

radical arts handbook  
**issue 02 radical present**



## **publishers**

Future's Venture Foundation is a small Charitable Trust established to provide funding to artists and creatives to develop and deliver challenging and radical works that intend to make a difference and positive contribution to society, the environment and culture.

Gaia Project is an independent publishing and curatorial initiative operating at the intersection of Art and Ecology – or indeed, in that poetic space where Art becomes Ecology, and where Ecology becomes Art.

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### **Future's Venture Radical Arts Handbook**

Issue 1: Radical Past

Issue 2: Radical Present

Issue 3: Radical Futures

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Back Cover: FV Flame by Michael Barnes-Wynters

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### **Future's Venture**

<http://futuresventure.net>



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## future's venture foundation **manifesto**

manifesto for a new arts company or 'outcasting': the art of sustainable living

This manifesto outlines the basis for a new arts charity (Future's Venture Foundation) arising from two legacies: that of Lanternhouse which closed in 2012, and before it the world-renowned Welfare State International. The charity has been endowed by the sale in early 2015 of property owned by Lanternhouse International.

We use the notion of 'outcasting' as our underlying philosophical approach. Outcasting refers to that which is cast out: waste material, the rejected, other. We seek to support outcasts from conventional arts funding and outcasts from the strictures of normalized social and political expectations. We are casting out old associations, casting seeds, and casting out a fishing line reaching out for new members, associates, partners, and collaborators.

### **The art we make:**

- Changes the dominant social, environmental, economic and political narrative
- Maintains a radical voice and focuses on content and process rather than 'outputs', 'outcomes' and 'impact'
- Explores methods of genuine participation without compromising the autonomy or integrity of the artist
- Intends to make a difference: a positive contribution to society, the environment and culture
- Promotes sustainable living, rather than sustainable development
- Listens, responds and reflects
- Is not subject to the limitations and coercions of public and most other funding agencies
- Maintains a dialogue for futures thinking, exploring the potential to work between, across and beyond all creative disciplines
- Seeks partnerships, collaborations and networks
- Adopts adaptable processes and forms of engagement appropriate to the needs of the situation
- Remains dynamic, organic, ecological and rhizomatic in its approach throughout its life

### 3 Zines = 1 Radical Arts Handbook

*‘The most moral activity of all is the creation of space for life to move onward.’  
– Robert Pirsig. Lila: an inquiry into morals*

This book-zine is the second in a series of three publications – *Radical Past*, *Radical Present* and *Radical Futures* – a compendium to form the *Radical Arts Handbook*. Edited by Roney Fraser-Munroe, Michael Barnes-Wynters and David Haley, with support from James Brady, it establishes the Future’s Venture Foundation Imprint.

Future’s Venture Foundation (FVF) is a political intervention of defiance, a critical pedagogical process and an artwork in its own right. Its name disrupts the language of neoliberalism. Here, **Future’s** means owning our diverse, self-determined opportunities rather than predetermined commodity speculation. Here, **Venture** is supporting artists to undertake risky, daring and audacious projects. Here the underlying principles of this **Foundation** are based on ethical investments to provide the Radical Independent Arts Fund. A fund that is independent from other controls with the radical intension of affecting the fundamental nature of society through art practices.

As a whole, this *Radical Arts Handbook* is a manifestation of what FVF has achieved so far, where it is now and its potential exit, through others, beyond 2021.

Contributors have been drawn from a wide range of artists and activists, many of whom received funding to develop and produce their projects and productions through the Future’s Venture Foundation Radical Independent Arts Fund.

Between the past and the future, the present. Between reflection and speculation, the now. In the moment action takes place. We live by every heartbeat, every breath. Some choose to be artists. Some choose to be radical. This issue reveals more people who live to be both at this moment, right now, present.

Between despair and hope, we find FVF becoming community in support for each other and others, creatively.

#### The Editors

Future’s Venture Imprint Group

## reflection **alison surtees**

What else can we do?

As much as actually 'writing' a bid can be problematic, there is a world of other stuff no one tells you about when you get the money. How do you navigate all this additional pressure of accepting funding and how do we help artists to achieve their ambitions? It encompasses so much more than your art or practice, thinking about managing people, projects, wellbeing, time, digital aspects and more. How can you get support beyond just taking the money? What is the responsibility of the funder on giving the money? Because I felt that we were responsible in some way for the artist, taking the chance with them through financial support.

My thinking had already evolved with the introduction of the Advisory Panel, to reduce the burden of Trustees on reaching out to new artists and networks, and to bring more networks to bear. Mentoring in a more formal way as well as ad hoc, and access to the wider networks for support and knowledge sharing, has been a focus for us. At the end of 2019 I instigated development sessions for artists, around key areas of knowledge that could help support them long term. I engaged our artists, advisors and trustees, as we all shared expertise and skills that would be useful. Aimed at providing a sense of connection, developing personally and professionally, it began in earnest at the start of 2020 in person, and as the pandemic hit, quickly transferred to online, covering digital to collaborative leadership, IP, networks and mental health. It provided paid work for artists delivering sessions, at a time when this was critical to them earning income, it grew the connection between artist and funder and artists and each other. It continues to be our shared mutual support system.

Alison Surtees  
Trust Administrator

Anonymous Artist Statement

*I wanted to also say a massive thanks, I've had another situation where I've had to put the Mental Health training into practice for someone who was going to take their life. This was one evening, it was rather full on, due to our distance as they were in another town, I used zoom and created a brave space, I let them take control and let them talk, cry and scream. I listened and said I wouldn't go, we sat for hours. They are ok now and seeking professional help.*

*Thank you for giving me the confidence and ability to be there for them. If anyone gets the chance to do this course, I highly recommend they do it.*

## foreword **keisha thompson**

Salutations! I have the wonderful task of writing the foreword to this scrumptious second edition of the Radical Arts Handbook. It is quite overwhelming to think that I have been Chair for over two years now. Big thanks to Dave and Alison for encouraging me to put myself forward and supporting me in taking up that space.

