



# THE IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) ON BAME COMMUNITIES

## CASE STUDIES

### ARTS

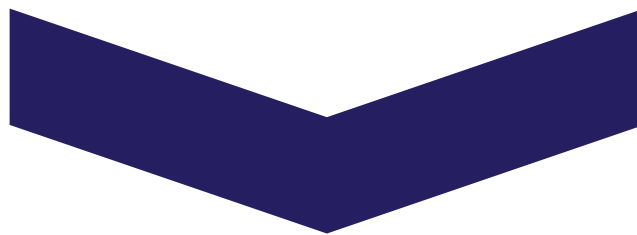
ACE Dance and Music (May 2020)

Black Arts Forum (BAF) (May 2020)

Collage Arts (May 2020)

Theatre Peckham (April 2020)

Creative Design and Manufacture (June 2020)



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at [info@ubele.org](mailto:info@ubele.org) and tell us about:  
your challenge, best practice, impact (financial etc).

# ACE DANCE AND MUSIC



## **‘Togetherness is the Key’**

**ACE dance and music is a national touring dance company based in Birmingham UK, which was founded in 1996 by Gail and Ian Parmel. ACE dance and music is an internationally recognised leader in the field of Contemporary African and Caribbean Dance.**

By combining African & Caribbean movement aesthetics with contemporary techniques ACE create high-quality innovative performance – always combining dance with original music and often using new digital media and techniques from other disciplines including theatre. The company’s reputation has developed through 11 biennial productions touring to small and mid-scale theatres and festivals both across the UK and internationally.

ACE dance and music (African Cultural Exchange Ltd.) was established as an agent for cultural exchange which has made a specific and unique contribution to contemporary dance locally, regionally and nationally. They offer a full range of bespoke education and outreach programmes, deliver in-house studio-based dance classes, and play host to ACE Youth – ACE’s youth dance company, with its own independent reputation for excellence. ACE dance and music have nurtured the talent of some amazing young artists such as: ‘Xhosa Cole’ who won the BBC Young Jazz Musician Award 2018, singer/songwriter ‘Mahaila Burkmar’ and ACE’s Education Manager ‘Iona Waite’; a few of the British gems that have grown their talent at ACE.



The 2020 Coronavirus pandemic has certainly presented them with challenges, they were in their first term of what was planning to be a very busy year. Their weekly classes providing music and dance cater to a diverse range of needs from adults seeking fitness; to movement classes for children from 2 years old, to the heaving classes for talented youth to new recruits just exploring. The pandemic immediately brought their space in Birmingham to a grinding halt, ended their schoolwork and forced the national and international dancers training with them, living in Birmingham, heading quickly home to London, the Midlands, Amsterdam, South Africa, and Spain.

Meeting with their team the founders made the decision to quickly migrate all of their teaching of classes onto the zoom online platform. They sent out emails with joining instructions to all participants, reassuring them that once the lockdown was over the classes would be kept free for two months giving everyone time to re-establish their routines.

ACE is a National Portfolio Organisation funded by the Arts Council which enabled them to keep on-line classes free. A percentage of their income does come from this work and also from their professional tours, so there will definitely be a consequent impact on their finances. However, they are most focused on doing what they have always done which is to use the arts as a powerful tool for bringing people together, most important in this time of crisis.

[acedanceandmusic.com](http://acedanceandmusic.com)

# BLACK ARTS FORUM



**The Black Arts Forum (BAF) is based in Birchfield, Handsworth, North Birmingham and situated in the Perry Barr constituency. Based at Grosvenor Road Studio (GRS), a building owned by one of their key partners, Black Voices, the work they do is focussed on primarily Black artists who need support to develop, testbed or showcase their work.**

The support provided by BAF is across diverse art forms but with a strong emphasis on visual artists. Through their partnership with Outside In, BAF also provides support to visual artists that are struggling with overcoming significant barriers to their practice or to profiling their work. The range of people BAF work with includes millennia's who are trying to cope with anxiety and/or depression; Elders groups, those facing mental health challenges, young carers, and Black female artists 40+. BAF have curated numerous exhibitions; quarterly showcase and open mic slots through their 'Music Exposed' events.

