

Contents Introduction **Mission and Vision Producing and Touring / MamaBabaMe** The Attic 9 Sprog Rock 10 **New Work Development** 12 **Community Engagement Expecting Something** 16 **Creative Kin** 19 ArtFelt Fruitmarket project **Music Hall Babies Professional Development Creative Skills** 26 **Playspace** 28 **Erasmus** 30 **Supporters** The Gift of Live Performance **Financial Overview** Who we are Photo: Holly Mc Photos

Introduction



I'm delighted to welcome you to Starcatchers' Annual Report for 2018/19. It has been another bumper year for Starcatchers with projects and activity taking place across Scotland making new connections and inspiring children, families, artists and early years practitioners everywhere we have been.

As part of our Producing and Touring programme we revisited some of our favourite shows from the last 12 years including *The Attic* by Hazel Darwin-Clements which was first produced in 2010. In 2018 we toured it across Scotland and partnered with Theatre in Schools Scotland to bring this magical production to nurseries and early primary classes across the country. We also brought back our beautiful dance theatre co-production with Curious Seed,

MamaBabaMe which had a sell-out run at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe as part of the Made in Scotland Showcase.

With support from Creative Scotland we have been able to begin to develop some new work for our audiences – *Little Top*, a new circus production for babies aged 0-18 months by Ellie Dubois and Kim Donohoe and *Bounce* by Stephen Deazley – a music installation for babies. We are excited to see how this, and some other new work will evolve over the next few years and look forward to sharing this with babies, toddlers, and their grown ups across the country.

Our Community Engagement activity continues to flourish with ongoing delivery of Expecting Something in Wester Hailes and Lochgelly working with young parents under 25 and their babies. The groups have created films and developed performances for babies as well as participated in a huge range of arts activities led by our brilliant Associate Artists Katy and Marion. We were delighted to share our Expecting Something approach with Aberdeen Performing Arts in the delivery of a short programme of workshops as part of their Music Hall Babies project.

2018/19 saw the culmination of our Creative Kin pilot project working in partnership with Children 1st to bring arts and creative experiences to children in kinship care and their families. This has been a highly successful project which has had such a positive impact in both Ayrshire and in Moray and we hope we will be able to revisit this working in 2019/20 and build on this success.

We delivered some new engagement activity with new partners this year. This included ArtFelt, an intergenerational project in partnership with Luminate, Scotland's creative ageing organisation and Colourful Characters, a week of creative activity for 0-5s at the Fruitmarket Gallery.

The Creative Skills Programme built the creative confdence and capacity of hundreds of early years practitioners across six local authority areas and two further education colleges. It was wonderful to observe the way that this training has impacted on their practice and empowered children across the country to play more creatively. It was also exciting to see practitioners convert their training in to our SQA-accredited qualification.

Finally, we were delighted to launch Playspace, our artist development programme which will provide artists working in Early Years with a range of training and development opportunities to inspire and develop their artistic practice.

As I said, it's been a bumper year for Starcatchers! I am indebted to the commitment, energy and enthusiasm of the whole Starcatchers team, including all the artists we work with and our fantastic Board. A huge thank you to everyone who has contributed to our success this year – we could not do it without you.

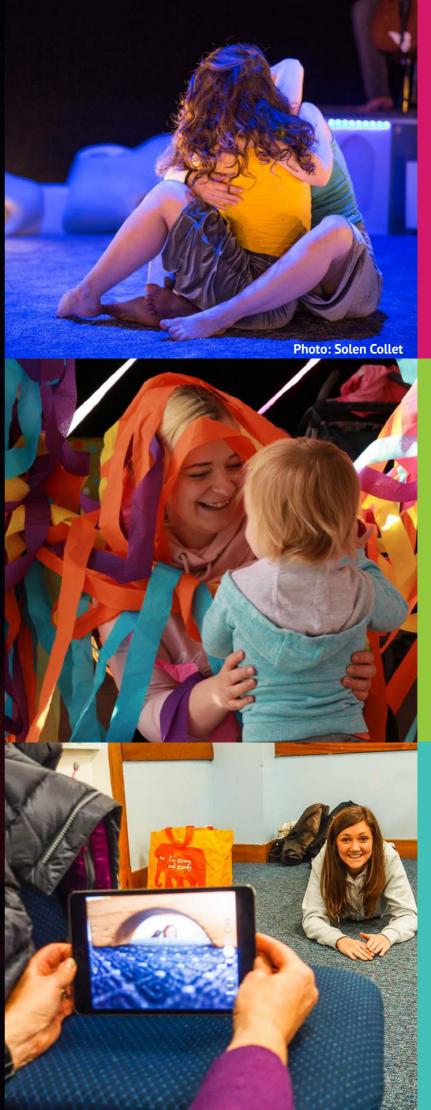
Starcatchers is Scotland's National Arts and Early Years Organisation

We want to inspire babies, toddlers and children 0-5 through live performance and the arts.