When Barney first prepositioned me to join the board in 2016 I leapt at the opportunity (after getting over my initial fear of being a trustee – obv!). Although, I would not necessarily class my work as radical art, I am a great supporter of it. Furthermore, I have often felt frustrated on behalf of my artist friends, who come from that world, and have struggled to get their work funded. Potentially because they couldn't (or didn't want to) navigate the funding system or for other reasons that I do not have the word count for. I am grateful that we can fund artists in a way that is human, bespoke, subverts the power dynamic, supports risk-taking, provides critique with care and invites artists into a genuine family. (We've got a WhatsApp group to prove it.)

Anyway, that's enough about the past! This edition is about the “present”. The etymology being the Latin “*praesentem*”. Apparently, it means “at hand” or “in sight”. Funders are often concerned with “what has been done” and “what is going to happen”. Two loaded questions that can serve as barriers to many artists. We do not all have a secure track record or a clear idea of what will be produced. I am proud to say FVF has always shown great flexibility and invested in artistic process more than anything else. We trust our artists to make use of what is at hand and what is in sight. The rest always falls into place.

**Keisha Thompson**

Chair

Future's Venture Foundation







In 1974 I started work at a small arts organisation, Renaissance Theatre Trust. The Black Death has given the flea an undeservedly bad reputation - fleas are a metaphor for so much more than mere parasitic, bloodsucking insects and a vector for disease. In the aftermath of a pandemic, a climate catastrophe, or nuclear devastation, *pulex irritans* will be amongst the only creatures certain to survive, with their sole basic requirement being the availability of warm-blooded hosts. They are part of the most resilient and adaptable orders of insects known as *Siphonaptera* and their simple endurance throughout all time and events has inspired much art and philosophical thought.

The shortest poem in the English language (by Ogden Nash) alludes to their ubiquity - "Adam had 'em" and their infinite degeneration, like some sub-atomic theory of evolution, was first captured by the great satirist Jonathan Swift and subsequently made popular with Augustus De Morgan's 1872 couplet: "Great fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite 'em, And little fleas have lesser fleas, and so ad infinitum."

John Donne's poem 'The Flea' exposes the flaw in eugenics and gender definition by combining all aspects of Humanity into a single suck: "Mark but this flea, and mark in this, How little that which thou deniest me is; It suck'd me first, and now sucks thee, And in this flea our two bloods mingled be."

As a white, middle class, middle aged, cis male, my voice needs to be small yet part of the many - not at the forefront, but part of a wider movement. The great causes of our age such as BLM, MeToo and XR, are about common cause, endurance and resilience. Grand gestures by people like me are irrelevant - daily, constant, unstoppable irritation and presence is how I can contribute, as I jump light-footed and sharp into the soft underbelly of the beast. My flea circus tries to embody these principles of joy and love, together with an insatiable and unstoppable desire to prick and irritate those who operate against common welfare.

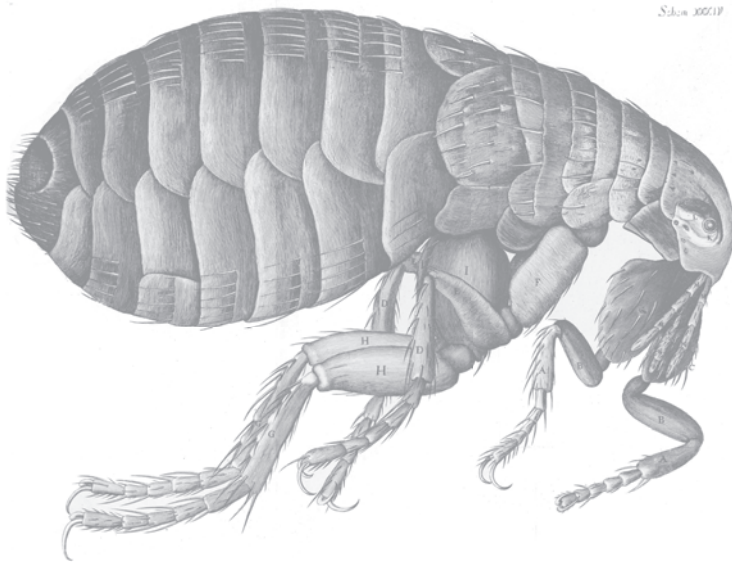
## flea radicals **tony lidington**

But perhaps most powerful of all the metaphors of fleadom, is the clarion call to arms by Marian Wright Edelman (president & founder of the Children's Defence League):

“You need to be a flea against injustice. Enough committed fleas biting strategically can make even the biggest dog uncomfortable and transform even the biggest nation.”

This was the statement that I left to my fellow Futures Venture trustees when I finally resigned from the advisory panel, having been a part of the organisation for six years. The flea is small and irritating alone, but acting together, such minor irritants can be transformative – this is what I believe Futures Venture endeavours to achieve: not show-stopping stunts, but small moments of change which create an itch to be scratched... destabilising acts which can subvert the mainstream. We are flea radicals!

Tony Lidington AKA Uncle Tacko!  
8th January 2021



## the garden **ruby-ann patterson**

### **Funding**

A heavy footed toddler  
blundering proudly.  
a child with no manners  
making up words,  
turning out empty pockets  
Treading on bulbs and  
pulling up plants.  
repotting, re-plotting.  
asking - what powers live underneath  
the cold soil?

who grows in the shadowy edges?  
Artists.  
drowning in watery language  
living probationally.  
waiting for autumn's harvest  
planting  
disorderly daffodils  
to be nursed by spring rain.  
Artists.  
Roots gripping the ground like curled  
toes.

Whilst some are making the margins  
wider  
moving barrows to dredge up  
fermenting fear.  
Unpruned bushes with flailing limbs  
stretch generously into other plots.

Artists.  
no choice to have but to be  
unequivocally, eternally  
grateful  
bowing at the feet of the trampling  
child  
who knows  
the graceful, tasteful measurable  
art  
must look and speak the part.  
to compliment the surrounding  
foliage.

