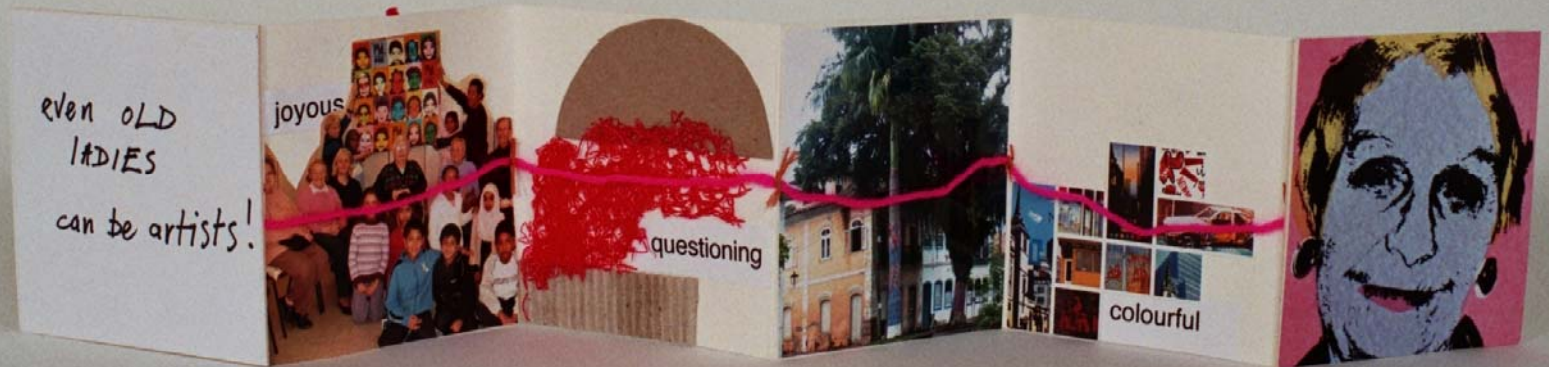




Report on a Programme of Continuing Professional Development and Good Practice



For Artists and others running Intergenerational Arts Activities

January 2004 – December 2006



REPORT ON MAGIC ME'S PROGRAMME OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GOOD PRACTICE

For artists and others running intergenerational arts activities

Magic Me is the UK's leading provider of intergenerational arts activities. This report outlines a three year programme of training and professional development for Magic Me freelance artists, staff and partners.

We are regularly invited to share our learning and practice. We have written this report to document our own learning but also to enable us to share this with others interested in the growing and important area of intergenerational work.

Jan Stirling and Susan Langford
Magic Me,
June 2007

www.magicme.co.uk Magic Me, 18 Victoria Park Square, London, E2 9PF

We are extremely grateful to:

Arts Council England for their support and funding for this programme, and in particular to Karen Taylor, Social Inclusion Officer.

Thames Gateway Creative Skills Partnership and Ocean New Deal for Communities for match funding.

All the Magic Me freelance artists, staff and partners who took part.

Sue Mayo, a key person within Magic Me for many years, who brings to all her work a real depth of understanding and experience and a light touch.

Catherine Rose whose insight and notes from the CPD days have made this report possible.

Caoimhe McAvinchey, of Goldsmiths College, for timely advice on evaluation and research.

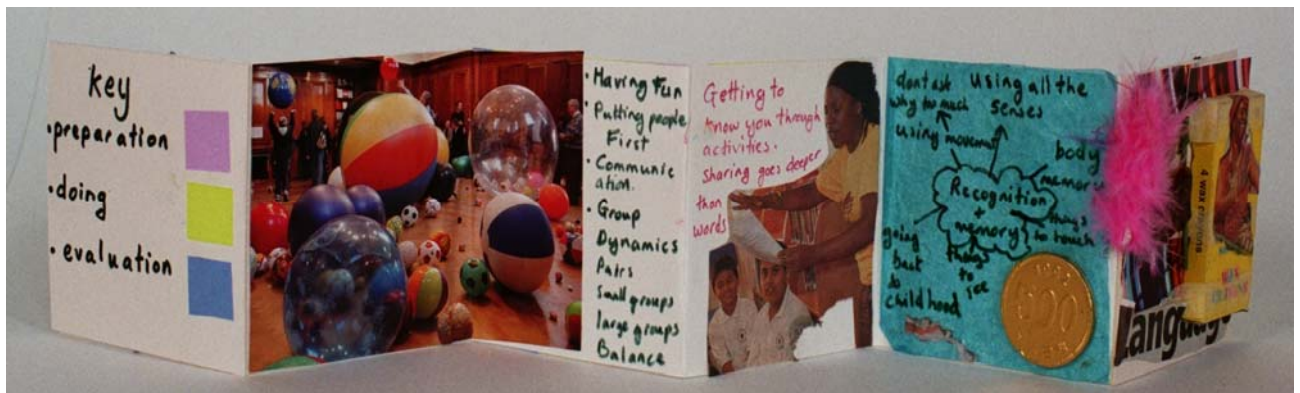
Thank you to those who have allowed us to use their poetry in this report and photographs of their artworks and books in the illustrated version. The accordion books shown throughout this report were made by: Janet Brooke (front cover) Julian West, Ginny Carvisiglia, Gill Haskey, Anthony Lam, Polly Beestone, Anita McKenzie, Ali Campbell, Sally Knocker, Cath Goldstein, Sarah Hammond, Jan Stirling, Sue Mayo. Poetry by Leah Thorn and Surya Turner.

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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION Susan Langford, Director, Magic Me

Someone once told me that setting up intergenerational arts projects must be quite easy. You only need to make two phone calls, one to a school and one to a care home, talk to an artist and put a few dates in the diary.

When I started Magic Me back in 1989 I already knew it was much more complicated than that, but I did believe that with more experience and knowledge of how schools and care homes worked, I would get faster and slicker. It actually now takes me much longer.

I understand the need to get under the skin of an organisation, to find out what makes them excited and to check out how closely the timetable on the wall matches what actually happens. I have learned that staff rooms are not always happy places where everyone gets on, and that even in the most functional of organisations, a 12 week arts project needs to negotiate its way into people's consciousness and the busy schedule. The most important thing I discovered was that I couldn't do everything myself, and projects worked best when I didn't try to.

The job of the artist at the heart of a Magic Me project is to enable young and older people to meet one another and to combine forces to be creative together. Activities work best when each generation needs the other to be able to complete the chosen task, when they combine their different viewpoints and energies. The arts provide a reason and a focus for meeting, a sense of occasion, ways of communicating and a chance to develop and display hidden talents.

The skills and expertise that an artist needs to take on this job cannot be underestimated. The artist's role is key to the whole process, and they must be able to work sensitively within a varied team of people from different disciplines, professions and points of view.

The early Magic Me projects were all based in care homes, bringing school students to work with residents on arts projects week by week. The aim was to break down the invisible barriers around older people's care homes, barriers which left residents cut off from their neighbours and sometimes bored to death. Young people brought in fresh ideas and energy, and a contact with the wider, changing community; they left with new skills, expertise, stories and a fresh perspective on growing up and growing older.

From a single pilot project in 1987 Magic Me has grown to be the UK's leading provider of intergenerational arts projects, serving over 300 people each year. 90% of the work still takes place in our home Borough, Tower Hamlets, in East London, but our expertise and experience reach much further afield through special projects in other parts of London and through our publications, training and consultancy work. In 2001 we published *Sharing the Experience*, a

handbook on how to set up and run arts projects linking young and older people, drawing on a three year series of action research projects. I co-authored this with Sue Mayo, Magic Me Associate Artist over many years, and a very skilled intergenerational artist and trainer. Writing the book helped us to define the process and stages involved in bringing young and older people together, and see the complexity of the artists' role.

In early 2002 Jan Stirling joined Magic Me, bringing to the organisation a rich mix of skills and experience, and a passion for training and supporting artists and developing good practice. Within her first month at Magic Me Jan was leading the development and then the delivery of a five month Artists Training Apprenticeship Scheme, introducing 15 artists to intergenerational arts and Magic Me projects. She went on to establish new systems for recruiting, supporting and supervising artists in our freelance pool. During her employment Jan's role and title grew into Arts Development and Training Manager, reflecting her involvement across the organisation.

Magic Me has flourished, delivering an ambitious programme on limited resources. Our model is flexible and sustainable; combining a small core staff team, and a pool of skilled freelance artists, we can respond quickly to a range of needs and changing demand. Work with care home residents and school students remains one of our core activities, with a particular emphasis on finding creative ways to include people with dementia, however Magic Me now also works through over 50's Clubs and resource centres, sheltered housing schemes and day centres, community and cultural organisations. Young people participate through schools, after school clubs and youth organisations. Individual young and older people are sometimes recruited directly. Project activities range from photography to poetry, puppet making to drama. All combine creativity, community building and personal development.

In 2003 we began a new phase of development. Magic Me was increasingly working with local community groups on estates where there were tensions between young and older people and lack of communication between neighbours of different ethnicities. Work with individual older people and with young people after school and in the holidays was also growing, creating a new direct relationship between artists and participants, outside the usual support structures provided by our partner schools and care settings. Our staff and artists were taking on new responsibilities, creating new ways of working in often very complex situations.

Our challenge was to build a larger team of freelance artists, diverse in artform, experience and culture, and to pass on to them Magic Me's years of experience and proven ways of working. Experienced staff and artists within Magic Me held a great deal of knowledge and insight about intergenerational work, the question was how to share and spread this across the organisation and to reconsider what we knew, to apply it in new situations.

Jan and I worked together to design and make possible a three year programme of Continuing Professional Development for our artists and partners. The aim was threefold: to provide a series of CPD days combining specialist training, skills sharing, reflection and creative space for the whole team; to develop our artists as 'reflective practitioners', people able to stand back, observe and consider their practice; and to reassess the roles and responsibilities of an artist within an intergenerational project. The programme enabled us to establish Magic Me as an organisation with learning at its heart.

The organisation and management of 16 training events was a big workload to add to our already busy regular programme. I am indebted to Jan Stirling for her vision, skill and stamina in establishing the CPD series, and her own contribution as a trainer and facilitator. 15 months into the three year programme Jan fell very ill and was absent from Magic Me for just over a year. By this stage the CPD days had established a strong spirit of co-operation and shared endeavour amongst Magic Me artists, staff and trainers. Sue Mayo, joined me in leading the second half of the programme, and the group's work together continued to deepen. Cath Greenwood co-led with me three workshops for teachers, activities organisers and other partners. In July 2006, we were delighted when Jan returned to help us pull all the threads together and to co-author this report.

I am proud of what we have all achieved together, of the way it is already informing our practice and of the new confidence and skills which I see in artists working on our latest round of projects. Interest in the relatively new field of intergenerational work continues to grow, and its potential for building stronger and more cohesive communities is being recognised at Government and grass roots level. I am pleased to offer this report as part of the wider debate about setting standards, and establishing good practice, to share with others the detailed thinking and skill that goes into making even those early phone calls.

Reading this report I am reminded of the many fruitful Saturdays I spent with a great group of people over the last three years. Thank you to everyone who participated, and the very individual contributions you all made.

Susan Langford, Director, Magic Me
June 2007

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE



PART ONE: INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

1.1 MAGIC ME AND OUR INTERGENERATIONAL WORK

Magic Me specialises in intergenerational arts work, using arts activities and creative tools to bring together young people and older people for mutual benefit, learning and enjoyment. Founded in 1989 Magic Me has extensive experience in designing, managing and evaluating intergenerational arts projects. We are committed to producing work and projects of a high quality; reflecting on practice and progress have always been an integral part of Magic Me's approach for staff, artists and participants.

Intergenerational work has been defined by the Centre for Intergenerational Practice as:

“Intergenerational practice aims to bring generations together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities, which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and help to build more cohesive communities.”