We strive to achieve this by:

- Creating beautiful live theatre, dance and music performances, and arts installations for babies, young children and their adults
- Connecting artists with communities
- Empowering early years professionals to transform children's experiences through expressive arts
- Inspiring artists to push the boundaries of artistic practice.





Producing and Touring

We work with exceptional artists to create live performances and arts installations for babies, young children and their adults.

We tour to arts and community venues across Scotland, the UK and internationally, creating magical moments that young children and their parents and carers experience together.

Community Engagement

With our partners in the early years, education, health, arts and voluntary sectors, we connect artists with local communities.

Our artist-facilitated community engagement projects empower participants to explore their creativity, learn new skills, build confidence and self-esteem, strengthen relationships and create new friends.

Professional Development

Creative Skills is Starcatchers inspirational training programme for early years practicioners, educators, childminders and others who work with babies and young children.

Playspace is our artist development programme for artists interested in working with, or developing work for, babies and young children. We support artists across all artforms at different stages of their careers.

In 2018/19 Starcatchers produced and toured: MamaBabaMe The Attic Sprog Rock

Producing and Touring

MamaBabaMe at the Fringe

After a successful tour of Scotland and the UK in 2017, MamaBabaMe was part of the Made in Scotland Showcase and received sold-out status at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2018.

A beautiful dance, physical theatre and live music experience, MamaBabaMe was created especially for babies and young children aged 0-3 and their grown-ups by Artistic Director of Curious Seed, Christine Devaney.

It featured live music composed by award-winning musician Greg Sinclair, a set designed by visual artist Yvonne Buskie and lighting by Simon Wilkinson.

Christine Devaney, said: "I wanted to create a show that explores the beauty, depth and complexity of the vital connection between babies and the adults in their lives, and also celebrates it. MamaBabaMe is a performance that baby and adult can experience together because we can all, babies included, respond in a very powerful way to a beautiful piece of live classical music and dance.

"Neuroscience has helped us understand the importance of babies' earliest experiences of relationships, how these relationships shape brain development and have a lasting impact on our lives. We're also much more aware of the

incredible capacity that even the youngest babies have to engage with the world around

them."

"A tender, sensuous, encompassing piece of children's theatre."

The Edinburgh Guide

"Brilliantly conceived, wonderfully choreographed and beautifully performed."

The Sunday Herald



venue performers



Eight years after the production was first created, *The Attic* returned to the stage for a new generation of 2-5-year-olds in 2018 touring across Scotland to arts venues as well as community venues, nurseries and schools as part of Theatre in Schools Scotland (TiSS).

When Lucy and her imaginative and playful grandmother unpack old boxes and suitcases, the sleepy attic springs to life with memories and surprises. Creator Hazel Darwin-Clements brought some new ideas to the stage, with a beautiful live score by David Paul Jones.

The tour also included a number of dementia-friendly performances, bringing live performance to a more diverse audience.

"My favourite thing about touring into nurseries and schools is hearing 60 nursery and P1 children laughing at the comedy in the show. It's so great to reach children who wouldn't otherwise get taken to the theatre. For so many it's their first experience of seeing a live performance like this and even the littlest ones in the audience are spellbound by it."

Hazel Darwin-Clements, Performer and Creator

"Well done Starcatchers, you have made some beautiful memories for our community and helped us strengthen the intergenerational learning opportunities in our area."

Sprog Rock

Sprog Rock is an interactive live music experience for children aged 0-5 and their grown ups.

During 2018, Sprog Rock rocked out at the Merchant City Festival at the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, and the Spree Festival in Paisley.

yenues
7
performances

They also attended the UNCON conference at Perth Horsecross Theatre, a youth-led National Children and Young People's Arts conference, which in 2018 was a celebratory event for the Year of Young People, showcasing the artistic and creative work of young people in Scotland. Sprog Rock gave an 'Introduction to Punk' workshop aimed at children 3+.



New Work Development

In 2018/19 we saw the exciting development of two new pieces of work:

Little Top

Development for *Little Top*, a magical first circus experience for babies aged 0-18 months and their grown-ups, began its development in 2018/19. This exciting new work is a unique collaboration between Starcatchers and Superfan, conceived by award- winning circus artist Ellie Dubois and early years artist Kim Donohoe. Ellie is reinventing traditional notions of what modern circus can be, and Kim aims to push the boundaries of what kind of performances can inspire very young children. Together they will be creating a truly unique first circus experience.

The research phase of Starcatchers' new work always involves working alongside little ones! The group visited nurseries and invited babies and their grown-ups to rehearsals at Platform to trial different parts of the show with our youngest audiences.