The Garden needs chaos  
speckled with fault.  
needs rowdy hydrangeas,  
to crawl up the brickwork  
needs friction that lights up the world  
needs evergreen spirit.  
and a patio where every artist is  
dancing,  
and grass that's as well-kept as it is  
enjoyed

Ruby-Ann Patterson  
@iamrubyann  
[www.ruby-ann.com](http://www.ruby-ann.com)

*(The Garden was performed as part of the Beyond Future online event  
on 5 November 2020)*

cuts of the cloth



## cuts of the cloth

### background

From May 2017 until January 2019, we created a piece of theatre, Cuts of the Cloth. Initially, we explored with Muslim women their relationship with the Hijab in response to the constant policing of the female body. Inevitably, Islamophobia surfaced and how this was affected by the ‘war on terror’ and the counter-terrorism strategy, Prevent. An urgent need emerged to document this situation, respond and give voice to growing gendered Islamophobia, the impact on Muslim communities and highlight the misrepresentation of Muslim women in the media

### what succeeded and what didn't in your project or production?

The funding allowed invaluable time to research, interview women, collaborate and explore the process without meeting targets. Time for the process to breathe and develop, provided in-depth research which showed in the final performance. The play moved people to reflect on many issues and seeing a Muslim woman of colour on HOME's main stage meant that some saw themselves represented. We knew the subject would meet some disapproval, making some audience members uncomfortable. However, interacting with the play started much needed conversations, changing people's perceptions. Many professionals saw Prevent training differently and now question the government narrative. We made it the best we could, but underestimated our own capacity and now need to value our time for the capacity to seek funding for touring.

### what difference did future's venture foundation funding and support mean to you, your project or production and your future work?

It was refreshing to not censor ourselves, worry about offending liberal frameworks, bringing discomfort to cultural and political gatekeepers, or meet criteria that often comes with funding. And Future's Venture support networks continue beyond the project's end in 2019.

We continue to create challenging and provocative work. Hafsah has a Tete a Tete Festival commission with FormidAbility, exploring Bristol's role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Nikki, a Jewish anti-Zionist, is writing a play set in East Jerusalem, that depicts the friendship between a Palestinian and an Israeli woman to dismantle perceptions about violence.

Hafsah Aneela Bashir Writer & Performer | Nikki Mailer Co-Creator & Director

### further information

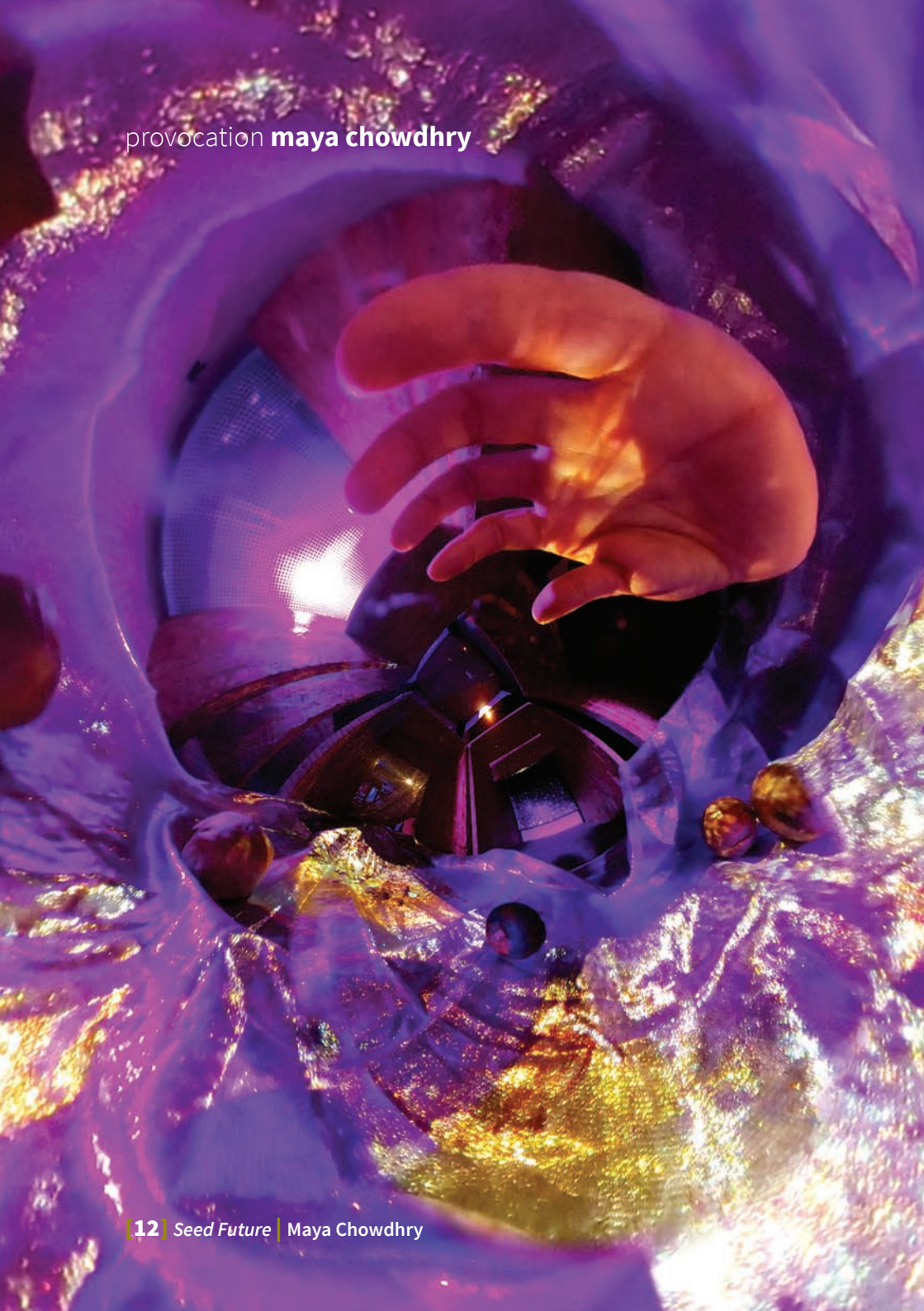
<http://outsidetheframearts.org.uk/cuts-of-the-cloth/>