Most intergenerational practice falls into one of three models of working:

- Older people serving young people e.g. older mentors going into schools
- Young people serving older people e.g. students supporting older people who are learning computer skills
- Young and older people coming together as equals for a shared purpose.

Magic Me's expertise is in the third model, using arts projects as a focus for intergenerational meeting and relationship building. Within a single project or group, different dynamics operate at different times, with young or older individuals taking the lead for particular activities.

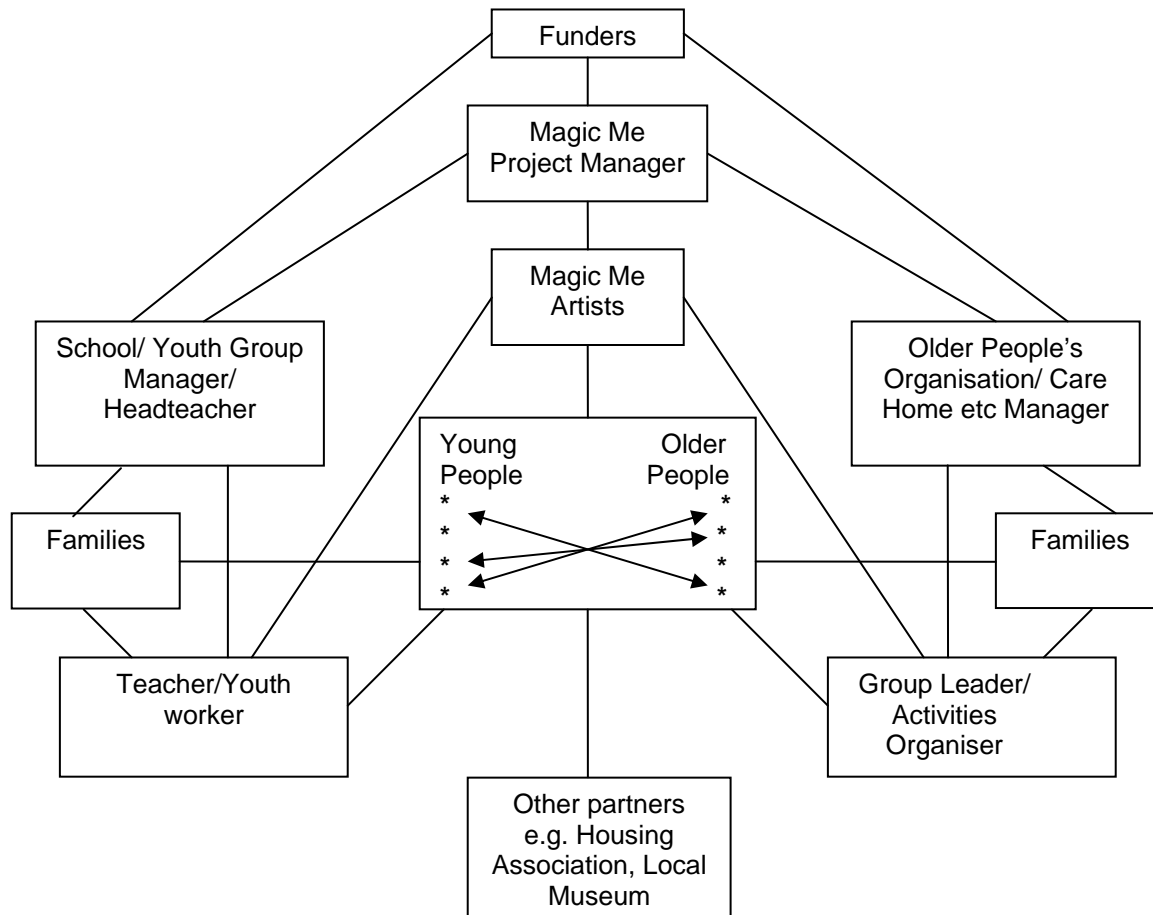
Too often services for young and older people are designed to cater for problems, seeing people as having deficits and disabilities that need to be made up for. Our starting point is the skills, interests and talents which people can offer their community, and which come to the fore in intergenerational situations.

1.2 CORE ELEMENTS OF MAGIC ME PROJECTS

Magic Me projects vary in scale, scope and artform, however all have common elements: young people, older people, the organisations and individuals who work with them, and the Magic Me artists and staff.

Shared understanding is crucial. Planning and development takes time to ensure a project really fits each partner's situation and schedule. Careful recruitment and preparation of young and older people, teachers and care workers are also essential. Our experience is that the first meeting of young and older people takes place many months into the project process.

The diagram below illustrates the web of relationships and lines of communication which underpin a successful project.



1.3 MAGIC ME AND OUR ARTISTS

Magic Me artists are at the heart of our projects. They need to be skilled and talented in their artform, able to inspire and enthuse others, and have expertise as group leaders, facilitators, teachers, advocates, managers and technicians. They must also be adept at managing the complex web of relationships with and between arts, health, and education organisations, specialist staff from these areas, and culturally diverse groups of young people and older people. The changing demography of the local Tower Hamlets population means our projects often link people not only from different generations, but also of different ethnicities, faiths, cultures and communities.

Magic Me employs freelance professional artists from a wide range of art forms within performing, visual, media and literary arts. Freelance artists are paid on a project basis to co-design, lead and evaluate projects supported by Magic Me core staff. Their role encompasses the artistic, social and educational aims of each project.

1.4 DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PROGRAMME

In Autumn 2002, Susan Langford, Director and Jan Stirling, Arts Development and Training Manager, undertook a review of the organisation's systems and ways of working. At the same time there was growing demand for our services and with local partner organisations we were developing plans and funding bids for a series of new projects to run from late 2003 onwards. A recruitment drive added 10 new artists to our freelance pool, building our capacity to work with more people and the range of artforms we could offer.

We now needed to introduce these new freelancers to Magic Me and prepare them for intergenerational work. We also needed to establish a shared understanding of good practice throughout the organisation, to ensure the quality of the work, during the coming period of growth and experimentation.

Our challenge was that of any small organisation that uses mainly freelance personnel. We wanted to build good working relationships with individual artists in order to create a sustainable pool of people skilled in Magic Me's approach and invested in growing and perpetuating good practice. We needed to attract and retain good artists who are often juggling many projects and pieces of work, so that they made working for Magic Me one of their priorities, and would stay in touch during the gaps between projects.

The Continuing Professional Development and Good Practice programme was designed to suit this situation.

PART TWO: CONTEXT



PART TWO: CONTEXT

2.1 THREE YEAR PROGRAMME: A CHANGING CONTEXT

It was essential to make the CPD programme flexible and realistic, to fit the realities of artists' lives. Over a three year period people experienced many changes in circumstances from a personal and professional perspective including births, deaths and marriages, creative highs and lows, poor and good health, other training or education. To be useful the CPD programme had to be flexible to individual's changing training needs, the circumstances in which Magic Me projects take place, and how the two interact.

National and world events also had an impact, most notably the bombs in London on 7 July 2005 and the community tensions, heightened Islamophobia and media focus on immigration and identity that have followed.

2.2 MAGIC ME'S PROGRAMME DURING 2004 – 06

Core strands of arts project work during this time included:

The Bigger Picture Project 2003-05

Part of the Ocean New Deal for Communities regeneration programme, *The Bigger Picture* brought together a culturally diverse group of local residents, aged 17+ and 55+. Over ten months they met weekly. Drama, poetry, visual arts and storytelling provided a focus and a means for participants to learn skills, build relationships and gain a new understanding of how their local community is, and could be. The group designed and ran an event to share their ideas with their peers, neighbours, local activists and decision makers. In the third phase the intergenerational group devised and led workshops for local Year 9 Secondary School pupils, challenging young people to find positive ways to deal with problems they saw in their local community, including drug dealing, gang fights and crime.

Points of View 2004 and follow up project 2005 – 06

Oaklands School students joined members of The Sundial Centre to explore their local community, past, present and future, as part of their GCSE Citizenship curriculum. Students were all chosen because they struggled in school and were underachieving. Weekly workshops over six months combined photography, creative writing, singing and drama with role play and discussions on citizenship. Four older participants chose to study for the GCSE alongside their younger partners and took the exam with 120 students in the school gym. All of the group passed including one man aged 84 years. *Points of View* was funded by the Learning and Skills Council.

The resounding success of the project, in motivating students and boosting their engagement levels in the classroom, led to the school inviting us to develop a second project, *Playing with Possibilities*. Students and older people joined

forces with a sculptor and a puppeteer to design and make toys and play structures for a local nursery school.

The Women's Library

Since 2004 we have built a highly successful partnership with The Women's Library, the UK archive of women's history, Mulberry School for Girls, and local older women. Three very different projects, combining creative writing and photography, have brought together young and older women for after-school and holiday activities, with themes inspired by the Library's collections: *Beauty?*, *Spinning Plates*, about women's relationships with their homes, and *Heartfelt*, about issues that women would campaign for or against. Projects have enabled Bangladeshi Muslim young women to meet and get to know older black, white and Jewish women of many faiths and beliefs. A fourth is planned for Spring 07.

Care home projects

Magic Me has developed new ways of linking school pupils with care home residents including people who have dementia, are physically frail, or have sensory impairments. Combined arts projects have been designed to use all the senses to engage and inspire groups of individuals who communicate in very different ways, and find creative ways to engage care home staff, and encourage them to support the projects. Magic Me's work in this field was recognised in 2003 by an IMPACT Award from GlaxoSmithKline.

Training for other organisations

During the three years the staff leading the CPD programme also ran training sessions for other organisations on a consultancy basis and at a variety of conferences and events. This reflects the increased interest nationally in intergenerational work and the recognition of Magic Me and its associates as experts in the field. The majority of training was for people new to intergenerational work; devising bespoke training for them enabled us to clarify the basic blocks of knowledge and understanding individuals need to lead or support such projects, and the particularities of intergenerational arts activity.

2.3 THE CONTEXT FOR INTERGENERATIONAL WORK

Intergenerational initiatives and approaches can provide new solutions to urgent challenges and trends affecting communities around the world including:

- An ageing population and falling birth rates, raising concerns about how resources should be shared, and debates about the age of retirement and future pension provision.
- A wave of 'baby boomers' now in their 60's, an increasing number of active 3rd Agers with greater expectations, living in diverse situations and lifestyles.
- Changing family structures because of longevity of older members, smaller numbers of children, divorce and family breakdown, increasing

mobility and the impact of these on patterns of care, support giving and communities.

- Urbanisation and the breakdown of traditional support systems and values within communities.
- Globalisation, migration, diasporas and issues of identity and citizenship within both immigrant and host communities.
- The growth of new technologies and means of communication which are not accessed equally by all generations or income groups.
- The negative effects of ageism on young and older people, and the struggle of many cultures to take on, understand and be comfortable with living longer, demonstrated, for instance, by the fast growth in cosmetic surgery, botox and anti-ageing products.
- Growing understanding of the need for holistic solutions and renewed emphasis on cross-sector or cross-disciplinary working and services.

2.4 DEVELOPMENTS IN INTERGENERATIONAL WORK ACROSS THE UK

Opened in 2001 The Centre for Intergenerational Practice, based at the Beth Johnson Foundation in Stoke-on-Trent, has provided a focus and force for developing intergenerational work as a field in the UK, building links between policy, practice and research. In 2005 and 2006 the Centre developed and piloted the first *Approved Provider Standard for Organisations Providing Intergenerational Projects and Programmes*. As a member of the Centre's Advisory Group, Susan Langford was part of this initiative from the start, helping to design the standard. Magic Me was one of 11 organisations to be awarded the Standard. Staff's work towards this achievement ran alongside the CPD programme.