Bounce

Bounce will be a new performance experience inspired by bouncing and conceived by award-winning UK- based composer and renowned music educator Stephen Deazley. Collaborators include clarinettist, improviser and digital sonic artist Dr Pete Furniss and visual theatre maker, Al Seed.

Research to date has included meeting with developmental psychologist and author of Laughing Baby, Dr Caspar Addyman at Goldsmiths, University of London. Further development of Bounce will take place during 2019/2020.





Expecting Something

Expecting Something works with new, young and expectant parents in Wester Hailes, Edinburgh and Lochelly, Fife, providing a weekly safe space to spend time with their babies and peers whilst engaging in artist-facilitated creative activities.

These sessions take place on a weekly basis at Whale Arts in Wester Hailes, Edinburgh and the Lochgelly Centre in Lochgelly.

They have been led in 2018/19 by artists Hazel Darwin-Clements, Katy Wilson, Kim Donohoe and Marion Geoffray — all experienced in working creatively with young children.

Sessions cover many different art-forms including photography, painting, sculpture, music, puppetry, etc and are tailored to the groups' interests. As well as the weekly sessions the participants are given the opportunity to visit and engage with cultural activities in their area.

2018/19 Hightlights include:

Bundle

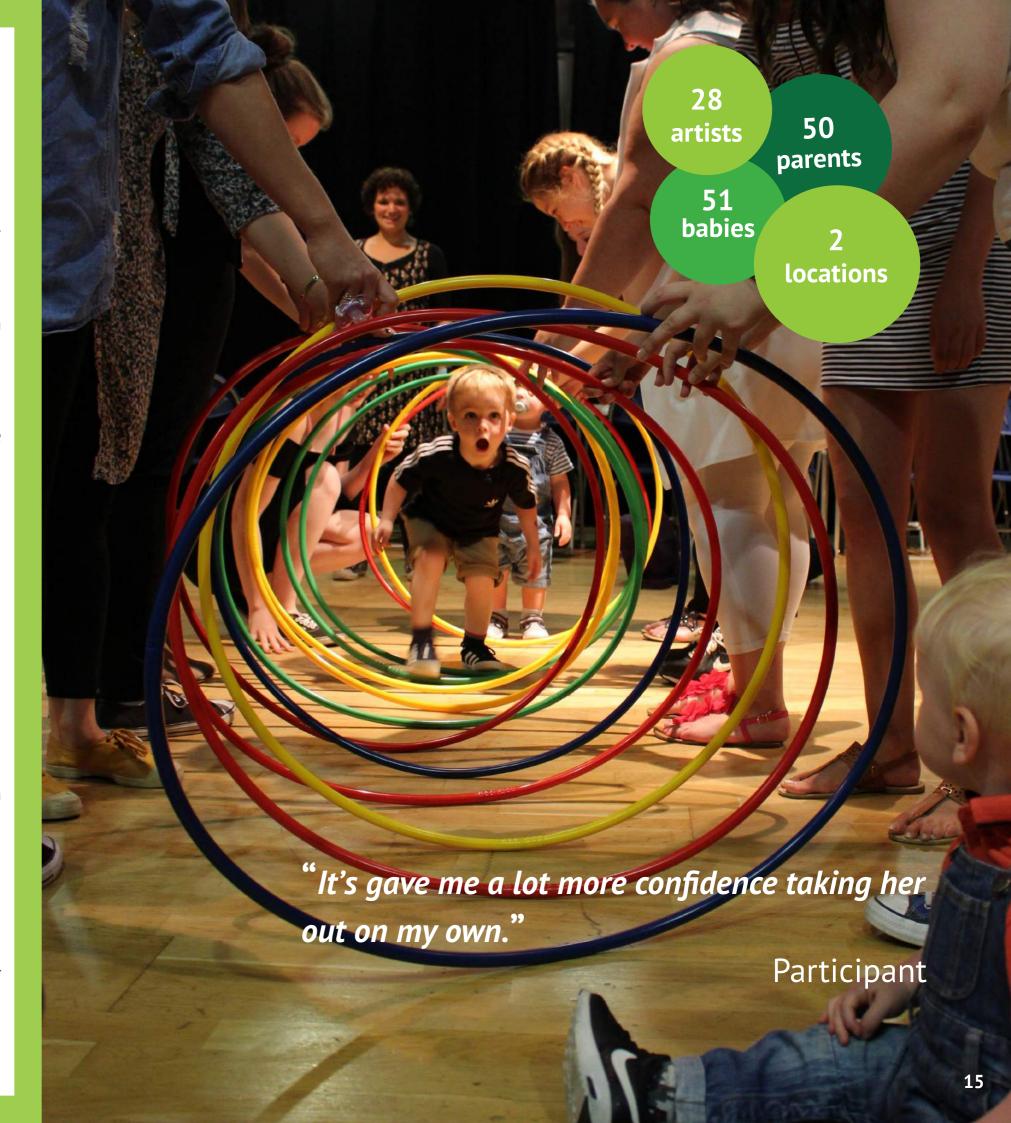
Expecting Something participants in Lochgelly worked with lead artist Hazel Darwin-Clements to create their own show *Bundle*.