<https://www.instagram.com/outsidetheframearts/>

<https://twitter.com/artsoft>



provocation **maya chowdhry**



**The Feed**

**Molasses tongue**

**to be onto sweet goals**

**for flames**

**food is thought**

**eat food for last human threat**

**as blood through enough food**

**food tastes**

**around thought**

**in everything**

**not in your belly**

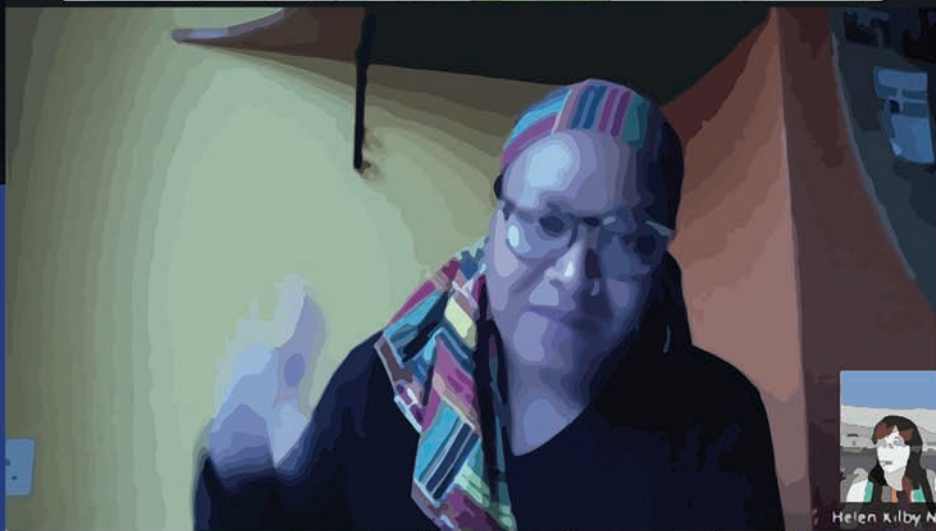
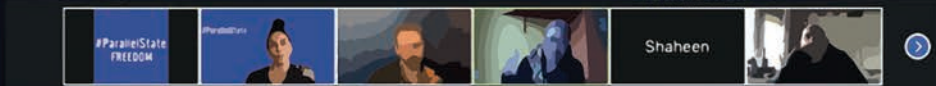
**death at you earth to feed everyone**





#ParallelState  
Welcome to your new state

#ParallelState  
Welcome to your new state



#ParallelState @AParallelState

Messages



## background

The Parallel State is a breakaway state – a space to collectively imagine alternative solutions to life on Earth – free from the oppositional constraints of the failed states in which we live. The Parallel State is building new alliances through a series of online events and laying the foundations for the 2021 Parallel State Summit.

## what succeeded and what didn't in your project or production?

The Parallel State has delivered a programme of events and actions, aimed at listening to the unheard corners of the world. Through the pandemic period, a growing network of people contributed their thoughts, images and sounds from where they were. This included a sound blog from a senior consultant in a hospital in the North of England, geese at midnight in the Cairngorms and a moving story of someone who lost two relatives to COVID-19. 2020 was a momentous year with the rise of the #BLM movement. Parallel State opened up several online events that facilitated discussion around #BLM activism. A small committee worked to connect people and bring in new voices. As the year ended, we began to take stock and realised that we had captured valuable material that needed to be archived. So, we have begun the process of building a website for a launch in 2021.

## what difference did future's venture foundation funding and support mean to you, your project or production and your future work?

The FV funding enabled us to create a platform of events and to connect digitally with people, building our new state. We stayed playful - more cabaret than seminar - and people liked that. We encouraged new artistic talent and funded three small artist commissions. These were Joyce Treasure, Sam Metz and Lavz. We placed no pressure on them to have any particular outcomes, we just asked them to imagine what the Parallel State would look like. In return they have made some excellent work, including a Parallel State 'anthem'. The resource enabled us to get up to a scale where we have been able to draw in more resources from Necessity, another radical fund.

## further information

<https://soundcloud.com/parallelstate-uk>

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/parallel-state/id1507371406>

Twitter: @aparallelstate

Instagram: parallel\_state

## provocation **hafsah aneela bashir**

*“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.” – Audre Lorde*

2021 began with a positive. A positive COVID-19 result that is.

Today is the first time I have ventured out after 18 days and the world feels different. I feel different. My body feels different. I need a desensitization injection at the hospital and I'm worried I'll be late for my appointment. I have my son's car on the drive and I'm trying to remember which pedal to push to make it start as if I haven't been driving for two decades.

As I steer along the road, the world comes at me fast. My mind feels slow – anxious. A police car pulls up slowly behind me and I realise I can't remember if I am covered on the insurance. What's my son's number plate? I can feel myself start to sweat. I am taken back to another time, my car being pulled over by Kent police. A young white female officer in my face shrieking, 'you'd better be insured' before realising my five terrified children are staring back at her. I remember her spit landing on my bottom lip and using my hijab to wipe it off.

I slow down and start to whisper prayers. The zikr helps my heart. I don't want any noise in the car. Recently I have got used to a new kind of stillness. I park in the hospital car park, taking longer than usual. I realise too late it's the wrong one - Grafton and not Hathersage Road.

Rushing, I am surprisingly light on my feet. I get to the building listed on my letter. Notice that I am not breathless. No one seems to know where the clinic is. The number was on the letter. The letter is at home. After a tour of ENT and Diabetes, I finally find it. My chest feels tight. The nurse looks like she wants to give me hug. I rest for half an hour, my arm itching from my injection, looking around this sterile hospital room, conscious that I am on the other side of COVID-19. Many haven't made it.