Accredited training in intergenerational work remains very rare, although some arts degree courses which include arts in community or education settings are now beginning to cover it. Specific course modules at undergraduate level are in development by the Welsh Centre for Intergenerational Practice, based at the University of Glamorgan and at Lampeter University, with the Centre for Intergenerational Practice.

2.5 MAGIC ME ARTISTS, THEIR EXPERIENCE AND LEVELS

Magic Me freelance artists are selected for their skills and experience in creative work with diverse community groups. When they start out with Magic Me most have no previous experience of delivering intergenerational arts projects, nor training in this field. Some artists have received only arts training whilst others also have training and experience in social work, youth work, education, arts therapies and other complementary fields. This means that within our team there are very different theoretical and practical frameworks for thinking about the complexities of intergenerational work.

At any given time our freelance pool consists of experienced intergenerational artists and those new to the field. Some artists will be extremely skilled in designing projects that combine high quality arts experiences with other aims, whilst others may struggle to devise activities that deliberately encourage interaction and group building. Magic Me has always had to provide support, coaching and training for new artists, in order to pass on our accumulated experience and expertise in intergenerational work. Our commitment to offering relevant CPD and training is crucial to creating a shared body of knowledge and good practice within our freelance and staff team.

2.6 THE LOCAL CONTEXT AND ARTISTS ROLE IN IT

Part of the potency of intergenerational work is its capacity to acknowledge and value the natural processes of living and ageing. Working with diverse groups of people and in such complex communities, our intergenerational arts projects can naturally absorb, challenge, celebrate and reflect much of what happens in the 'real world' outside a session. All of life, including death, potentially takes its place in the room.

An almost unique opportunity of the work is that groups of people from different generations, faith groups, and ethnicities can find shared values and common concerns that might serve to sustain them through times when the community and the world is experiencing rupture, confusion and discord. This has always been an important aspect of our work and frequently one of the legacies of our programmes.

In order to do really meaningful work alongside the realities of such things as the 7th of July bombings, the mortality of group members, and the social backdrop of unsettled families and communities, arts practitioners need to be able to engage with and understand their own issues and responses to these themes. They also need to understand the role of the creative arts and cultural practices in maintaining or rebuilding a sense of community in difficult times and in passing on group identity to new generations.

PART THREE: THE PROGRAMME



PART THREE: THE PROGRAMME

3.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

To provide a formal programme of Continuing Professional Development for Magic Me artists and partners which will:

- Inspire and foster critical debate about the place of intergenerational arts projects within complex and diverse communities.
- Consider principles and best practices involved in intergenerational arts work.
- Explore and define the roles and responsibilities of the intergenerational artist.
- Place expressive arts at the heart of the programme and use them as a tool for teaching and learning, documenting and reflecting.
- Include within the programme theoretical, practical and experiential learning approaches.
- Enhance Magic Me's capacity to provide high quality intergenerational arts projects.

To share our acquired knowledge and expertise and to contribute in practical ways to the development of best practice within the wider field of intergenerational work by:

- Documenting the CPD events and the learning that takes place.
- Running a one day workshop for non-Magic Me artists and arts managers keen to be involved in intergenerational arts practice.
- Writing a comprehensive report for publication on our website.
- Presenting our findings at conferences, public meetings and other events.

3.2 SUMMARY OF THE CPD PROGRAMME

From January 2004 to October 2006 Magic Me ran a programme of training and other professional development events which included:

- 11 CPD days for Magic Me freelance artists and staff. They were joined at different times by artists and staff from partner organisations who were working on time limited projects with us.
- 1 half day event for professionals and community activists working in the Ocean estate area, Stepney, who were confirmed or potential partners in Magic Me's *The Bigger Picture* project.
- 3 half day training sessions for professionals working with young and older people across LB Tower Hamlets, who were interested in working with Magic Me on intergenerational projects in the future; some are already partners in existing projects.

- 1 day CPD training day for artists and arts managers working across London, and interested to find out about Magic Me's approach and this programme.
- Production and publication of this report to share the findings of the CPD programme with a wider audience.

The topics and the trainers for each day are given in Part Six below. *Page 23*

3.3 PROGRAMME CONTENT

The topics for the first six CPD sessions for our freelance artists were chosen by Jan and Susan. They consisted of learning areas we knew from experience were crucial to creating a foundation for good intergenerational arts practice. Though it could be argued that most content related to community arts practice in general, we worked throughout to focus on intergenerational arts in particular.

The six initial topics included:

- Reflecting on Intergenerational Arts Practice;
- Evaluating Intergenerational Arts Practice;
- Active Citizenship;
- Child and Adult Protection;
- Using Arts Activities With People With Dementia;
- Working With and Valuing Diversity.

A questionnaire was used to establish the knowledge and experience of participants in each of these initial topics, and their responses helped us to pitch the content of the training days to suit the needs of the group. Where necessary specialist trainers were contracted to co-deliver these days with Magic Me staff.

The insight and experience of the whole training group was vital. The programme was flexible to allow for contributions and learning from participants. Specifically sessions seven to ten responded to themes and issues about best practice that were raised by artists in the first six sessions and engaged more explicitly with key questions such as:

- What is the role of artists in intergenerational arts work?
- What do artists working with Magic Me need to know, bring, have, in order to do such complex work well?
- What systems and support do artists need to have in place in order to do their work well?

Session eleven was devoted to taking stock of what we'd accomplished, what we now knew, and where we wanted to go in future CPD training.

3.4 THOSE LEADING THE PROGRAMME

The programme was designed and managed by:

Jan Stirling, Magic Me's Arts Development and Training Manager

Jan, is an experienced theatre artist and dramatherapist, and a seasoned community arts practitioner. Jan brings a long history of involvement in the 'arts and' fields to her Magic Me role including arts and: education, health and well-being, conflict-resolution, community-cohesion, and disability advocacy. Jan has worked as a trainer / lecturer, designing and delivering under-graduate and post-graduate trainings in the use of arts-based methods and approaches in group work with vulnerable people. Her students have included practitioners from the arts, social services, education and health sectors.

Susan Langford, Director and Founder of Magic Me

Susan, an artist and designer, has 20 years experience of designing, leading and managing intergenerational arts projects in diverse settings. She has led the strategic development and growth of Magic Me since 1986. As its Director she also provides training and consultancy to other organisations, has devised and co-led action research projects and written books, reports and articles on aspects of intergenerational work. Susan is on the Advisory Group of the Centre for Intergenerational Practice, a Management Committee Member of ICIP, (the International Consortium of Intergenerational Programmes) and Editor of ICIP's newsletter, published in three languages.

Also key were:

Sue Mayo, Magic Me Associate Artist

Sue has more than 20 years experience as a freelance theatre practitioner, writer, trainer and project manager. She specialises in devising theatre with community groups, frequently working in collaboration across art forms. Her experience with Magic Me includes leading intergenerational projects in a very wide range of settings and being co-author of our handbook, *Sharing the Experience*. Sue was a trainer throughout the three years and also worked with Susan to design and manage the programme during Jan's absence in 2005/06.

Catherine Rose, Rapporteur

Catherine observed and documented what happened during each CPD day, sometimes feeding back verbally to the group towards the end of the session. Her presence enabled the programme managers to concentrate on delivery and what was happening and her written reports have been invaluable in evaluating the programme and writing this report. She also devised the Magic Me Mind Map, Appendix 1, a way of organising and thinking about the diverse elements at work in the CPD programme.

3.5 THOSE TAKING PART: ARTISTS, STAFF & TRAINERS

Programme Manager: Jan Stirling, Arts Development and Training Manager
With: Susan Langford, Director
Sue Mayo, Magic Me Associate Artist
Other Trainers: Ali Campbell* Amandeep Hothi
Stella Dadzie Sally Knocker*
Nigel Faiers Pete Lawson
Cath Greenwood* Jennifer Williams
*Also participated as Artists in other sessions.

Artists taking part throughout the programme were:

Madhumita Bose, Visual Artist
Janet Brooke, Printmaker
Ginny Carvisiglia, Visual Artist
Cath Goldstein, Visual Artist
Sarah Hammond, Visual Artist
Gillian Haskey, Visual Artist
Anthony Lam, Photographer
Polly Laycock, Maker, Puppeteer
Leah Thorn, Performance Poet
Surya Turner, Storyteller
Julian West, Musician

Artists taking part in more than half of the programme were:

Sarah Hervey, Artist, Support Worker on *Points of View* Project
Anita McKenzie Photographer
JB Rose, Singer and writer
Delroi Williams, Poet and Live Arts

Other Artists, staff and project partners taking part in at least one session

Sarah Adams, Writer, Theatre Maker
Kim Dexter, Programme Manager, *Our Generations*, (April to Sept 06)
Cath Greenwood, Arts Development Manager (Sept 05 to June 06)
Kevin Harrison, Sculptor
Jo Kinsella, Young People's Support Worker, *The Bigger Picture Project*
Ahad Miah, Older People's Support Worker, *The Bigger Picture Project*
Shaheda Najmeen Video Maker
Nia Kuumba Drama artist
Spike Warwick, Writer, Poet
Razia Welland, Printmaker

From other organisations

Jo Flanders, Tower Hamlets Mediation Service
Sean Taylor, Poet, Spitalfields Festival

The programme was designed to cater for 20 artists and two staff on each day. The highest attendance was 17 artists, the average over the series was 12. In total 31 artists and staff attended one or more sessions with 21 attending half or more. One artist attended every session. Of the 31 artists, 7 were male and 24 female; 12 were black or from other ethnic minorities. Artists ranged in age from early 20s to 59.

Most artists were very committed to attending. Reasons given for not doing so included previous work commitments, illness, and family responsibilities.

3.6 THOSE TAKING PART: PARTNERS FROM OTHER PROFESSIONS

The CPD Programme also included events for non-artists involved with Magic Me and included:

The Bigger Picture Project April 2004

Community Regeneration Trainee
 Manager
 2 Neighbourhood Wardens
 Manager
 Mediator and Trainer
 Volunteer Co-ordinator

 Personal Advisor
 Teacher, Out of Hours Learning Tutor

Half day event

Ocean New Deal for Communities
 Ocean Neighbourhood Wardens
 Ocean Neighbourhood Wardens
 Tower Hamlets Mediation Service
 Tower Hamlets Mediation Service
 St Dunstan's Church /
 Arbour Youth Centre
 Connexions
 Sir John Cass Secondary School

Magic Me partners and potential partners March 2006 3 workshops

Working with older people:

Activities Organiser
 Activities Organiser
 Senior Care Manager
 Care worker
 Community Development Worker
 Care worker
 2 Neighbourhood Wardens

Pat Shaw Residential Home
 Hawthorn Green Care Home
 Sundial Centre (for older people)
 Sundial Centre (for older people)
 Sundial Centre (for older people)
 Stepney Jewish Centre (day care)
 Ocean Neighbourhood Wardens

Working with young people

Class teacher
 Head of Art
 Senior Youth Worker
 Youth Worker
 Teacher

Clara Grant Primary School
 Central Foundation Girl's School
 St Hilda's East Community Centre
 St Hilda's East Community Centre
 East London Mosque and Muslim
 Centre

3.7 THE PRACTICALITIES

Fees to artists for their participation

Artists were paid a fee of £100 for attending each training day and a higher fee if they were asked to lead an exercise, or read materials in preparation. This fee recognised the professionalism and expertise that all artists brought to the days. It also acknowledged that the training would benefit other aspects of their practice outside Magic Me.

Recruitment of partners

The Ocean partners were individually invited as part of the development of *The Bigger Picture*, by the lead artists. Participants in the CPD for partners were recruited through flyers, email flyers, listings and direct contact. They included individuals from previous, current and potential partner organisations with whom we were already in touch, and broader marketing through education, community and care networks in the Borough.