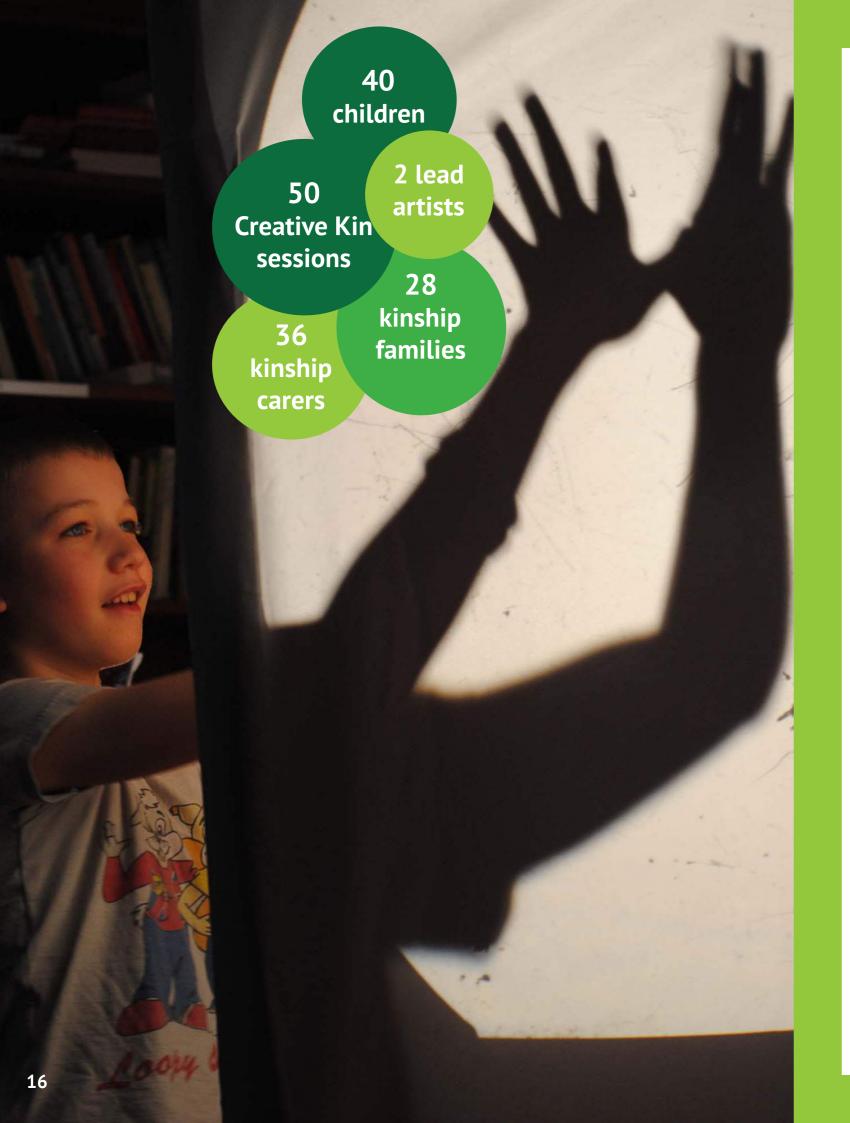
The piece they created is an exploration of the best sleeping environment for a baby, developed over one of the eight-week blocks. The group trialled their ideas using different artforms and worked with a range of visiting artists.

The show was performed to the local community, including children from local nurseries, in July 2018.

Wester Hailes Film Festival

Participants in Wester Hailes worked with visiting artist Becky Manson and musician Rory Clark to create a short film *This is no ordinary playgroup*, for a local film festival. It premiered across Wester Hailes in a number of community venues during the October half-term break.





Creative Kin

Creative Kin was a two-year pilot project delivered in Moray and Ayrshire in partnership with Children 1st from 2017 until March 2019.

Two lead artists facilitated weekly sessions providing creative respite for kinship care families — many of whom were dealing with complex issues.

Independent
evaluation found
that Creative Kin had
a significant impact,
improving kinship families'
confidence, wellbeing and
relationships.

They explored music, visual art, drama and other artistic and creative activities together as families with a focus on strengthening family bonds and improving wellbeing.

Independent evaluation by Matter of Focus found that the project had a significant impact, improving participants' confidence, wellbeing and relationships,

The opportunity to engage in creative play together as a family was really important, helping improve families' sense of togetherness and, in turn, helping to strengthen attachment between carers and their children.

