROAR



▲ The selected composers, UPROAR musicians & their mentors at work. Photo: Ethan Davies.

The Trust supported UPROAR/Wales New Music Ensemble with their Composer Studio, a mentored, structured programme for six Welsh early career composers that provided an opportunity for them to write for the ensemble. Michael Rafferty, Artistic Director, said:

"The funding support we received from The Fenton Arts Trust was an important contribution to UPROAR and Ty Cerdd's Composers Studio project. We are passionate about providing opportunities for new generations of composers, and this project, involving large ensemble, could only be achieved with significant support."

Two of the supported composers commented:

"Working with the UPROAR ensemble felt like a true collaboration and partnership. Both the mentors and ensemble helped to realise my ideas, providing invaluable insights that felt constrictive and creatively explorative - I never felt limited with the creative possibilities."

"The project allowed me to extend myself artistically and develop as a composer within a friendly, welcoming setting. This culminated in a recording session that I would not have been able to organise myself without the support of UPROAR."

Financial Support 2023-2024

The Fenton Arts Trust awarded 37 individuals and organisations a total of £154,640 in support of the arts in the UK during the financial year.

Beneficiary	Award	Amount
Annelise Bucher	<i>Relay is a danced chain reaction. Playful and spontaneous, 5 dancers and 5 musicians collide to create unexpected relationships.</i>	1,500
Apples & Snakes	<i>Future Voices: a development programme for 40 emerging spoken word poets from across England to celebrate our 40th anniversary in 2023.</i>	5,000
Ardent Theatre Company	<i>Performance fees for ARDENT8 to support 8 actors from outside London early in their professional careers who face socio-economic barriers.</i>	5,000
Art in Perpetuity Trust	<i>Mentoring Award for four art graduates, across two years, mentored by APT Artists providing free studios and exhibiting opportunities.</i>	6,000
Arthur Keegan	<i>Album of new music celebrating Thomas Hardy released by award-winning record label. Will help establish composer's career.</i>	2,460
Buxton International Festival	<i>A programme offering young musicians, in the early stages of their career; a professional environment in which to get work experience.</i>	4,400
Chisenhale Dance Space	<i>A programme providing eight early career marginalised dance artists with seed funding & bespoke mentorship to kick-start creative projects.</i>	5,000
Contemporary Music for All (CoMA)	<i>Connect the Dots: workshops for eight emerging composers, teaching techniques in inclusive collaborative music making with disabled musicians.</i>	3,000
Cove Park	<i>Future Materials Fellowships 2023: research and production residencies for visual artists working with sustainable materials and processes.</i>	6,000
Curious Directive Theatre Company	<i>HYPOTHESIS retreats are a paid residential opportunity for early career theatre companies - a unique week to think, dream & strategise.</i>	3,000
English National Opera	<i>ENO offers professional playing and singing fellowships to musicians from diverse backgrounds to break down barriers to career progression.</i>	4,500
Far From The Norm	<i>Far From The Norm performer associates will equip three performers with action-based learning to develop as leading HipHop dance artists.</i>	4,000
Fieldnotes	<i>Supporting four early career writers with a 6-month mentorship and development programme to facilitate the production of new poetic works.</i>	4,300
Fifth Word	<i>Acclaimed theatre company Fifth Word will create the first ever East Midlands-wide training programme for promising early-career playwrights.</i>	5,000
Gothic Opera	<i>Singers' fees for the London revival of Robert Planquette and H.B. Farnie's Rip van Winkle, or the Legend of Sleepy Hollow in October 2023</i>	6,800
High Barnet Chamber Music Festival	<i>Artist fees for our third season of concerts platforming the best early-career musicians in the heart of High Barnet.</i>	2,000
HOME	<i>HOME Projects is an artist development programme to support and mentor emerging North-West artists/curators, culminating in an exhibition.</i>	2,850
International Guitar Foundation (IGF)	<i>Young Artist Platform 2023: 4 year-long mentoring + commissioning & performances for 3 composers & 6 musicians + training for 50 more guitarists.</i>	5,000
Kate Lowe	<i>Immersive Opera Concerts: exciting and immersive opera concerts featuring young upcoming professional singers and instrumentalists.</i>	2,000
Leanne Moden	<i>I am seeking funding for time to write a piece of theatre about rural poverty and the pluses & minuses of tourism in small communities.</i>	1,000
Lewis Coenen-Rowe	<i>A concert of new chamber music created during the covid-19 pandemic by four emerging composers based in Glasgow.</i>	3,540
Lewisham Arthouse	<i>When dance meets visual art: showcasing of a new live art performance project for the public to support emerging dancers and artists.</i>	1,600
Lucy Mellors	<i>A tour of It is I, Seagull, Lucy Mellors' innovative new ACE-supported play, using opera, comedy & storytelling to explore mental health.</i>	2,500
Magma Poetry	<i>Support emerging writers to co-edit issues 86 (theme: Food) & 87 (Islands) of Magma Poetry, giving them new skills and Magma new audiences.</i>	5,280
Manchester Baroque	<i>A professional development scheme of training, mentorship and performance for early-career musicians specialising in historical performance.</i>	5,000
New Diorama Theatre	<i>RECHARGE: a joined-up skills & creative development programme to upskill & elevate talented, diverse early-career 'Covid-era' theatre-makers.</i>	4,800
Photographers' Gallery	<i>Folio Fridays support emerging photographers through networking opportunities & portfolio feedback from industry professionals & the public.</i>	5,000
RABBLE Theatre	<i>RABBLE Lift, providing seven inspiring paid internships for early-career actors and theatre makers on a professional production in 2023.</i>	4,000
Rhona Stevens	<i>To support the creation of Mirr - a new body of multi-genre music, rooted in the writings of Scots poet Violet Jacob.</i>	1,960
Royal National Theatre	<i>Support an additional, new design residency at the National Theatre - an annual, year-long paid position for early-career theatre designers.</i>	5,000
Scherzo Ensemble	<i>Funds to support fees for early-career orchestral players in three fully-staged performances of Rossini's opera La Cenerentola.</i>	6,000
Sound Festival	<i>Supporting 11 early career composers to be mentored & work with two ensembles & a choir to develop pieces for performance at soundfestival 23.</i>	4,500
Tara Theatre	<i>NOVA, our commissioning scheme for emerging writers of South Asian heritage, and Spoken Space, a mixed genre evening with open mic.</i>	5,000
The Night With...	<i>Support toward the 2023 emerging composer development covering their expenses to attend two workshops with Xenia Pestova Bennett.</i>	3,000
Theatre Royal Stratford East	<i>Assistant Director Scheme: four early-career theatre directors assist and learn from the Director of 4 plays, from rehearsal to performance.</i>	5,000
Theatre-Rites	<i>Under-represented emerging directors receive mentorship/training to develop career in visual theatre/puppetry productions for young audiences.</i>	5,000
UPROAR/ Wales New Music Ensemble	<i>Composer Studio 2023 - Mentored, structured programme for six early-career Welsh composers to write for UPROAR ensemble of 12 musicians.</i>	5,000
Wild Arts	<i>An artist development programme giving coaching, mentoring and performance opportunities to four early career singers.</i>	3,650
	TOTAL	154,640