Training venues

Local community rooms were hired for the artists and partner training including spaces at Weaver's Fields Restaurant Trust, Oxford House, Haileybury Centre and the Kobi Nazrul Centre. After Magic Me's move to an office in 18 Victoria Park Square in December 2005, artist's events could be held in a hired room there, minimising the work for staff in setting and clearing up.

3.8 FUNDING THE PROGRAMME

The budget for the three year programme was just over £64,000. Of this £56,678 was provided by Grants for the Arts funding, via Arts Council England. Additional funds came from a Thames Gateway Creative Skills Partnership grant of £1,800 for artists' training, from the training element of different project budgets and Magic Me's own development funds.

PART FOUR: THE CPD DAYS: OUR APPROACH



PART FOUR: THE CPD DAYS: OUR APPROACH

4.1 THE TRAINING APPROACH

A training day would typically start with a brief introduction and orientation followed by some active and interactive training exercises to warm up the group to the themes and issues being explored. A talk, or verbal presentation, case histories, and other theoretical content formed part of each day.

Experiential and practical approaches using arts based activities and processes were emphasised. Whilst primarily designed to engage participants creatively with the subject matter, the approaches and materials could also be adapted to intergenerational practice.

Sharing the Experience, Magic Me's handbook for setting up, running and evaluating intergenerational projects was the course text. Other support materials included published research, talks and articles, policy documents, work sheets and written hand-outs.

4.2 WHO'S THE EXPERT?

In intergenerational projects no-one is 'the expert' and all parties hold part of the bigger picture. A good intergenerational practitioner will always need to be able to admit ignorance, interpret jargon, and acknowledge the greater expertise and experience of many of those present, whether participants or other professionals.

It was vital during the CPD that as trainers and managers we were able to be honest and open about what we did not know, or had never considered in depth, and take the risk of not being the experts or 'in charge' at all times. In turn we expected that level of honesty from participants. Together we established an atmosphere of shared enquiry, curiosity, and reflection.

The commitment and continuity of a core group meant that learning was cumulative and collective as well as an individual experience. As the training programme progressed participants began to take a more active part in directing and providing some of the content. For instance artists came prepared to offer relevant warm up and reflective exercises, run mini sessions illustrating their Magic Me practice, or present a piece of work of their own.

Shared understandings mixed with diverse perspectives; a dialogue about what makes good intergenerational arts practice and practitioners began to evolve. There was a strong sense for the Magic Me trainers that the theoretical and practical underpinnings of our intergenerational arts practice were being grown and strengthened.

4.3 USING THE ARTS

Drama, poetry, creative writing, music, visual art, craft making and photography processes were used to explore and reflect on themes and issues, and to evaluate the CPD days.

For example four of the eleven training days focused on themes of reflection and evaluation. The arts were a key tool on these days and were used to help the group to:

- Explore their understanding of reflection and evaluation practices; acknowledge resistances, assumptions, expectations; describe and analyse positive and negative experiences of evaluation.
- Learn and devise creative reflection and evaluation approaches and use them naturally and consistently in their practice.
- Reflect on and evaluate their training experience, and the progress they were making through it.

Some examples of how the arts aided these processes are:

'Kissing chairs' a drama / movement exercise leading to pair performance work that brought to life experiences of evaluation and having been evaluated in the past.

'Make It Real', a spoken word poem devised by artists as a way of communicating some of their experience of the training days.

'Evaluation Snap', a card game using hand made playing cards on which were images and text relating to things participants had enjoyed, not enjoyed, remembered about a training day / series.

'On the Line' a continuum line that was used to measure a range of things including how well aims had been met, and where people stood in relation to an issue.

'Mini Sessions', a series of three small workshops using drama and visual practice, print-making, and story-telling processes. Each session was run by an artist in the pool who had used these tools on a MM project. Other group members were participants in or observers to the mini sessions. Afterwards participants and observers analysed the session in order to evaluate 'what makes a successful intergenerational arts session.'

'The E-word', a poem written by a group member illustrating her journey in relation to understanding the value of evaluation. This was written and read as part of her evaluation of a training day on reclaiming evaluation for ourselves.

Some processes were used more than once, changing slightly to suit new aims or explore new themes. The repetition modelled how exercises could be versatile and could evolve over a project. For example on the second CPD day for artists, which was about Active Citizenship, we made small accordion books. Working with the theme 'Me and My Community', participants used text, objects and other materials to create a sequence of six pages that helped them to share things about themselves, their communities and their work, with each other. They brought these books along to the fifth day in the series as a tool for warming up to the theme of Diversity. Re-visiting the books at a later date and from the perspective of 'diversity' deepened participants' personal narratives.

On the final day of the series artists made new accordion books. This time they used the process to illustrate their experience of the training and to communicate something about their learning over time. On the reverse side they illustrated key things they wanted to communicate to other artists about the practice of intergenerational arts and the role and responsibilities of the artist. These new books effectively became each person's unique handbook of intergenerational arts practice.

PART FIVE: HOW TRAINING FED BACK INTO MAGIC ME'S PRACTICE



PART FIVE: HOW TRAINING FED BACK INTO MAGIC ME'S PRACTICE

5.1 ARTS TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES TRANSFERRING TO PROJECTS

Throughout we aimed to use training and arts techniques which artists could immediately adapt to use with community groups, and were pleased when they began to do this. Artists reported using exercises in their Magic Me and wider practice. They also modified and invented exercises inspired by the CPD activities and shared these with the group in later sessions.

It comes as no surprise that the accordion book, a favourite of ours, has also been a favourite with groups. The flexibility of the book's format, makes it suitable for individuals or groups, and has led to it being used subsequently by artists to tackle a variety of themes. A giant version, a six foot high folding screen, was used on Magic Me's Bigger Picture Project as part of a presentation by young and older people about their local community.

Artists also reported using 'On the Line' in a variety of ways. In one example young and older group members stood on a continuum line marked on the floor to show what they would be more and less willing to do in a performance situation. A repeat of the exercise following the performance graphically depicted each group member's progress. In another version people who were less mobile evaluated sessions by placing feathers along a continuum in a box of sand placed on a table.

Two projects with nursing home residents, including many people with dementia and sensory impairments, have been deliberately designed to stimulate and work with all five senses, an approach suggested by the dementia training day.

5.2 MATCHING ARTISTS WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH PROJECTS

The training days gave artists from different disciplines the chance to meet and work together creatively. Artists built up a shared store of knowledge and skills. They learned about one another's artforms through participation and discussion. This meant that they were already developing as collaborators when they came to co-run projects.

Managers also became more aware of each artist's particular strengths. When setting up new projects this understanding helps us to choose artists who will complement one another's skills and knowledge.

5.3 DEVELOPING POLICIES AND ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES

A direct outcome of the Adult and Child Protection Day was the inclusion of new content in our two policies: *Policy on Vulnerable Adults* and *Policy on*

Safeguarding the Welfare of Children. This day helped us see how we could better support freelancers if an issue arose on a project, and to build this into the Policies.

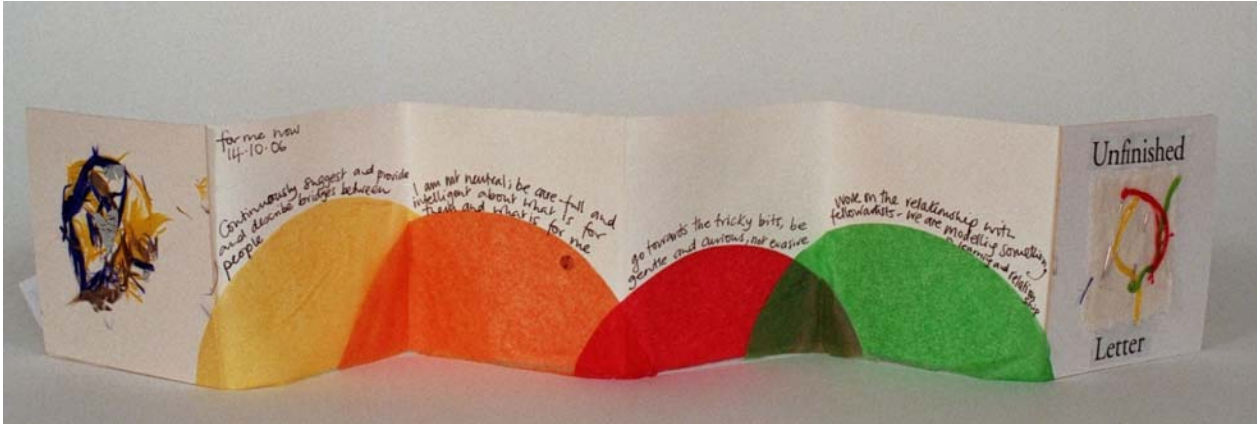
5.4 FIVE CORE PRINCIPLES OF MAGIC ME'S INTERGENERATIONAL ARTS PRACTICE

Whilst honing content for training days Jan, Susan and Sue arrived at a new way of describing Magic Me's model of intergenerational arts practice. The articulation of five core principles was an unexpected and very useful outcome of our CPD work.

The five core principles of Magic Me intergenerational arts practice are:

1. **There is an intergenerational focus.** Young and older people come together as equal partners, with a common purpose.
2. **Relationship building is conscious, not accidental.** Projects, sessions and activities are designed to enable young and older people to develop relationships in meaningful ways.
3. **Creative and expressive arts activities are central to our work.** Making something together is a focus for meeting and an important outcome. Through arts activity we enable thinking, feeling, doing and reflecting.
4. **There is equality of access to arts activities.** Activities are designed to take account of the needs, abilities and confidence levels of culturally diverse groups of older and younger people, with a variety of life experience.
5. **Reflection is built in to each project.** There is time for young and older participants to think and talk about what's happening as projects develop. Sometimes this will happen in the intergenerational group, sometimes with young or older people on their own. As much as possible arts processes are used to enable reflection to happen.

PART SIX: THE CPD DAYS: WHAT WE DID



PART SIX: THE CPD DAYS: WHAT WE DID

6.1 CPD DAYS FOR ARTISTS

January 2004

Reflecting On Intergenerational Arts Practice and Evaluating Practice:

Sue Mayo and Ali Campbell supported by Jan Stirling and Susan Langford

This was a 'begin as you mean to go on' day that set both a tone and standard for reflective and evaluative practice throughout the series. Artists were encouraged to see 'showing' and 'telling' as equally important ways of communicating their insights and observations. Using materials as diverse as beans, feathers, voices and bodies Sue and Ali introduced the group to a range of practice methods. The group used these to consider their experiences of good and bad evaluation, and to think about how they would like to work in the future. Artists reported feeling more comfortable with the notion of 'evaluation' at the end of the day than they had at the beginning.

February 2004

Active Citizenship: Intergenerational Arts and Social Change.

Jennifer Williams, Jan Stirling and Susan Langford

This lively session brought together theatre games, and verbal and visual presentation, with hands-on making, and story-telling to introduce ways of seeing intergenerational arts practice as a pro-active force for change in communities. The group made individual accordion books on the theme of 'Me and My Community'. These triggered discussion and debate around the role of the arts and the artist in personal and communal growth. Later the group looked at the dynamics of different intergenerational settings and thought about what creative approaches might be suitable in each (see Appendix 2). Artists reflected on how their sense of themselves as creative people, and their relationship with the communities they lived in and worked with were linked.

March 2004

Child Protection and Adult Protection In Relation To Intergenerational Work

Amandeep Hothi, Nigel Fraiers, Jan Stirling and Susan Langford

This was a particularly intensive training day focusing on issues of abuse and safety in work with vulnerable people. A wealth of printed material and verbal information on the signs and symptoms of abuse filled the morning, whilst active and interactive processes helped the group to consider issues of safety and good practice in the afternoon. The subject matter was challenging and often difficult to encounter and the content raised as many questions as answers around our responsibilities as community artists towards 'at risk' children and elders on our

projects. Artists fed back that though the information had been useful, the day had been too full and time to absorb and reflect on content was too short. As a result more reflection time was built into subsequent sessions.