Creative Kin was funded by the Scottish Government's Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Project Fund.

"Sessions have brought us closer together as a family, we can interact with each other in a different setting."

(Carer feedback)

"We liked everything, all the sessions we have attended have been brilliant. The sessions are awesome the way they are, no pressure, just good fun."

(Carer feedback)

"Starcatchers has shown the family that they can spend time together without having conflict... and gave hope that they can recreate this at home within creative activities... Feedback from the carer has been that she really enjoys seeing what the children are drawn to, learning what they enjoy and seeing them show creativity and imagination to inform what they do at home."

(A member of the Children 1st staff team)

Creative Skills Training for Creative Kin

Fifteen Creative Skills training sessions were delivered to Children 1st staff in Aryshire and Moray, engaging a total of 30 staff members.

Through the training, staff explored new ideas and approaches in creativity which have been used and further developed in their subsequent work with kinship families.

Staff have also seen the Creative Skills training as an opportunity to develop more team-building and raise awareness among new staff of the value they place on creatvity in their work with families.

As a result, creativity within Children 1st has been further championed and embedded in the organisation.

15
Creative
Skills training
sessions

30 Children 1st staff





Artfelt was a unique collaboration between Luminate, Scotland's creative ageing organisation and Starcatchers, exploring the impact of putting artists at the centre of an intergenerational art project.

A nursery (Forbes Nursery at Greenhill, Edinburgh) and a care home (Morlich House in Morningside, Edinburgh) were selected to participate in the pilot, which took place between September and December 2018. Two lead artists were employed: Kirstin Abraham who has expertise working within early years and Deirdre Nelson who has expertise working with older people.

The project comprised of three sessions held at the nursery and the care home, followed by six joint sessions held at the care home, and a celebratory event.

The key aim of the project was to evaluate the impact that artist-facilitated activities can have on intergenerational partnerships and increase the confidence, knowledge and skills of both artists and the professionals working in the nursery and care home.

project like ArtFelt is an extremely beneficial project for all involved as it promotes positive wellbeing, positive socialising opportunities and upbeat light-hearted interactions between generations"

(Anonymous participant)

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Colourful Characters

Colourful Characters provided a week of artistic exploration and adventure for little ones age 0-5 in February 2019.

A colourful mix of art, music, storytelling and theatre delivered in partnership with the Fruitmarket Galleries, Edinburgh. Bookable and drop-in sessions were tailored to children's age and stage.

Starcatchers Associate Artist, Heather Fulton, led the project with visiting artists Hazel Darwin-Clements, Fraser Stone and David Rankine.

"Absolutely fantastic day at the Fruitmarket Gallery. The artists were brilliant! My 3 and 5-year-old loved the Starcatchers colour machine show and especially enjoyed making the parts for the machine! They also loved the play session in the gallery after! They didn't want to leave. The space was great for them to explore too!"



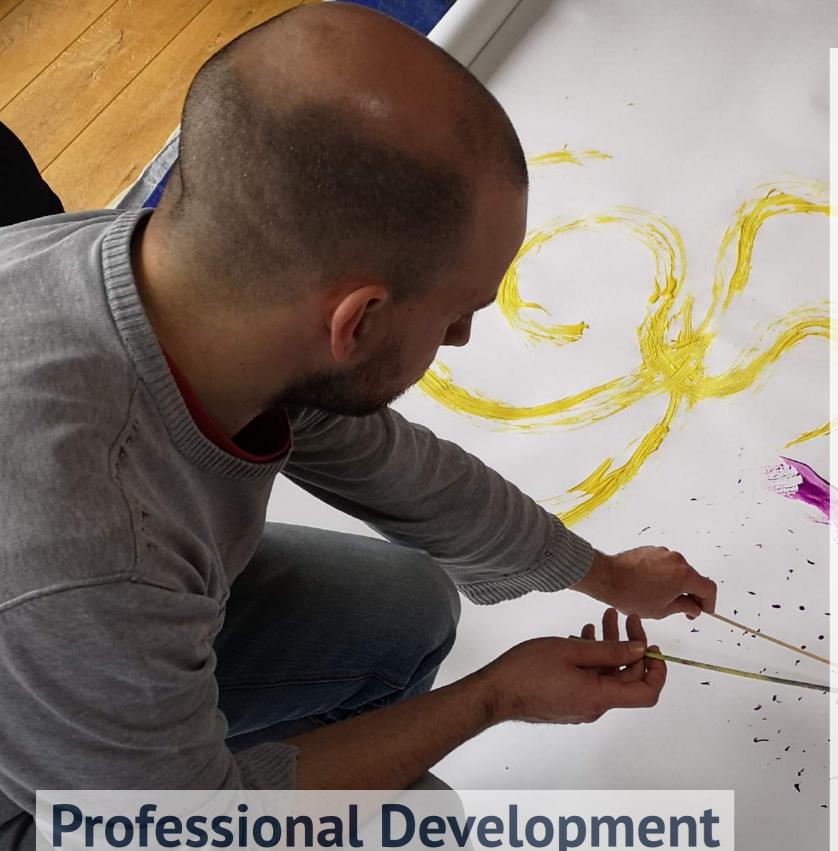


Music Hall Babies

Starcatchers was delighted to deliver a series of artist-led workshops for babies and their adults in Aberdeen as part of Aberdeen Performing Art's programme of events leading up to the reopening of the city's new Music Hall in Winter 2018.