It is said that when God created mercy, He created it in a hundred parts. Of this He sent one part to earth.  
Just one.

It's through this, we love and have mercy for one another. Ninety-nine parts he kept with Himself. For us – when we meet Him. I wonder then, who am I not to be merciful to myself?

## provocation **hafsa aneela bashir**

Self-isolation has taught me a lot. That silence is balm. That I have fought hard to cultivate a peaceful environment these last few weeks. Minimising non-urgent calls. Less screen time. I think about how my body didn't hurt as I was walking, as if with COVID-19, has come cleansing. Of my mind and spirit.

In a world that values productivity and consumption over connection and community, napping I am learning is restorative. I feel like napping now. I walk out of the hospital towards the express supermarket outside and am aware how my mind is working slowly but noticing everything. The rain in the cracks of the pavement. The neon-hooded jogger across the street. The way light hits the windows on the building opposite. I wonder who's looking back at me.

I take my time at the supermarket thinking about what food I'll offer this body that pulled me through COVID-19. I read the ingredients properly, marvel at the colours of the fruit. A nurse and I discuss what to have for lunch as if we've known each other all our lives.

As I drive back home, I feel grateful. Maybe my radical present is just me dancing in my seat to Hawa Hawaii, full blast, reassured that it's okay to pay attention even if it fills my mind. I am a poet. The solution isn't to block things out but to continue doing what poets do.

To notice.

It's all about balance. Cancelling the noise – the unnecessary clutter. It's a beautiful feeling to delete in one go, the 354 emails arriving in my junk folder each day. To delete anything that pulls me away from this idea of rest as resilience. Maybe my radical present is to read books. To cry watching the Perfect Planet. To function with intention and not on autopilot. Maybe my radical present is just me driving, feeling the uplifting bass of Kunta Kinte in my chest, knowing what it means to rest, absolutely present in this one moment.



# WE SHALL NOT FORGET ( WHO DIDN'T PAY THEIR TAX )

SUPPORT THE NHS By Spending With Companies Who Don't Use Off Shore Tax Havens

We are led to believe the government wants to 'Save The NHS'. A rousing slogan from a party that has dismantled, underfunded and privatised this lifesaving institution for decades (not to mention routinely voting against meaningful pay rises for NHS staff). I'm no expert on finance but perhaps the billions spent on unusable PPE and other dodgy contracts for Tory donors (or the £3 billion that has recently 'gone missing') could have helped 'Save The NHS'? They deserve more than our applause.



nathan geering



## site specific moves nathan geering

### **Sight Specific Moves Breakin' is falling with STYLE!**

For years I investigated the unlikely link between Hip Hop and visual impairment which led me to create The Rationale Method (RM), a pioneering approach to accessibility. RM adds many branches to the tree of accessibility with one of its biggest branches being an initiative known as Sight Specific Moves. This unique course teaches people with visual impairment the art of Breakin' (breakdance) as a means of injury prevention and improves spatial awareness. Successfully piloted in Rotherham, the course was taught to children aged between 8 and 16.

Many people with visual impairment fall and get injured, but Breakin' teaches people how to fall safely whilst being aware of their surroundings. When people become injured through a fall, it is usually because the force stops abruptly at a single point in their body. Breakin' uses techniques like 'Go Downs' (ways to transition from standing to the floor), so people with visual impairment learn how to keep moving to dissipate the force of a fall over a larger surface area through their bodies and reduce injuries.

To communicate movements effectively, I used RM Notation which has a unique language that utilises beatboxing sound effects to give a richer soundscape to people with visual impairment, deepening their understanding of a movement's quality. This technique was developed with people with visual impairment, by asking them to physicalise the sound effects that beatboxers made. RM Notation is intuitive, as it instantaneously gives vital information to the speed, energy and quality of movement. RM Notation is also used in the RM of Audio Description, offering a dynamic way of experiencing live action from television/ film, theatre, dance, art and sport.

I approached Future's Venture, to deliver the course to cities across the country, but instead of financial support, its trustees advised me to deliver just one course and create a promotional video to help secure future funding and partnerships. I decided to partner with The Royal Opera House as they run "Monday Moves", a ballet dance class for people with visual impairment. Making the most of this opportunity I secured two performances for the Sight Specific Moves dance group at The Royal Opera House's Open Up Festival, using RM.

To give people a deeper understanding of the course and the transformative impact it has on people's lives, I decided to produce a documentary rather than a short promotional video.



## site specific moves **nathan geering**

The participants were aged from late 20s to 70s! They were either familiar with dance through the 'Monday Moves' ballet classes, or had no previous experience. Each participant had to move out of their comfort zone, as they usually dance upright, whereas with Breakin' they had to become comfortable with being on the floor. After a couple of sessions their floor confidence increased and they safely navigated from standing to floor-based positions. A massive project highlight were the stories of participants using the techniques in their everyday lives to avoid falls and injuries; life skills that enhanced their physical health and wellbeing.

The participants contributed to devising the choreography and the end result was a showcase that combined ballet and classical music with Breakin' dance and funk music. A beatboxer audio described the performance, live, providing cues to help performers keep time and gave them indications of the next movements to be performed, simultaneously heightening accessibility for both performers and audience.

The audience was amazed that people with visual impairment can perform unison choreography and individual dance movement. The participants loved the experience of performing in front of hundreds of people, gaining confidence as artists and in their everyday lives.

Since the Royal Opera House activity, the documentary has secured partnerships with major visual impairment organisations across the country and delivered online, nationally and internationally, to help combat isolation during lockdowns. We have appeared on BBC Breakfast and BBC Strictly 'It Takes Two' with audiences of over 10 million. The support from Future's Venture came at such a crucial time and allowed me to strategically plan activity that has resulted in maximising both social impact and public reach.

Through the Sight Specific Moves injury prevention course, my company is able to teach people with visual impairment a valuable life skill that will hopefully improve their quality of life for years to come.