April 2004

Using Arts Activities With People With Dementia

Sally Knocker, supported by Jan Stirling and Ali Campbell,
with a live reading/performance by Leah Thorn

This day focused on dementia and the uses of arts activities with people living with it. As a leading UK trainer and author in the use of arts activities with people with dementia Sally balanced frank and factual information with interactive exercises, role plays and case studies. She introduced the group to key facts and issues around dementia, dementia care and the role of arts activities in care settings. This was set alongside a report by Susan Langford on research Magic Me had done in this area. The day also incorporated a live performance of an excerpt from "Watch" by spoken word poet and Magic Me freelance artist Leah Thorn. Watch is "an autobiographical performance piece exploring the effect of Alzheimer's on the parent/child relationship; the centrality of memory to one's sense of identity, in particular Jewish identity; and the need for sensitivity and cultural awareness on the part of care staff". Artists reported that the day had been fun and informative and though the subject matter was challenging, Sally's approach to teaching the material had been very accessible.

May 2004

Working With and Valuing Diversity In Intergenerational Arts Work;

Stella Dadzie

This day set out to focus on diversity within intergenerational groups. The day began with a return to the 'Me and My Community Books' made in February, as a way of warming up to the diversity in the room. Stella introduced the group to a Personal Training Contract which was agreed as a basis from which to work during the day. A life-map exercise brought similarities and differences between group members into focus. Other exercises helped the group to define notions of 'equality' and 'diversity' and to note conditions that help or hinder communication and understanding. Tableaux made in small groups helped participants to look at Magic Me as an organisation in relation to diversity. The group considered a video case-study of a mixed race family who had been violently targeted on a London housing estate. A group poem was made from responses to the day. Feedback included the need for further sessions on diversity to be offered to continue to engage with complex issues to do with race, ethnicity, age, gender and faith.

June 2004

Reflecting On Intergenerational Arts Practice and Evaluating Practice

Sue Mayo, Jan Stirling and Susan Langford

This day looked back on the initial five CPD training days giving the group a chance to reflect on their learning in the context of three focused questions: What values, principles and beliefs underpin and inform my work? How and with what intentions do I approach creative work with diverse groups of people? What skills, tools, understandings and qualities might I need to hone further to do this work? Participants used writing, story-making, poetry, song, visual art making and verbal reflection to evaluate and reflect on the training experience, and to assess where they were and how they wanted to develop as intergenerational practitioners. Artists fed back that the time to meet, learn and reflect together regularly on issues to do with intergenerational practice had been useful.

January 2005

Principles of Magic Me:

How and Why Intergenerational Arts Sessions Work

Sue Mayo and Susan Langford

This session introduced participants to five core principles of Magic Me's work. Each core principle was explored by a small group who designed an arts-based exercise that helped us all to think about the principle in more depth. In different groups participants considered past Magic Me projects, choosing examples of things that worked and things that didn't. They found expressive ways of showing these back to the large group. The examples were discussed and analyzed with participants noting how much can be learned from 'mistakes'. The group recognized that even difficult things that happened on a project, for instance the death of an older participant, could be worked with sensitively and creatively leading to a deeper, richer experience for participants.

May 2005

What do the arts and artists offer an intergenerational setting? What do artists and the arts gain from an intergenerational setting?

Sue Mayo and Susan Langford

This session looked at a wide range of art forms and what each had to offer an intergenerational setting. Detailed information was gathered about how artists approached and prepared for projects. The group discussed how creative writing, poetry, dance, drama, music, craft, photography, story-telling and visual art worked in practice with older and young people. They considered what the benefits of intergenerational projects were for young and older people, their schools and centres, their families and communities, and the wider world. Participants reflected on what they gained from working in intergenerational

settings, and on the challenges and rewards of co-facilitating with artists from a different art form.

November 2005

Sharing Practice: Workshop Structures, Techniques and Skills

Pete Lawson and Sue Mayo, with contributions from Ali Campbell, Janet Brooke and Surya Turner

This session explored and analysed what makes a successful intergenerational arts session. Three mini workshops in different art forms, (drama / visual practice; print making; story-telling / creative writing), were offered by experienced Magic Me artists. Some of the group participated, later commenting on the experience. Others took observing roles and fed back on such things as artistic process, group dynamics/social growth, and individual journeys. The group identified key things a successful session needs. Some core skills and qualities of good creative facilitation were noted and explored. Participants identified some of their own personal strengths and learning needs as artists/facilitators.

May 2006

Reclaiming evaluation and finding creative ways to do it

Sue Mayo and Susan Langford

This session re-visited the subject of evaluation. The group considered examples of good and bad evaluation practices. They identified how and why such things as evaluation, documentation, reflection and monitoring were integral to their work with intergenerational groups. Small groups designed arts-based evaluation exercises for forthcoming Magic Me projects. A general sense was that to be meaningful and useful evaluation needs to fit the ethos and ways of working of the project. Using creative approaches which reflect, or build on the project activities will engage participants and not feel like an added on, outside requirement.

Other themes and issues covered were: the need to translate our understanding of evaluation into language that could be communicated to other sectors; the importance of ensuring that group members had a say in how a project is evaluated; the need to provide tools and support for artists to be able to do the complex work of evaluating the relationships within a project, including artists' relationships with one another and with partners.

Future CPD sessions will aim to address some of these issues directly. Feedback from artists let us know that 'evaluation' has become more integral to artists thinking and doing in sessions.

October 2006

Reviewing and evaluating the CPD programme and what we learned.

Jan Stirling, Sue Mayo and Susan Langford

This was the final of eleven CPD days for our freelance artists over a three year programme. A brief written account of each CPD day was distributed and read by participants prior to the day. During the session the group recalled images and memories of the series, speaking them aloud in the room. Everyone made an accordion book of their own experience of CPD highlighting their learning. Each used the book to tell their story to the group. On the reverse side of the book they placed images, text and objects depicting important things to remember about intergenerational work. Artists shared these 'hand books' with one another and discussed, then listed, what would be important for new people starting out in intergenerational work to know.

Some possible topics and formats for future CPD were presented on which the group reflected and commented or made suggestions. Everyone spoke about their experience of the day and what they were taking away with them. Feedback stressed how important the CPD days had been to the artists, with many saying how valuable the chance to think and reflect with peers was.

6.2 EVENTS FOR PARTNERS

April 2004

The Bigger Picture Project

Jan Stirling, Project Manager / Artist and Delroi Williams, Project Artist

This three year intergenerational project was developed and led by Jan Stirling, as part of a broader regeneration programme Ocean New Deal for Communities, in Stepney. Many local organisations and individual professionals and activists in the Ocean area had shown interest in the project. This half-day event, was an introduction to the possibilities and practicalities of intergenerational work, and a chance for the group to develop focused aims for the project.

Through a series of creative exercises and discussions the group focused individually on their own organisation, their own role in the community, what they found fulfilling about their role and its limitations. They then worked together to find connections with other agencies and individuals in the room, finding much in common.

The exercises resulted in discussions about particular areas of conflict within the local community and specific proposals about the focus of the project, and those who might take part. Ideas from this session fed directly into the project planning. The creative activities that the group experienced demonstrated to them the

approaches that Magic Me uses and how an intergenerational, inter-cultural group might work together as a result.

A follow-up event, planned for the end of *The Bigger Picture* Project in Autumn 2005 was not held, because the focus of Ocean NDC and local groups was elsewhere by that time. The postponement, by the Borough, of a vote by residents on the transfer of council housing to other social landlords, led to major upheaval and staff changes within Ocean NDC. This in itself is a useful reminder of how the impact of external events on one partner in an intergenerational project, can have a major effect on all those involved.

March 2006

Magic Me partners and potential partners

Susan Langford and Cath Greenwood, Magic Me Arts Development Manager.

A series of three workshops were developed and run for: people working with children and young people; people working with older people, and one joint workshop for both together. This structure enabled teachers, youth workers, activities organisers and care workers to think about their own work places and clients, and how intergenerational arts work might fit there.

The parallel sessions for the two professional groups included: an introduction to Magic Me's ways of working; exercises exploring and challenging ageist assumptions and stereotypes of both young and older people and work on drawing up a contract of behaviour for an intergenerational group, which led to discussion on how young and older people might interact.

Participants from both groups came together for the third workshop. They explored the practicalities of timing, suitable spaces, accessible equipment and materials. Many people were surprised to find their concerns and challenges at work echoed those of their colleagues working with the other age group. They found common ground and became much more relaxed about exploring possibilities and difficulties.

6.3 CPD DAY FOR ARTISTS FROM ACROSS LONDON AND BEYOND

November 2006

Bringing young and older people together through the arts: the roles and responsibilities of artists in intergenerational work

Jan Stirling and Susan Langford

This was a one-off training day offered to experienced community artists and arts organisers wanting to learn about Magic Me's intergenerational arts practice.

The aim was to communicate our learning from the CPD series and introduce people to the five core principles of our work. Participants were each given a copy of *Sharing the Experience*, which outlines the practicalities and principles of setting up and running an intergenerational project from start to finish.

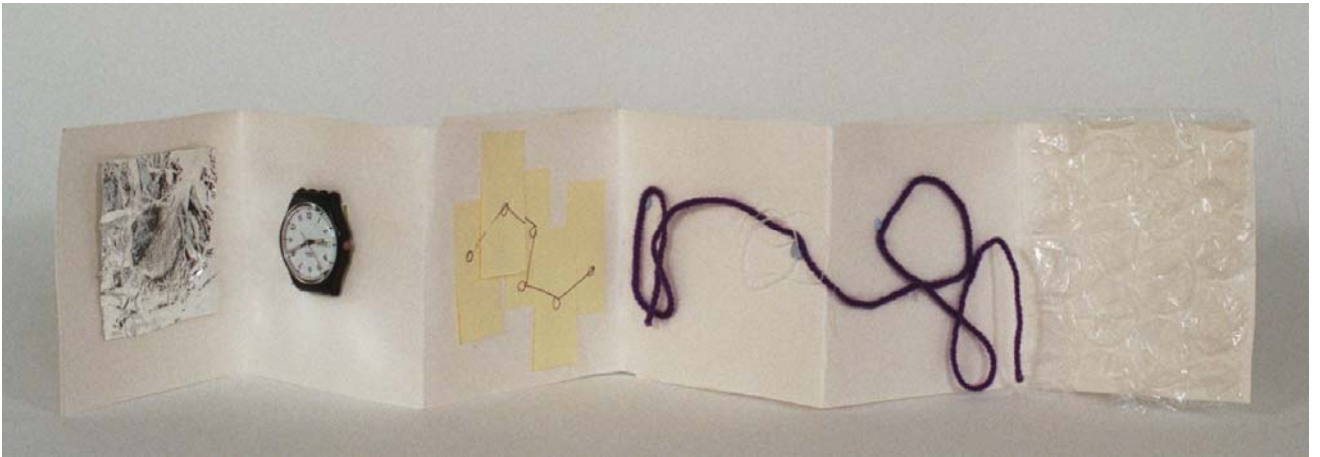
The 28 participants were:

- 20 people who paid £50 to attend
- 4 people given a free bursary place from a total of 9 applicants
- 4 new Magic Me freelance artists.

Those present were working with young and/or older people but most hadn't as yet worked with both together. The day included two short presentations on Magic Me's approach, with some examples of projects and specific activities demonstrating a range of the challenges and possibilities of bringing young and older people together. In small groups participants created 3D installations from junk and arts materials, examining their own interests in intergenerational arts work. They used their installations to illustrate the complexities of intergenerational dynamics within communities they knew well, and then considered possible responses and interventions, and presented these to the large group. The group then thought about what skills and competencies an intergenerational artist might need to carry out the work.