Since Covid-19 Pandemic their key work has stopped especially because their base has had to close to the community. They have no income to cover their core costs such as salaries, rent or utilities at the present time. Before the crisis they had just succeeded in gaining a small 'Cultural Diversity' grant from Birmingham City Council to conduct more cultural leadership training and extend the reach of their work. They are currently exploring the best way to now deliver elements of this vital work online due to the current crisis.

[blackartsforum.co.uk](http://blackartsforum.co.uk)



# COLLAGE ARTS



**Collage Arts, a BAME led charity based in Haringey, has led on art and artistic development in the borough for thirty years, providing workspace for 250 artists.**

They open opportunities for the whole community to engage with art through a range of programmes and projects; offering support services, exhibition opportunities, facilities and resources. They especially work to create greater access in the sector for under-represented groups such as economically disadvantaged young people; black and minority ethnic groups, women, people with disabilities, young people leaving care, LGBT communities and ex-offenders.

The recent Coronavirus crisis that is still unfolding has deeply impacted their service, closing all of their buildings leased to artists and their offices to staff. Most of their staff have had to be furloughed for three months and the financial implications will no doubt be significant. In weeks, their work with young people has had to go through a revolutionary change as they have fight to maintain contact with the young people they work with.

Their programme, Collage Works for 18 plus year olds, which accredits up to 75 young people a year with an art qualification has been the easiest to change to complete on-line delivery.

The staff that run their 'Voices' programme which is delivered to 83 young people-over sixty attending consistently each week-are working feverishly to keep their young people safe and engaged. Their partnership work delivering a range of art workshops to six Haringey schools has stopped with school closures, as has their work with Haringey Virtual School for young people in care.



The event venue Karamel, base for much of their youth delivery, is now firmly closed, preventing the Saturday arts school and the monthly theatre workshops for young families.

Collage Arts are grappling with the additional safeguarding needed for this on-line work with young people, reviewing suitable platforms and updating their approach, connecting families by phone, so that the young people and their parents feel involved in the new processes and that staff are confident that they have considered all the important issues of working on open platforms with young people that have a heightened vulnerability at this time.

[collage-arts.org](https://collage-arts.org)

# THEATRE PECKHAM



**Theatre Peckham offers a range of art-based opportunities for young people from the North Peckham Estate. They regularly have a weekly membership of approx. 500 young people.**

The centre has had to close all of its activities. Their concern is for the mental health/wellbeing for their members. They will need somewhere to go, some way to express themselves, someone to connect with. If Theatre Peckham were to open to provide this support (even online) they would be under-resourced as they don't have any bespoke funding to do this work.

In order to maintain the contact with their members, Theatre Peckham has created an app.

[theatrepeckham.co.uk/](http://theatrepeckham.co.uk/)

# CREATIVE DESIGN AND MANUFACTURE



**CDM UK is repurposing the existing grant funds at their textile design and training centre based in Ardwick in Central Manchester. They train people in hand-processed textile manufacturing skills. Face to face training has been on hold from mid-March 2020.**

The organisation diverted efforts into making scrub bags for the NHS and also masks, which are reversible, reusable and from breathable fabric. They launched a donation appeal for fabrics, which was remarkably successful. The material was recycled, cut up and sewn into over 350 scrub bags to local hospitals and over 50 to local nurses and doctors. Masks went to their volunteers and the local community free of charge. Then fees were introduced to the general public to cover the volunteer costs and emergency supply for the vulnerable.

The funders were flexible and agreed to re-appropriate the funds which would have been used for venue hire, lunch, and transport costs for trainees. Instead, they bought sewing machines and gave them to learners to use in their homes and started the training virtually using online platform such as Zoom. They also developed a resource pack and dropped it off to the homes of the learners.

So, the project changed its format of activities from face to face group-based training to online training to adapt with the changing circumstances due to COVID-19 and funded machines that can be loaned to learners in their homes. This allowed the vulnerable and disadvantaged women they work with something positive to do, creating unique creative items as well as items for the NHS while locked down at home. Doing what they did to cope with the impact of COVID-19, CDM UK changed their thinking and successfully created a positive out of a negative.

[creativedesignmanufacture.com](https://creativedesignmanufacture.com)