### **further information**

[www.rationalearts.com](http://www.rationalearts.com)  
instagram rationale arts  
facebook rationale arts  
twitter rationale arts



nathan geering











**\*BUFFING STUFF REALLY DOESN'T HELP**

**FUN**

**BECAUSE PAINTS SUCK**

**love life**

**STOP ERASING US**

**fuck**  
LIVE BY EQUALITY  
COMMUNITY

**\*Buff**

To remove painted graffiti with chemicals and other instruments, or to paint over it with a flat colour.

**STOKES CROFT BRISTOL'S CULTURAL QUARTER**

**SEE YOU AT THE CLAMPS**

**USE THE SPACE WHILE YOU STILL CAN**



"WE CANNOT SOLVE PROBLEMS BY USING THE SAME KIND OF THINKING WE USED WHEN WE CREATED THEM."



# peoples republic of stokes croft

## background

PRSC is a community organisation that was founded in 2007 in a highly quixotic fashion, as a response to the short-sightedness of government in regard to the cultural importance of Stokes Croft and surrounding area. PRSC was conceived as a force for bottom-up change, seeking to embody real change through philosophical debate, both in thought and through action, building on and working with the already vibrant existing counter-culture.

## what succeeded and what didn't in your project or production?

The project is ongoing and thriving, with the organisation becoming increasingly resilient, developing all manner of community and arts projects, largely self funded through our own endeavours. Over the years we have discovered first hand, and at considerable cost the power that shapes our communities and our cities.

In 2011 the community rose up to oppose the incursion of Tesco into this fiercely independent area. The long and bitter campaign culminated in Tesco's arrival and serious rioting as a direct result. In 2019, after eight years of community involvement in the Bearpit – a 1960s sunken roundabout in the heart of Bristol, which became a Mecca for street art and for voice – we were forcibly removed by the Council, the area was sanitised and handed over to corporate Bristol.

## what difference did future's venture foundation funding and support mean to you, your project or production and your future work?

The Future's Venture funding was an absolute godsend. Michael Barnes-Wynter (FVF advisor) pitched up by chance at PRSC one dark day in late 2019, just as PRSC was at its lowest ebb, having recently been evicted from the Bearpit and having endured tens of thousands of pounds worth of its kit wilfully destroyed. Having clocked the set up, he said, "I am going to see that you get some help". We put together a bid for the other FVF trustees, to develop our manufacturing capability, improve our media presence and to fund a part time funding manager.

The necessity to write this bid helped to galvanise our fight back. We have since massively increased production and sales of artwork, re-jigged our web presence, and our foray into seeking funding has repaid our efforts tenfold.

A timely intervention indeed, the most important element being the belief in us and the support offered without expectations or strings attached, in our time of greatest need.

## further information

[www.prsc.org.uk](http://www.prsc.org.uk)

[www.stokescroftchina.co.uk](http://www.stokescroftchina.co.uk)

ku'umba





## **ku'umba - radical creative evolution**

Ku'umba is a grassroots, hyperlocal production syndicate made up of an assembly of freelancers brought together with a vision towards accessible, equitable and progressive change. Ku'umba, the sixth pillar in the Nguzo Saba, describes creativity in the cause of improving the community to make it more beautiful and more useful.

### **background**

Based in the historic NIAMOS in Hulme, Manchester, we primarily operate as an arts and music company comprising a studio, label and imprint. The Ku'umba Arts Collective comprises a series of artist-led projects working together as an agency, studio, training provider and DIY label supporting each other under a common banner. Each member brings a different creative technical and/or organisational skill to the collective whole.

### **what succeeded and what didn't in your project or production?**

Given the constraints of national lockdown we have been unable to host any live music performances. Instead, we launched Sarakasi, a black-led circus company that is an autonomous member of the Ku'umba collective. With support from ACE funding, we developed our first ever theatrical production, 'Letsby Avenue'. Ku'umba created an original soundtrack for the performance that was performed live for one evening and then streamed to hundreds of audience members over three nights.

On the back of this we have begun weekly scratch sessions where circus artists collaborate with Ku'umba's music collective with the intention of developing the show over the next year.

### **what difference did future's venture foundation funding and support mean to you, your project or production and your future work?**

The funding enabled us to develop and then launch our online socials and promote the first release from Ku'umba's archive, a song titled 'Smooth Sailing'. Have a listen here.

### **further information**

<https://www.instagram.com/kuumba.mcr/>

<https://www.facebook.com/KuumbaMcr>



## jet moon



## **background**

Jet is a queer, working class, disabled artist, who creates intimate spaces of sharing and visibility with marginalised communities.

Resilient and Resisting is an oral history and collaborative storytelling project: research and interviews from people at the intersection of disability, queerness, kink, sex work and survivorship. The project was originally a series of interviews, travelling archives, readings and events. Seeking to give voice to groups I was part of, fighting back against the increased hardship and stigma we were facing under Austerity. The original project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Future's Venture gave funding to develop the design work for an artists book: compiling the resulting collection of interviews, photographs, graphic design (posters and flyers); alongside archival material from Bishopsgate Institute, MayDay Rooms and Hackney Museum, that depicted similar struggles in earlier times.

## **what succeeded and what didn't in your project or production?**

As the Resilient and Resisting project had already taken place, what remained was to collate the documentation and material into an artist's book. I was able to continue working with graphic designer Ola Podgorska (Fiercelove Design) who worked with me throughout R&R. At the time of writing this we are still working on the design but I feel happy with the progress we are making. The process has been reasonably straightforward, except not satisfied with the added complication of a pandemic, I also became homeless during 2020.

## **what difference did future's venture foundation funding and support mean to you, your project or production and your future work?**

At the time funding came in from FV I was really ill, run ragged by the last 18 months of struggling to survive and make the R&R project happen. I'd been living off a credit card! Apart from the importance of having some financial backing, it was a boost to meet an organisation that understood the politics of my work, and didn't ask me to damp that down. I could be unapologetically ME. Funding has helped to keep the R&R project active, moving us one step closer to an Artists Book. Next stop: finding money to print the book and then find a way to tour. We'd like to come North!