This was a very intensive day. Participants left with many more questions than answers. Given the complexity of intergenerational work this was inevitable. The demand for the event demonstrated a need for us to develop a range of training days at introductory and more advanced level for artists and for other professionals or activists.

PART SEVEN: MONITORING AND EVALUATION



PART SEVEN: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

7.1 The monitoring and evaluation process

A variety of approaches and methods were used:

- A Rapporteur observed each session, writing a report that documented the activities that took place and the responses of those taking part. During the first six sessions a short verbal and Power Point report was given to the group on the day itself. For each session a longer, detailed written report was provided for programme managers subsequently.
- Photographs were taken by participants, group leaders and trainers during exercises, when appropriate, and to record artworks, materials produced etc.
- Artworks created within activities were kept by artists (eg. small books) photographed (eg. small models, books, mimes) or written up (eg. poetry)
- Specific feedback and evaluation sessions within each day were recorded by the Rapporteur, by the participants, or by trainers acting as 'scribes'.
- An evaluation form was used to collect feedback on the Child and Adult Protection day.
- Four whole Artists days, including the first one of the series, focused on reflection and evaluation.
- On the first day artists were encouraged to find their own ways of reflecting which best met their needs, and would best facilitate reflection and evaluation. These might be alone or with others, using verbal, creative arts or other ways. Methods chosen included: movement; drawing; collage; talking with a partner; talking in a group; designing a game of 'evaluation snap' Some of these were used in subsequent sessions.
- Evaluation exercises used on other days included: recalling the programme through mime (in making tableaux of remembered moments) and making self-portraits (3D and 2D) of ourselves as artists working in the community. Individual reflection and then group discussion around key questions relating to the role and practice of artists led to the creation of three presentations by the groups. They chose to use song, mime, performance, audience interaction and an installation to shape their thoughts and share them with one another. These processes were scribed for later reference.
- The whole of the last Artists day was a review of the three year's work, with exercises to enable artists to reflect on their journey and learning throughout the programme.

PART EIGHT: OUR LEARNING



PART EIGHT: OUR LEARNING

8.1 WHAT WE LEARNED

The Continuing Professional Development Programme has been a powerful tool in developing Magic Me as an organisation and in pushing our practice to new levels. Combining reflection, training and skills sharing, the programme has provided a unique learning experience for all involved, and established Magic Me as an organisation with learning at its heart, a vital part of everything we do. Managers, artists and trainers have come together to deepen their understanding of intergenerational work and to reflect on what it takes to run a good project well. Together we have established new standards and expectations for our shared practice, which is already enhancing our projects and participants' experiences.

The Continuing Professional Development Programme gave us the chance to learn new lessons for the first time and also to refresh, renew and re-learn others. Much of what we understand about the role and responsibilities of intergenerational artists has grown out of many years of practice and reflection. The Programme was a rich opportunity to reflect on and deepen this understanding with a diverse group of artists from very different personal and professional backgrounds.

Though Magic Me has run training throughout its history, the format, content and intention of the CPD series was unique in our experience. So there was much we learned about developing an ambitious programme of professional development. It is worth repeating that our own willingness to 'not know' everything, to engage in the learning process and the artists' courage to trust their own 'not knowing' in the room made for fertile learning for all parties.

8.2 WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT INTERGENERATIONAL ARTS AND THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ARTISTS.

The success of intergenerational arts projects depends on the skills, abilities and qualities of the intergenerational artists who run them. The role of intergenerational artist encompasses a range of other roles including: group worker, teacher, collaborator, manager, mediator, advocate, community developer, evaluator, observer, and diarist. Understanding when to be what is a critical skill in itself.

On Magic Me projects artists from different creative disciplines work together. They collaborate with teachers, care workers, activities organisers and other professionals to deliver projects. The artist works within a complex web of relationships, circumstances and demands.

In order to work effectively intergenerational artists need to have:

- a genuine interest in young and older people; an abiding desire to learn more about their concerns, their hopes, their strengths and the challenges and issues they face
- excellent communication skills including the ability to collaborate, negotiate, mediate and facilitate;
- a good capacity for empathy; good listening skills
- an understanding of group dynamics, how they happen, how they can be worked with
- a degree of detachment including: the ability to tolerate the unavoidable frustrations of working across a range of sectors and with a range of professionals; and the ability to listen to, observe and engage compassionately with frail or vulnerable people without being emotionally overwhelmed.

Artists also need to have:

- a high level of competency in their art form; technical skill, creative vision and resourcefulness
- the ability to enthuse others and to make their artform accessible,
- a willingness to try out and accommodate other art forms, and to model creative risk-taking for participants
- the capacity to help young and older people make something meaningful together, and to find meaning through the processes of making.

Artists need to be:

- emotionally mature and self-aware
- able to work reflexively on their own, with co-artists, with partners and participants
- willing to explore personal feelings and issues that rise up as a result of the work
- aware of their own limitations and the limitations of their role
- able to ask for appropriate support and advice where necessary.

Young and older participants respond well to new experiences and challenges when the intergenerational artist:

- values their wisdom and experience and involves them at all levels of the work from planning to execution and evaluation
- shares the passion they feel for their artform with them
- offers well planned, well structured activities that are accessible and culturally appropriate

- delivers creative activities in such a way as to help people bypass fears and anxieties
- is flexible and responds constructively to conditions on the day
- acts with warmth, confidence and a positive expectation of a good outcome.

8.3 WHAT WE LEARNED ABOUT DELIVERING CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

General

- Good practice costs money. Magic Me staff put many hours into setting up running and evaluating the programme. Intergenerational work is labour intensive, complex and requires thinking time; cutting corners compromises the quality of the work.
- All of the sessions raised as many questions as they did answers. Each subject was complex and sessions could only cover some aspects of each area. This was frustrating initially to artists who wanted 'the answer'. As the programme progressed artists became more able to tolerate ambiguity. They also grew in their ability to enjoy formulating and engaging with the questions.

Artists

- Freelance artists will never learn everything they need to know from Magic Me and in fact have a responsibility as professionals to plan and undertake their own ongoing CPD, to which Magic Me has a responsibility to contribute.
- The group of artists taking part is diverse in artform focus, ethnicity, gender, age and experience. The level of understanding of the complexities of working with very diverse groups of young and older people also ranges from people with decades of experience who have done a great deal of learning and thinking, to those relatively new to the field and to these questions. For example the Diversity Day included at least 3 artists who have themselves worked as trainers on diversity, alongside artists with only limited experience who found the day very challenging.
- Whilst designing the programme Magic Me staff consulted with artists about their skills, experience and perceived training needs. However CPD days are not initial training and as leaders we do not know, except in the broadest terms, what participants will already know or have covered in previous learning or training. Days therefore needed to meet a wide range of expectations and levels of thinking.
- Training in diversity, dementia, child protection and other aspects of the programme, raise questions and issues that make people feel challenged and

uncomfortable. Many artists commented on this. Some were better able than others to live with the 'uncomfortable' feelings that are part of learning and of deepening one's understanding.

- Evaluation on the last day of the initial of the initial 6 session phase included a plea from some artists to 'make it real' rather than to duck the difficult feelings and conflicts between people in the room. As the group grew and worked together this became more possible. Time needs to be built in to the days to allow for this type of group work to be done appropriately.

Time

- There will never be enough time in the day to cover all the possible content and discussion on the range of complex issues that come up as part of intergenerational work.
- The days therefore need to have clear goals and focus, so participants feel they have covered the material in enough depth, with enough time for reflection and learning.
- The days and activities that worked best had a sense of spaciousness, which gave people time to reflect and digest.
- Initially the days were short particularly once breaks, introductions and closing time were included. We planned slightly longer days for later sessions to allow more time for training and reflection, and for the inevitable 'unexpected'

Rapporteur

- During this series the Rapporteur was asked to feedback to the group towards the end of the day, detailing what he or she had observed and recorded. Although very welcome at the start, as the series progressed, this method felt less useful and in fact having an 'official' feedback presentation may have been an interruption and a 'hard act to follow', making individual responses and feedback to the day more difficult.
- Different techniques were used in the latter five days that involved the participants more directly in this feedback process, so that the time was artist led. This was more successful and also provided chances to share and learn new ways of recording and reflecting, that artists could then use elsewhere in their own practice.

Activities and processes

- Artists welcomed opportunities to learn and reflect using arts activities and processes, particularly when they could make connections and see how these exercises might be used in their own practice.
- During the day on dementia, Leah Thorn, Performance poet and Magic Me artist, performed an excerpt from 'Watch' a piece which documents the effect of Alzheimer's disease on her relationship with her late father. Her performance enriched that day in a poignant way. It also demonstrated the power of the arts to explore difficult and complex experiences and thus the potential of using the arts as a training and learning tool.
- Some artists found it difficult to join in when challenged to work in an artform that is not their usual one eg. a drama exercise, or making a book. Artists commented on how useful this was; they were reminded how some participants feel when asked to join a drama or arts activity which is new to them.
- Days included theory, practical and experiential learning, and reflection. Artists welcomed the mix of learning styles and some particularly commented on the links made with research by Jennifer Williams on the Community day and Sally Knocker on the Dementia day. It should be noted that both trainers are researchers *and* practitioners and can make the link between the two, presenting research in a relevant and digestible format.
- A working contract was agreed with the group by some trainers for the sessions they led, however we did not initially agree a contract for the whole series. We made the mistake of assuming that the group were all professionals and present in a paid capacity and would therefore share certain ways of working. Whilst managers challenged disruptive behaviour such as arriving late it is more effective for a group to manage themselves.
- We agreed a contract at the start of the next phase of the programme including clear agreements on how to work and communicate within the group. In this way individuals and the group took responsibility for their conduct and involvement, and could challenge those who broke the agreement.

Leadership and management

- Those sessions led by people with direct intergenerational experience were most successful, as each point could link directly to Magic Me work. Exercises used by Magic Me staff and artists are ones that could be used with groups in projects and therefore served a dual purpose. Intergenerational work was not so specifically referred to in sessions led by specialists with

other skills e.g. the Diversity day which focused very effectively on race and ethnicity, but not on age.

- Creative activities were used successfully within days led by non Magic Me trainers (on the Community, Diversity and Dementia days) and where we use specialist trainers in future we should seek out people who are prepared to work in this way.
- The session on Child and Adult Protection felt the most rushed. This was partly the nature of the subject that combines a legal context with emotional subject matter and the need to link policy and practice. It was also because four trainers led different parts of the day: two specialist trainers alongside the two Magic Me programme leaders. Our aim was to design a 'bespoke' day covering Protection in relation to intergenerational Magic Me work. However this was hard to do, in detail, for a one-off event with trainers with whom we had not worked before.
- Adult Protection is a developing field, with a legal and policy framework still mostly centred on social and health care models, rather than the broader, universal approach used as the basis of Child Protection. Finding an appropriate trainer for Adult Protection was much more difficult, with a very narrow field of people to choose from. In retrospect we would have taken more time to find a more appropriate trainer and not pressured ourselves to do this for a funding deadline.
- The issue of how to bring young people and older people together in safe and positive ways is key to our work, and that of others in the field. As Magic Me develops more confidence and expertise in its own approach to Child and Adult Protection we could work with experienced trainers in child and adult protection to design relevant training in this complex but essential area.
- The time needed for Jan Stirling and Susan Langford to set up, deliver and reflect on the programme and follow-up with artists between sessions, was much more than estimated in the proposal.
- We also note that a great deal of the work to design and set up the programme, and find trainers etc. had been done before the grant funding was confirmed and therefore was additional to the days budgeted for planning and management in the grant proposals.