The series of five workshops run by artist Heather Fulton and Sarah Orr, focused on music, movement, sensory and visual art, nurturing creative potential and helping strengthen parent/child bonds. Part of a year-long project, Music Hall Babies introduced a group of babies born in December 2017 in the North-East to the arts from birth.

The babies all turned one year old when the new Music Hall opened in December, and celebrated with a performance to the public for the grand opening. This project aimed to create new spaces and a permanent home in Aberdeen for artistic and creative activities for the early years, throughout childhood and into adult life.



Professional Development

In 2018/19 Starcatchers delivered training for early years professionals across Scotland as part of our Creative Skills programme, now in its fifth year.

This year also saw the launch of Playspace, Starcatchers' artist development programme.

Creative Skills

Starcatchers' Creative Skills core training programme continues to reach Scotland's Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) workforce and students, empowering them to be more creative in their work with young children and to put open-ended, child-led approaches to the expressive arts at the heart of their practice.

This unique programme is developed and delivered by artists who specialise in creative experiences for the very young, which help support the delivery of key policies. Artforms include music, drama, puppetry, visual art, movement and storytelling.

The Creative Skills Programme is funded by the Scottish Government's Children, Young People and Early Intervention Fund (CYPEIF) until March 2020 and was identified as a Key Early Intervention Programme in 2016.

In 2018/19 the programme was held in five local authority areas and reached early years professionals across sectors including nursery and family centre practitioners, teaching assistants, early stage primary teachers, childminders, playworkers as well as HNC Childhood Practice students at Edinburgh College and Glasgow Kelvin College.

In 2018/19 Starcatchers' Creative Skills core programme was delivered in:

- Aberdeen City
- Dundee
- Midlothian
- North Ayrshire
- Glasgow
- Edinburgh College
- Glasgow Kelvin College

276 participants

77 sessions

5 local authorities

artists

12

colleges

Reaching an estimated 11,040 babies and young children

"Being creative, with the relaxing music playing, made me appreciate how the children feel when they're absorbed in making things or doing art."

(Midlothian participant)

"It has already hugely impacted my connection with the children I work with as a play-worker. It has enriched their play experience and impacted behaviour and emotions."

(Glasgow participant)



Creative Skills SQA Qualification

Participants who have completed Starcatchers' core Creative Skills training can progress to study *Creative Skills in Early Childhood Practice* – a bespoke SCQF Level 7, 24-credit qualification developed by Starcatchers.

In 2018/19, the qualification was delivered in both Aberdeen and Glasgow. The qualification incorporates:

- The theory behind creativity and play
- Relevant policies and legislations
- A practical exam focusing on how to apply theory in practice
- A final 2,000-word essay focusing on creativity in early years.

"The experience
was so magical for me, I
have learned so very much. It
has strengthened my practice
and allowed me to become more
confident in implementing
my ideas."

(SQA participant)

Creative Skills Commissioned Training

Bespoke artist-facilitated sessions are designed to meet individual settings' requirements and can focus on specific art forms or take a more broad-based approach. They can be delivered as one-off training sessions or over a longer time period.

"Creative Skills has given me great ideas, inspiration and the courage to try new things."

(ArtsPlay participant)

In 2018/19 we delivered commissioned training to organisations including ArtsPlay in Inverness, The Empty Space in Newcastle, Children in Scotland, The National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) and Arnhall Nursery in Dunblane.





Playspace

As part of our ambition to strengthen the arts and early years sector in Scotland, Starcatchers launched our Playspace artist development programme in 2018/19 through the Regular Funding support we receive from Creative Scotland. This programme is designed to support artists across all artforms at differents stages of their careers — from those interested in learning more about working with this age group to those who are experienced and want to develop their practice. As part of this pilot programme, we have engaged artists to take part in the following opportunities:

"Playspace in an invaluable and essential necessity for all artists to share their practice, connect, collaborate, learn and most of all to have a lot of fun without the pressure of time, space, finances or performance."

(Playday participant)

- Child Protection training
- Advanced facilitation training
- Playday workshops
- Networking events
- National and international children's theatre festivals through bursaries
- A week-long artist laboratory led by sector pioneer Dalija Acin Thelander.