## **further information**

<https://resilientandresisting>

## bill posters



### **what succeeded and what didn't in your project or production?**

The pilot and delivery phases of the Spectre installation and its associated digital intervention on Instagram was a mixed process of very intense highs and stressful lows due to the size, scale and scope of the critical interrogation of surveillance capitalism that we were undertaking for the project. We were aiming too high for the resources we had available and essentially completing a £100K+ project on a fraction of the budget. This led to tensions concerning match funding and fabrication debts that took a year to settle, however the cross-sector process, team and final installation exceeded our expectations.

We did succeed in creating an immersive installation that gamifies – and simulates – new forms of computational propaganda including OCEAN (Psychometric) profiling; gamification; algorithmic bias; personalisation; ‘dark design’; ‘deep fake’ technologies; and micro-targeted advertising via a ‘dark ad’ generator.

Presented sculpturally to viewers as a stone circle for the 21st Century, the algorithmically defined materiality of Spectre gives form to the religious philosophy of Dataism. Spectre creates space for viewers to explore & interrogate the deeper ethical and moral implications that exist concerning the interconnected logics of Dataism and Surveillance Capitalism and their impacts on core human values such as privacy, truth, trust and democracy.

Spectre started out to subvert the power of the Digital Influence Industry and via a series of viral ‘deep fake’ artworks, Spectre became embroiled in a deeper, global conversation about the power of computational forms of propaganda leading to global press coverage and unexpected – and contradictory – official responses from Facebook, Instagram and Youtube.

### **what difference did future's venture foundation funding and support mean to you, your project or production and your future work?**

Future's Venture were very early supporters of the concept for Spectre and the encouragement to move the project forward with the commitment of £2k match funding was greatly appreciated. FV helped facilitate access to a free space to build the prototype but this was quite a complex and stressful process due to differing expectations from the host and our team.

### **further information**

[www.whathaveidonenow.co.uk](http://www.whathaveidonenow.co.uk)

provocation **david tovey**



I've always struggled with my identity; my sexuality, not fitting in to any community - for most of my life I hated who I was. I would drink huge amounts of alcohol and abuse my body. I let people destroy me on the outside and from within, I isolated myself from the world, I hid all my problems inside and, at the bottom of a glass, locked them away so deep that they could never be found. My mental health suffered because of it and led me to many suicide attempts and, ultimately, to homelessness.

Over the last few years, I have started to unlock and evaluate these problems - using them to figure out who I am and who I want to be, and reliving them in my artwork. Art is there to help with our inner turmoil; it saved my life. It got me out of homelessness, it gave me something to engage with, to focus on, to fill my TIME.

TIME!

When you have a lot of time on your hands, you need to find ways to fill it. On the streets, you drink that time away, you may get caught up with drugs – it can destroy you; it can take away your soul. I said that art saved my life, and it did. You see, with a social issue such as homelessness, where people are faced with a multitude of challenges, a multitude of solutions are needed.

I believe that art and creativity should sit alongside housing, healthcare and employment as part of the solution to homelessness. It helps build resilience, a voice, well-being and confidence, but also arts and culture are a human right – as stated in article 27 of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Human Rights – and that means that those who are homeless have a right to access the arts, just the same as anyone else.

So how about this! Let's provide arts and culture to those who are homeless, not just housing. Due to COVID-19, the value of the arts has never been stronger; overnight, it's become as important as medication - helping with isolation, resilience, and mental health in lockdown. TV programmes and online arts workshops have exploded onto our screens, making the arts accessible to as many as possible. But there are always parts of society that fall through those cracks, homeless communities being one. This is something that can be addressed.

## provocation **david tovey**

I've seen the benefits of homeless arts in action. In 2016, I founded the One Festival of Homeless Arts, in London. The festival was conceived after I attended an event by Arts & Homelessness International at City Hall in London. After listening to a Brazilian delegate who had been homeless talking passionately about a small music festival created by homeless buskers in Sao Paolo, I thought 'Why is this not happening in the UK?'. It really did show the value and importance of the arts within the homeless community and so, using my disability benefit, I set up the festival in 2016.

Over the past four years it has grown and we have represented artists from over 20 countries; got artists into education, employment, and housing; been in three cities in the UK, and even held workshops internationally. All this has been done without funding - you don't have to have money to make a great change, just a belief that change can happen when there is something worth fighting for.