PART NINE: BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAMME



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9.1 Benefits to Magic Me artists taking part

- 11 days of training and reflection on key issues relating to intergenerational work and other community arts work.
- Input from experienced Magic Me practitioners and other specialist trainers.
- Handouts and other complementary materials including: research papers, summaries of training topics and exercises, published articles etc.
- Each artist received a copy of *Sharing the Experience*, Magic Me's handbook on how set up and run intergenerational arts projects.
- Artists were paid a training fee for participating. This was the first time some had been offered training by any organisation they have worked for and certainly being paid for learning was a very unusual experience. People commented that they felt valued and taken seriously because of the fees.
- Meeting and working with other freelance artists gave opportunities to discuss key issues and shared concerns. Artists also learned about one another's work, built relationships and had ideas for collaborative future projects.
- Artists had opportunities to share their skills and experience with others. This included demonstrating their workshop practice, performing a short narrative piece or sharing games and exercises with the group.
- Artists had chances to explore art forms other than their own. This led to benefits such as: insight into the experience of participants coming newly to an art form; a chance to develop their own range of creative expressive possibilities and to consider how different artforms can complement one another.
- Training in Child and Adult Protection related directly to Magic Me policy, so that artists could better understand their responsibilities and what action they need to take if they have concerns about participants.
- Opportunities to use and reflect on different learning styles and methods. As well as aiding artists' own learning this also modelled a way of working with groups.
- An opportunity to be part of Magic Me the organisation in a different role to usual. Artists had new opportunities to question, to challenge and to shape practice.

- A way to be active in Magic Me at times when they were not working on a project. This offered continuity of contact with the organisation, and a sense of being part of it. Some artists talked about the value to them of having Magic Me care about their practice and witness their progress over time.

9.2 Benefits to partners taking part

- Each partner received a copy of *Sharing the Experience* and introductory training in intergenerational arts projects, from experienced practitioners.
- Partners met with their peers and people from other professions and sectors, to discuss the potential for intergenerational work in their own workplaces. By mixing with people who worked with the 'other' generation to themselves, partners gained new insight into the practicalities of setting up a project, and what impact one might have.
- Some partners were very new to the idea of intergenerational work and, though excited about it, had a very general sense of what they might do. The training enabled them to develop more focused, realistic aims and understand the work they would have to do for their own organisation to be involved in an initiative.
- Partners enjoyed working in creative ways using visual arts and drama, as part of the training. Having experienced these activities they could better imagine a project with their client group.
- All of the partners work in challenging situations where they are the person leading and driving the work and putting a lot of energy and ideas into it. Most relished fresh ideas, and a chance to share their expertise and the challenges of their jobs. One care home Activities Organiser reported that she had used a poem in Magic Me's 2006 Calendar, a training handout, to inspire a creative reminiscence session with residents, in an extremely successful session.
- Partners were better able to communicate their needs and situations when negotiating with Magic Me, having gained in confidence doing this in the training.
- Partners at *The Bigger Picture* Project event contributed ideas directly into the project plans and were able to air their concerns about the wider context in which it would take place.
- These partners also met for the first time colleagues working locally, with whom they found much common ground and good links were made and maintained as a result, outside the Magic Me project itself.

9.3 Benefits to Magic Me as an organisation

- The programme provided a structure and impetus to explore and develop our practice, and to spread what we have discovered within the organisation as a whole.
- We were able to pass on and develop Magic Me's practice with the artists who lead our projects and work in our name. The programme enabled us to summarise and present to artists information and experience developed by Magic Me over the years, but not yet shared with the whole freelance pool. For example the day on dementia included the findings of our action research project with people with dementia (1998 to 2001)
- Whilst designing and delivering the training Magic Me staff had to deconstruct and analyse how we work, which deepened our own understanding of the key elements of successful intergenerational work.
- Building shared understanding and a sense of group amongst our pool of freelance artists, led to a greater sense of us being an organisation, rather than a series of individual projects. Artists now know more about the work of the organisation as a whole and where their own experience fits within this.
- Working in an ethnically and culturally diverse group challenged Magic Me staff to consider aspects of the organisation's practice and management, its recruitment and retention of artists and staff.
- There was an immediate positive impact on projects that were underway during this period. The CPD days gave artists formal and informal time to get to know one another, so that they did not have to build relationships from scratch at the start of working on a project together. Managers were better able to choose complementary teams of artists for new projects.
- Artists working together on projects noted that they had used exercises learned during the CPD, adapting them to their own participating groups. Artists had shared reference points from the CPD which aided their planning and practice.
- Opportunities to deal with unresolved questions and issues that were raised by individual artists as a direct result of the CPD. For example, for one artist old questions resurfaced about the actions of a teacher she had worked with on a project a while ago. She wanted to discuss these with managers and think about how such a situation could be handled differently in future.
- Opportunities for managers to observe artists working with others and reflecting, which gave us greater understanding of their skills and has helped with project design and selection of artists to work on future projects.

- Opportunities to reflect on the skills, experiences, values and attitudes that we require of freelance artists, and how we can assess whether people have these before making offers of work.
- Opportunity to develop artists who show potential but are not yet experienced enough to lead projects for us.
- An opportunity to show our artists that we value them, encourage them to develop and want them to continue working for us. The CPD was also an excellent way to maintain our relationship with artists for whom we had no current appropriate work. We need to nourish and value our freelance artists, to earn their loyalty and build a sustainable workforce and practice.
- Events for partners enabled us to raise our profile locally, find and enthuse potential new partners and give them a realistic idea of what intergenerational work involves.
- We also got to know individuals away from their workplaces. People could sometimes be more open about their roles, the challenges and the tough realities in a neutral space. Taking part in creative activities themselves, the group also revealed aspects of their lifestories, their talents and interests and we found points of contact which have enhanced our subsequent working relationships.
- We have also shared the findings with many others and will continue to do so through this report. Running the CPD event for non-Magic Me artists in November 2006 enabled us to gauge the interest in intergenerational arts, and especially training in it, and to find out what artists are seeking to learn. Susan Langford also presented the findings to date to an international audience at the ICIP (International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes) conference in Melbourne, Australia in June 06

PART TEN: THE FUTURE

10.1 Future CPD programme

During the evaluation process we consulted artists about their continuing training needs and themes for future CPD. Issues they were keen to pursue included: more in-depth work around cultural diversity; working with conflict within groups; and exploring challenging issues that arise in intergenerational work, linked to ageing, mortality and disability. There was a sense that the group were much more ready to take on difficult issues and cope with feeling challenged. Two Artists CPD days are planned for Spring and Autumn 2007. Other CPD methods were also considered, for example circulating reports or research, or visits to local organisations such as the East London Mosque cultural centre.

10.2 Our Generations

Magic Me's *Our Generations* programme began in April 2006. A three year programme of work across many artforms and settings, *Our Generations* aims to compare and contrast different kinds of intergenerational relationships and dynamics, involving young people aged 9 to 25 and 'older' people from 55 to 100+. An External Evaluator is following the progress of the projects and participants, enabling us to explore what works, in what situation and why. Workshop days for project artists will enable them to share progress, problems and insights with one another, the Programme Manager and Evaluator. Links will need to be made to share this learning with all Magic Me freelancers and staff.

10.3 Diversity of artists

To serve the community in which we work Magic Me needs to recruit further black and ethnic minority artists and Trustees, particularly from the Bangladeshi community, and people who speak locally used languages including Bangla and Somali. *Our Generations* is providing us with many practical opportunities to build links and grow our understanding in this area, and to meet people who operate in different networks. Future CPD will need to continue to accommodate further artists new to Magic Me and to intergenerational work, and also to include people from a variety of cultures and artforms, with different experiences and skills to offer the organisation.

10.4 Training for others

The programme demonstrated a demand for training in intergenerational work, particularly at an introductory level, from artists and other people such as community development workers. Magic Me will consider how best to design and deliver training in response to this demand, including how we might work with others to design and run accredited training.

10.5 The way forward

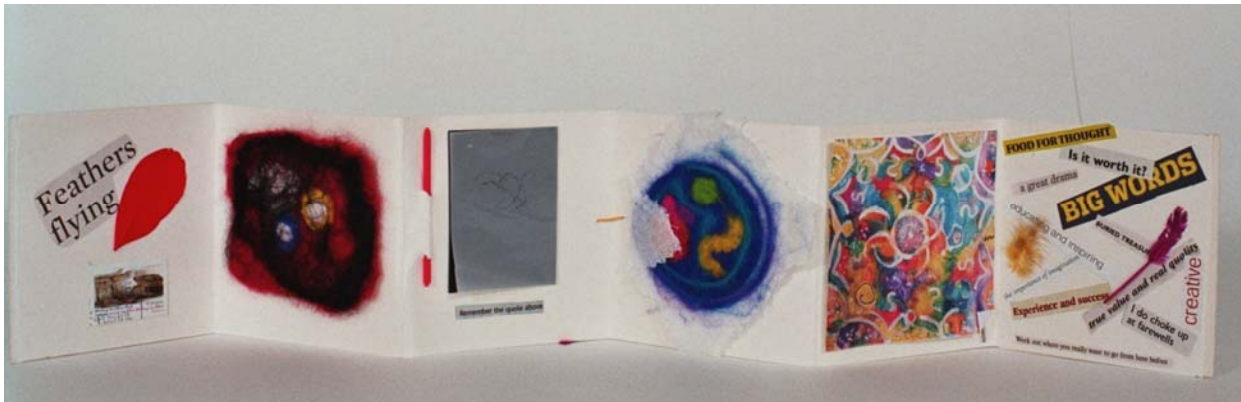
Through this programme and its impact on our working practices training and CPD have become an integral part of Magic Me. We will build on this and continue to develop how we work with, and support our artists. The costs and work of providing ongoing CPD have been built into our budgets and 3 Year Plan for 2007/10.