All of these opportunities were offered at no cost to the participants.

Spirited Minds

Dalija Acin Thelander spent five days with 13 artists interested in early years practice in Scotland, working with them to challenge conventional models of theatre and help ensure artistic work with this age group remains at the forefront of innovation.

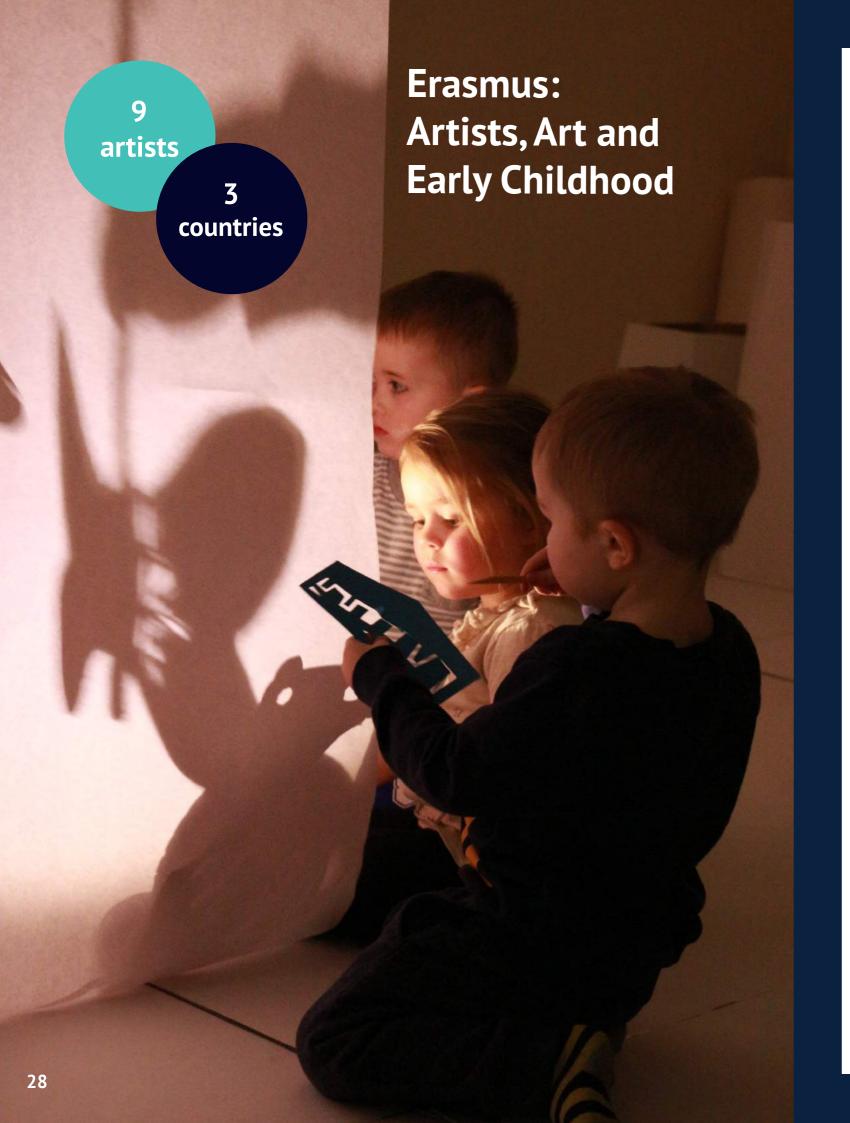
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Thelander said: "There are talented artists dedicated to creating incredible work for babies and young children but, overall, this age group remains overlooked and often excluded because

there is still far too much reliance on conventional models of theatre and lack of knowledge about the needs of this audience.

"Too often children's responses to artistic experiences continue to be muted or controlled in some way – for example an expectation that they need to sit still. It's hierarchical; it's artist-centred rather than child-centred. Striving to break away from this is important not only for young children but for those children who are neuro-diverse and have additional support needs."

The five-day laboratory was an opportunity to "push artists to take nothing for granted and really reflect on their view of the child".



Artists, Art and Early Childhood is a two-year (2017-2019) research project led by Starcatchers (UK), Compagnie ACTA (France) and 2 Turven Hoog (Netherlands) and funded by Erasmus Plus.

The project focuses on the relationship between artists and young children in day-to-day life — in early learning and childcare (ELC) settings, arts venues and festivals — and the impact that this has on both children and artists themselves.

During a series of study visits to each of the participating countries, participants learn about each country's policies and approach to culture and the early years, visit ELC settings and explore artistic experiences for young children in arts venues and festivals.

In 2018/19 artists visited:

The Netherlands (September 2018)

Focused on developing understanding of The Netherlands' childcare system where, since January 2018, childcare is provided solely by private organisations. The artists and company members visited a range of ELC settings in Amsterdam and The Hague, including Perron 7, an inspiring Reggio-based setting.