Current Beneficiaries

Support for the current financial year (2024-2025) includes the following beneficiaries from around the UK:

Ben Rowarth	National Youth Theatre of GB
Chandeni Gobardhan	New Sussex Opera
Edinburgh Art Festival	Northern Ballet
Exeter Phoenix	Poetry London
FACT Liverpool	Propel
Farnham Sinfonia	Quandary Collective
Film London	Rachel E. Thorn
Halle Concerts Society	Rebecca Allen
Hampstead Theatre	Roundhouse Trust
Hull Urban Opera	Royal Exchange Theatre
Jermyn Street Theatre	San Mei Gallery (Van Gogh House London)
Lake District Music	Scherzo Ensemble
Little Angel Theatre	Shape Arts
Michael McEvoy	South East Dance
Multi-Story Orchestra	Theatre503
National Youth Choirs of GB	

Fieldnotes

Our grant supported this artist-run publishing project with a programme for emerging writers. One of those supported, **Miruna Fulgeanu**, who has gone on to win the prestigious Oxford Poetry Prize and is now putting together her first collection, commented:

"This multifaceted programme has been a blessing, filling a gap in access to resources / community / guidance. Since I'm self-employed, the grant itself has allowed me to reduce my working hours over the 6 months and dedicate that time to my poetry instead: writing, and doing other essential work I usually struggle to find time for, like submitting and applying for opportunities."

Supporting TFAT

We aim to help individuals and artistic institutions by awarding grants and funds in keeping with founder Shu-Yao Fenton's wishes. We would welcome any donations in pursuit of this, which can attract further Gift Aid.

Please make cheques payable to *The Fenton Arts Trust*, or by bank transfer: *Lloyds Bank, Sort Code 30-00-08, Account no. 00979513.*

Fenton Trustees and its representatives actively seek out opportunities to attend events and engage with beneficiaries, to gain a fuller understanding of how the funds have helped support and develop their practice. This we understand is relatively unusual. If anyone is interested to know more about, or to support this side of our work, please get in touch via the address below.

*The Fenton Arts Trust (Registered Charity no. 294629)
PO Box 268825, London SE23 9DG*

If you do decide to support us we will be delighted to hear from you.

**The Fenton Arts Trust, P.O. Box 68825,
London SE23 9DG | www.fentonartstrust.org.uk**

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