**Jan Stirling
Susan Langford**

April 2007

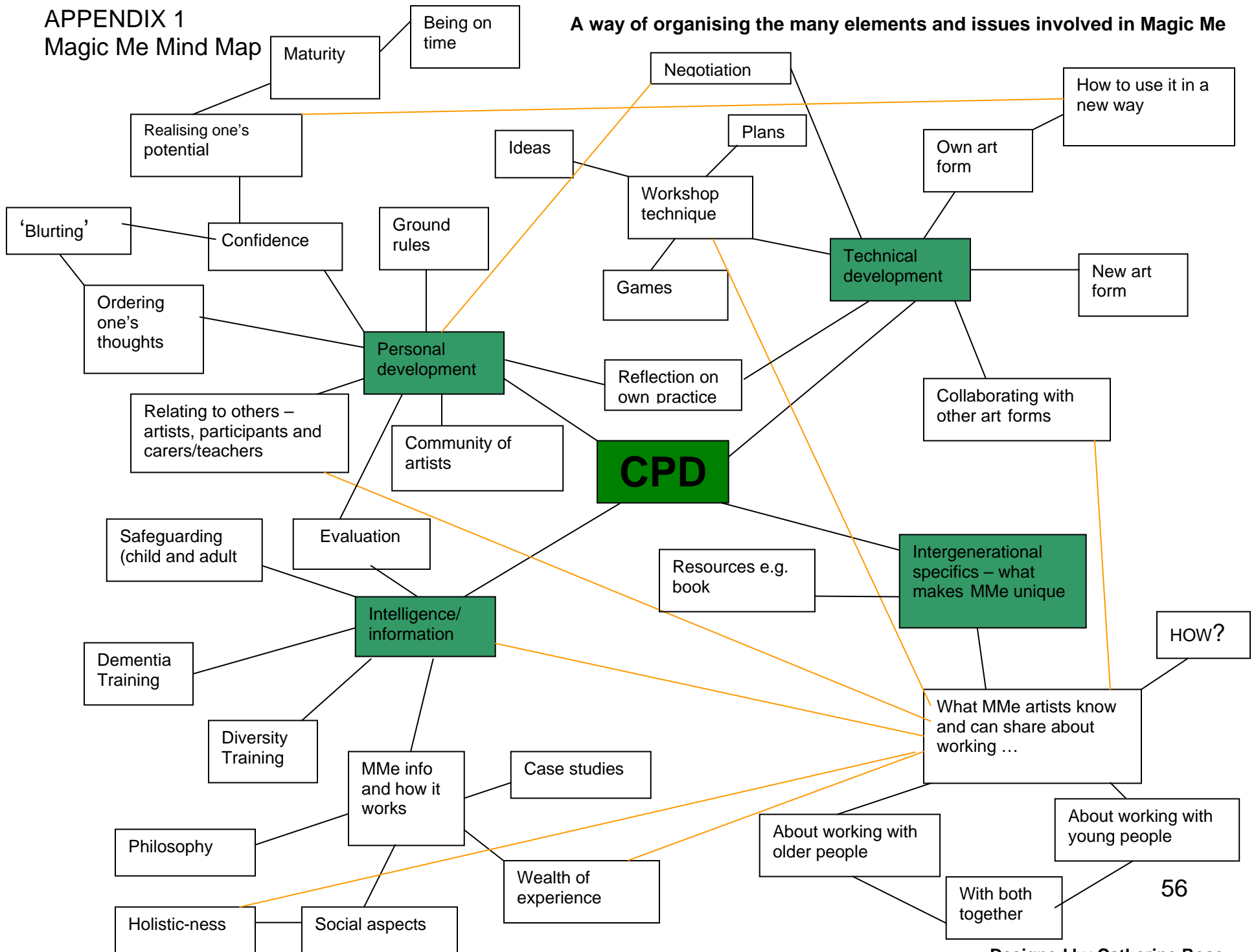
APPENDICES

- APPENDIX 1 Magic Me Mind Map
- APPENDIX 2 Magic Me Projects: Some Possible Scenarios/Dynamics
- APPENDIX 3 Creating a Safe Place For Intergenerational Work
- APPENDIX 4 Poems



APPENDIX 1
Magic Me Mind Map

A way of organising the many elements and issues involved in Magic Me



APPENDIX 2 Magic Me Projects: Some Possible Scenarios/Dynamics

1. A Junior School and a Nursing Home for older people

A group of 12 pupils (9-10 years) visit a group of 12 residents once a week for a term. Joint sessions take place in the activities room at the home. Each week residents reflect on the session over tea in the activities room, once pupils have gone back to school for a reflection session.

2. Estate based project

A group of 12 young adults (16 – 25 years) and 12 older adults all living on the same housing estate come together to work on creative activities relating to their community, its issues and concerns. They meet weekly for 24 weeks. Reflection for the whole group happens weekly with time for the two peer groups separately scheduled at intervals throughout the project.

3. A Secondary School and a resource centre for older people

A group of 12 pupils work with 12 older people weekly for 20 weeks. The pupils come from one class studying Citizenship. The older people have been recruited individually for the project. Sessions take place in school time, sometimes at the school and sometimes in a room at the resource centre. Reflection for the whole group is weekly, sometimes in peer groups, and sometimes in mixed groups.

4. A Junior School and local older people

12 older people visit a local junior school class weekly for 10 weeks to work on a project. The 26 pupils are divided into two groups, with each group hosting 5 visits from the adults. Everyone works on the same creative project. Older people meet to reflect over tea at the end of each session. The pupils reflect regularly sometimes with their teacher, sometimes at the end of the session.

5. Arts Venue

A local arts venue (gallery, performance venue, museum) hosts meetings of a mixed group of 16 local people: young adults (16-25 years) and older adults. Their creative work together relates to a current exhibition or performance. Regular reflection sessions are held for the mixed group.

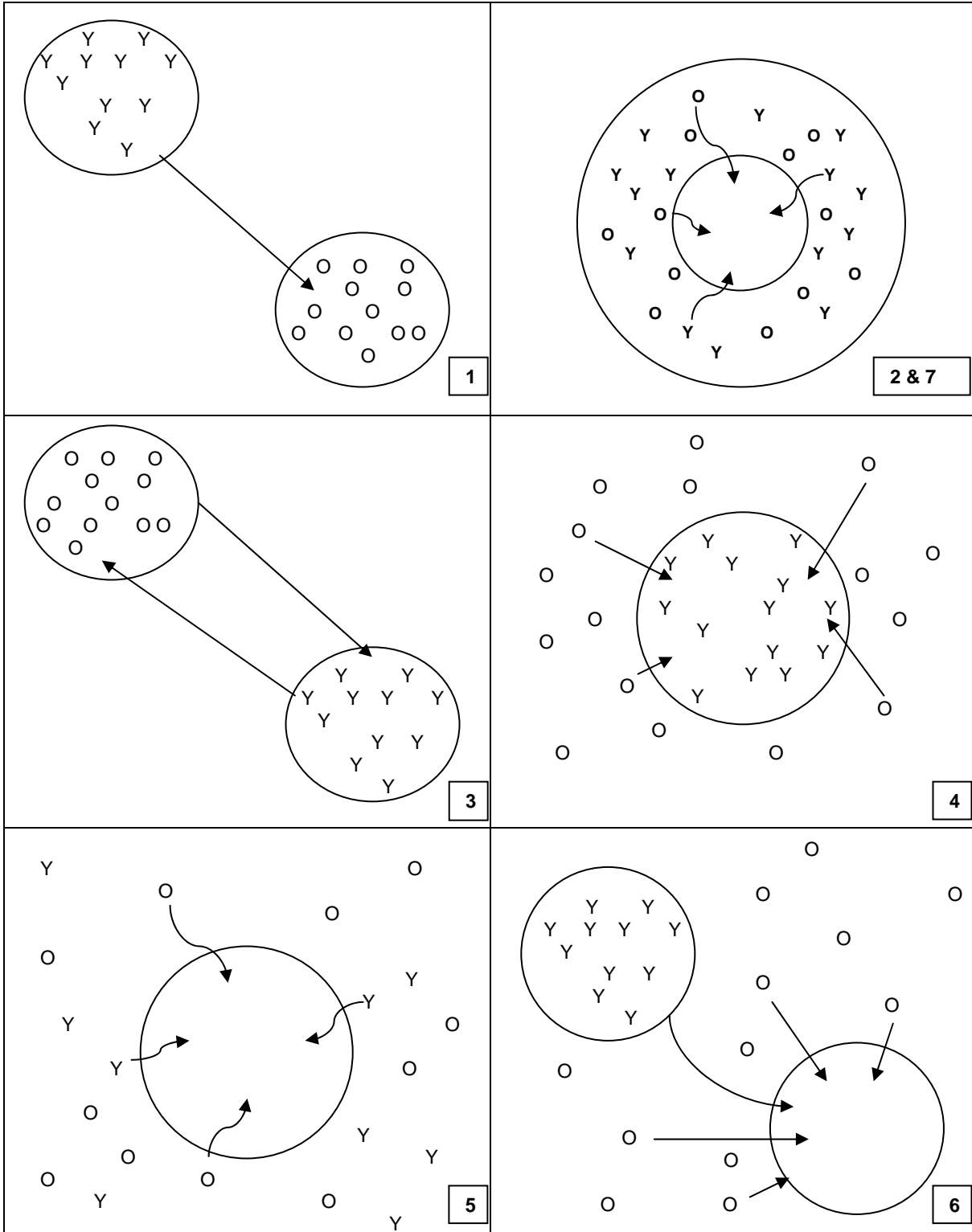
6. After School project

10 young people recruited from one secondary school join 10 older people at a local community venue to work on a joint arts project. Sessions run from 3.45 to 5.15 weekly for 12 weeks with one full-day session in the school holidays at the end of the project. Regular reflection sessions are held for the mixed group and for the two peer groups.

7. Summer Holiday project

10 young people aged 9 to 13 years join 10 older adults at a local community centre. All live within easy walking distance of the centre and use it regularly, but not with the other age group. The project runs from 10.00 till 3.30 for four days in the summer holidays, two days one week and two days the next. Reflection time is built in during each day for the whole group together, or in peer groups.

Magic Me Projects: Some Possible Scenarios/Dynamics



APPENDIX 3

Creating a Safe Place For Intergenerational Work How can we help to create it?

Find an accessible venue, and transport if needed

Make environment friendly and welcoming

Gather chairs for older people, and furniture that makes building relationships possible

Arrange room so people are physically comfortable and everyone can see each other

Reduce unnecessary noise inside / outside the room that could prevent concentration

Adjust lighting, heating and ventilation to comfortable levels

Negotiate single use of room for duration of session; no interruptions, no intrusions

Ensure sufficient leadership and support persons in the room

Act as a bridge for people who do not know each other

Model the kind of behaviour you want from participants.

Be: Respectful, value other's opinions and contributions
A good listener
Non-judgmental, it's OK to get it wrong
Open, kind and considerate
Willing to try and to take creative risks
Trusting and trust worthy
Confident
Caring towards and interested in people
Creative
Helpful when it's wanted

Agree clear ground rules with participants. Remember to discuss issues of confidentiality, access, appropriate touch, and the right to choose to participate

Intervene if behaviour or circumstances in the room threaten safety

Know the limits of your patience, skill, knowledge, responsibility
Request help and support from co-workers, managers, supervisors when you need it

Prepare a clear plan and strategy of what you want to do: have some plan B's in mind, be flexible and responsive to the situation in the room

Include ice-breakers and warm ups, reflections and closures – build in clear beginnings, middles and endings to sessions and projects

Design exercises that are inclusive and sensitive to the diversity in the room

Provide materials and equipment that is safe and appropriate

Create time and space for young and older people to reflect separately and together in order to work through concerns, issues, needs, and strategies for improving relationships

Welcome constructive feed-back from participants; elicit and value their in-put

Affirm participants and give constructive feed-back in an equitable way

Respond sensitively to disclosures of abuse

Be clear about boundaries of confidentiality: For your protection I cannot and will not keep issues of your safety just between you and me

Follow Magic Me policy guidance regarding working with vulnerable children and adults, health and safety and equal opportunities

Be aware of and use the safety procedures in the venues you work in

APPENDIX 4

Once upon a time, not too long ago and not too far away, there was an ordinary woman, not an extraordinary woman, who knew how to listen *listen*

she listened with her eyes
her eyes

she listened with her skin
skin

she listened when she was near

she listened when she was far

she listened so closely she heard your breath in, your breath out
and she knew how to take your breath and with it came your words

which she catches
and she shows you

the beauty
the struggle
the honesty
the power
the purity

of your voice

and she says

breathe more
speak more

and you do

Surya Turner & Leah Thorn 14 May 2005

A story written by Surya Turner and Leah Thorn during the Magic Me CPD day on what the arts and artists gain from and give to an intergenerational setting, May 2005 Copyright Surya Turner and Leah Thorn 2005

The E-word

Got the email – ‘Oh no, not again, not evaluation!’
Magic Me, with its expectation of intense exploration.

I just want a Saturday
of play and relaxation.

Arrive at number 18 full of apprehension,
nothing going in my brain, no comprehension.

Then

Monitoring
Documentation
Reflection
more bloody Evaluation

and me & Jan & Sarah can't seem to locate our inspiration.

Lunchtime and my brain's still in hiding,
I'm struggling to find the subject exciting.

After lunch, a revelation!
We devise exciting exercises to aid evaluation.

Hey, it's not to do with forms, tick boxes, financial
considerations,
but with growth, closeness and self-
appreciation.

Challenge self-doubt, reach for liberation,
I know all about that kind of celebration.

And maybe someday I'll come to love the word 'Evaluation'?

Leah Thorn

A poem written by Leah Thorn in response to the Magic Me CPD day on reclaiming evaluation
May 2006 Copyright Leah Thorn 2006