They also observed delivery of creative CPD for childcare staff by Stichting 2+/2Turvenhooog through their Jong Beginnings programme, supporting artists to go into childcare settings in The Hague.

Glasgow, Scotland (November 2018)

During this week-long residency week artists worked directly with young children in a studio space based within a Glasgow nursery.

The Blairtummock Childcare Centre for Excellence, run by Rising Stars Nursery, is a short walk from Glasgow's East End arts centre Platform and has a baby room housed within the Glasgow Kelvin College building that Platform is part of. The

artists explored ideas and with groups of children, adapting their ideas in response to the children's interests.

Partner organisation staff and ELC staff from France also visited other childcare settings in Glasgow and heard a presentation on Scotland's ELC system from Dr. Cara Blaisdell, Lecturer in Early Years Education at the University of Strathclyde.

Thank you to our supporters

Starcatchers is grateful to a wide range of supporters.

Our work has attracted support and captured the imagination of those with a profound commitment to the value of the artist in early years, both across Scotland and from abroad.









ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL























The Gift of Live Performance Appeal

Experiencing live performance can have a powerful impact on even the youngest children but, for some families and particularly those with low incomes, this can feel out of reach.

After the success of our 2017 *Forward for Families* appeal in 2017, Starcatchers launched the Gift of Live Performance Appeal in December 2018.

The appeal allowed people to donate the gift of a ticket for a family to see our latest production, *Little Top*, a magical first circus for babies, during the Spring tour of 2019. All donations recieved through the Gift of Live perfromance appeal are used to give families with low incomes tickets to experience live performance.

We want to sure that every child can participate in high quality, innovative arts experiences from the earliest age.

Financial Overview

Statement of financial activities for the period ending 31 March 2019

			1	1
	Unrestricted Funds 2019	Restricted Funds 2019	Total Funds 2019	Total Funds 2018
Income and Endowments				
Donations & legacies	2,050	-	2,050	2,865
Charitable Activities	50,378	544,488	594,866	463,119
Investments	986	-	986	451
Other Incoming Resources	23,374	-	23,374	649
Total income	76,788	544,488	621,276	467,084
Expenditure				
Charitable activities	70,639	455,159	525,798	531,907
Total expenditure	70,639	455,159	525,798	531,907
Net income (Expenditure)	6,149	89,329	95,478	(64,823)
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	6,149	89,329	95,478	(64,823)
Funds Reconcilation				
Total Fund Brought Forward	26,977	34,856	61,833	126,656
Total Fund Carried Forward	33,126	124,185	157,311	61,833

An external audit was carried out by Chiene + Tait for the year 2018/19

Who We Are

Board

Ben Fletcher-Watson Post Doctoral Fellow at IASH, University of Edinburgh **Velavan Gnanendran** Deputy Executive Director & Director Programs Larry Ellison Foundation (Treasurer)

Mary Glasgow CEO of Children 1st

Adrian Harris Former CEO of Queen's Hall, Edinburgh (Chair)

Susannah Jeffries Deputy Head Teacher, Canal View Primary School

Gemma Statham Head of Legal, Spark Energy

Mhari Taylor Equality and Diversity Manager, University of Glasgow

Staff

Heather Armstrong Creative Skills Manager

Mara Barth Creative Skills Administrator (to November 2018)

Natalie Gibson Administrator and Marketing Assistant (from July 2018)

Laura Kearney Development Manager (from October 2018)

Jo King General Manager

Rebecca Leary Administrator (to July 2018)

Rhona Matheson Chief Executive

Sasha Mcdougall Business Development Manager (to October 2018)

Natasha Mclaughlin Expecting Something Coordinator

Nicola Pay Communications and Marketing Manager

Jennifer Phillips Producer

Fraser Stone Creative Kin Coordinator

Catherine Wilson Creative Skills Administrator (from November 2018)

Associate Artists

Matt Addicott Theatre

Kirstin Abraham Visual Art

Charlotte Allan Theatre

Andy Cannon Storyteller

Hazel Darwin-Clements Theatre/Puppetry

Kim Donohoe Theatre

Dr Rachel Drury Music

Rebecca Fraser Visual Art

Heather Fulton Theatre

Marion Geoffrey Theatre

Ellie Griffiths Theatre

Brian Hartley Visual arts and photography

Geraldine Heaney Film

Pearl Kinnear Visual Arts

Naomi O'Kelly Storytelling

Skye Reynolds Dance

Greg Sinclair Music

Katy Wilson Visual Arts



Starcatchers Productions ltd is a company limited by guarantee, registered at

G6, Hope Park Church, 1 Summerhall | Edinburgh | EH9 1PL Company number: SC392561, Charity Number SC042222