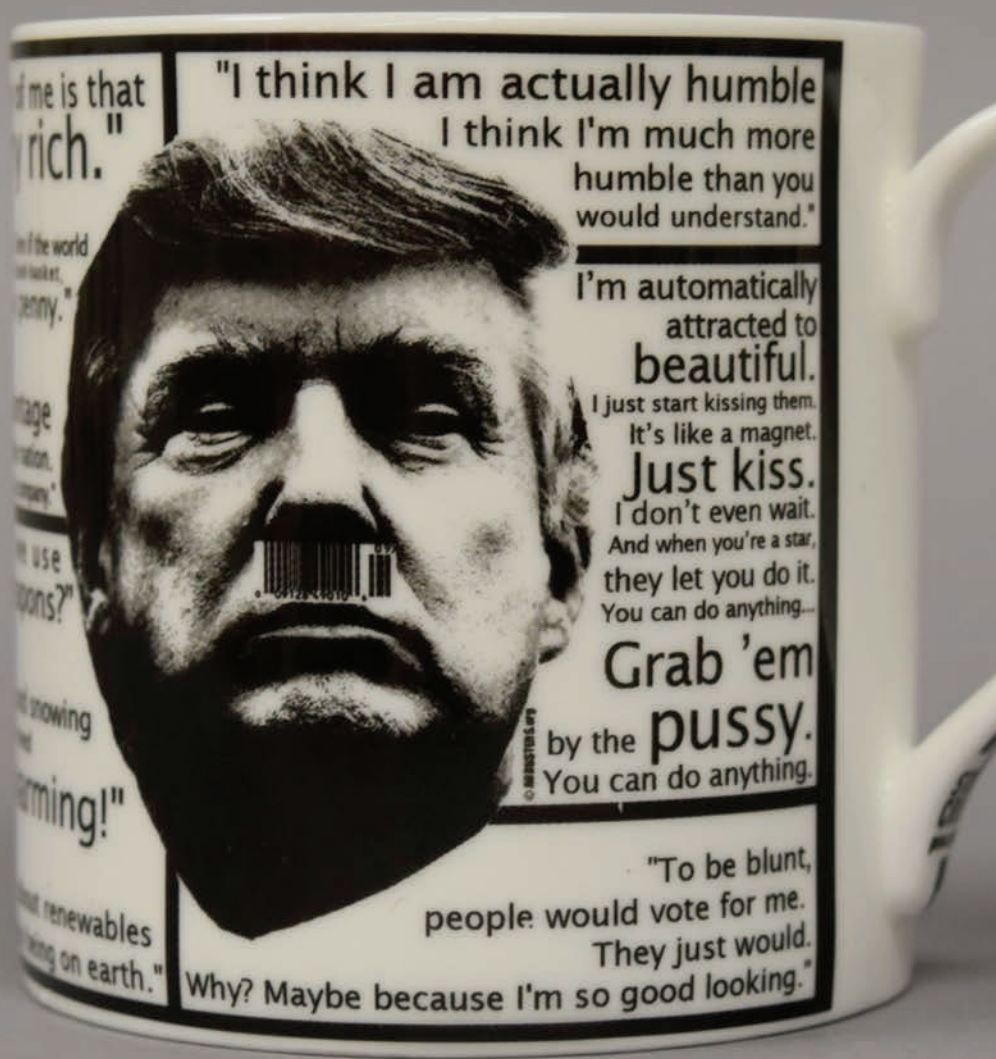
What COVID-19 has given many of us is TIME: Time to do, Time to be, Time to see, Time to care and Time to fight. But remember – too much time can be hard for many people who are homeless.

Many of us now have this opportunity to create great change for those who are struggling. We must fight for what is right. Arts and culture have so much value across the world so now let us capitalise on that – before it is too late.


*'Move Slow When the Path is Not Obvious and Creativity Could Lead to Better Results'* – Nina Simone

David Tovey is a Future's Venture funded Artist Campaigner & Founder of @OneFestivalofHA Creative Producer for @artshomelessint and a Trustee @weareunltd.





PECULIAR CHINA FOR A PECULIAR SOCIETY



Professor Chris Whitty told Sky News on Wednesday that wearing a face mask had almost no effect on reducing the risk of contracting the illness.

Prof Whitty said: “In terms of wearing a mask, our advice is clear: that wearing a mask if you don’t have an infection reduces the risk almost not at all. So we do not advise that.”

Sky News 04 March 2020



A large, multi-colored rainbow arches across the middle of the page. The colors transition from red at the top to purple at the bottom. The rainbow is set against a yellow background that transitions to a dark, cloudy sky at the bottom. A white L-shaped graphic element is positioned on the left side, framing the text.

BEYOND  
FUTURE  
04/03/21

provoke inspire care **david haley**

On 5th November 2020 the **Beyond Futures** Zoom event ended with a provocation...

A few words to our funder friends...

... I love Shakespeare, Samuel Beckett, Augusto Boal, Bach, Miles Davis, Ali Farka Toure, Vermeer, Rothko and Welfare State International. I also love Ulverston Live Music, the local allotment, and the crack with my neighbours on Walney Island, whenever there is a celebration to be had.

Sadly, such local culture is neither valued nor supported as 'Art'. But this is where children learn community values that carry them through their lives. And as the waves of COVID-19, economic disaster, climate and species crises hit, how will our cultures support self-determined ecological resilience? We need to create and affect transformation ecologically through critical culture, with radical art.

Originally, I wrote a litany of encounters from the 1970s to the present that told the story of institutional dogma, elitism, political deceit, bureaucratic absurdity and cultural oppression within mainstream arts funding. Despite the very good work of individuals, this situation persists. Indeed, FVF was founded on Lanternhouse International having its funding for making art cut. If the arts are to meet the transformative challenges we all face, we must seek alternative strategies. We, therefore, offer £20k to lever match funding from other funders to establish a post-FVF, independent, micro-scale, experimental, radical funding initiative... 'BEYOND FUTURE FUND'.

There are not enough independent funders of arts, culture and creativity in the U.K. and not enough support for artists of every age, gender, orientation, colour, class and locality to explore their futures. It is time for the next generation to realise their dreams. We, therefore, invite funders to join us in this new venture, as a creative act and an intervention in the system of future arts funding.

REFLECTION: No funders met the challenge, so we thought again...

**Why?** Why are we doing this? Why would anyone else want to contribute when funds are scarce? Who is giving up their time to establish the new entity? What's the cost of giving the money away, and is it not easier to give it to artists to give to other artists?

When we set out we were specifically against outcomes, outputs and impacts, saying this was the tyranny of funding for many artists. Our Manifesto still holds true as the guiding principle of why we started this, so I think we start with that.

**Who's in the arena?** Not many funders came to the event and we don't have the decision-making contacts within funding organisations to lever their funds; so do we go out to philanthropists? Having tried to establish a new fund and not succeeded, we must consider how we disperse funds, equitably to artists. As FVF captured the essence of what makes good funder, it's important to use FVF's network of artists and their wider networks to get to as many different people as possible, to give it away as a *Radical Present*. A gift, to fund artists directly, to eat and live. They will do art anyway, if they can survive, rather than fund 'projects' as other funders do it. This will make it easier for people to give funds away, dispensing with the project pitch and all it entails.

The £20k under discussion could fund young people at grass roots, trying to get projects off the ground that make change in their local communities. This would be seed funding to action, to intervene and disrupt traditional funding systems – a continuation beyond FVF, as we exit, making the biggest impact we can.

**notes**



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**next issue**  
**radical arts handbook**  
**part three**  
**radical futures**



<http://futuresventure.net>