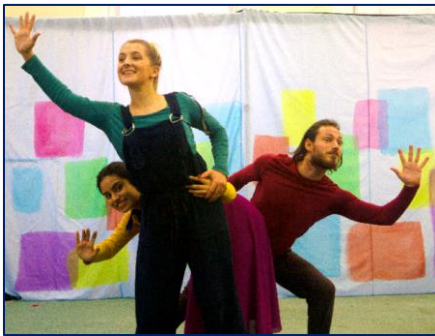


## Year Three Evaluation Summary

(April 2020 – March 2021)

**The Library Presents (TLP) brings quality arts activities to Cambridgeshire. The programme is run by Cambridgeshire County Council in partnership with Babylon ARTS and is funded by Arts Council England.**

NB Statistics relating to audience responses and demographic information are compiled only from those attendees who returned feedback or for whom information was gathered via online booking.



Left to right: **Live interactive story workshops** (Sonia Sabri) **Using your neurodiversity to enhance your creativity** (Good Behaviour Collective) **A Waltz in New Orleans - Radio Production** (Lucas Keen) **Pepper & Honey** (Notnow Collective)

In March 2020, following the outbreak of Covid-19, TLP had to curtail its Spring 2020 season. This presented many logistical challenges, but the well-being of artists, audiences, staff and volunteers had to take priority. Artists were offered 40% of their fee in advance to support them financially and audiences were offered refunds.

Attention then turned to developing an alternative offer that would support the arts community and continue to offer high quality creative experiences to audiences. In April, TLP circulated requests for medium scale submissions (up to £4,000) for interactive, collaborative projects that would see people coming together to create art work via digital means; and small scale submissions (up to £600) to offer shorter interactions online.

The resulting programme was christened **'The Library Presents...In Your House' (IYH)** and it became the central focus of TLP activity throughout Year Three.

In July, further call outs were circulated to postponed artists, new artists and artists who could produce inclusive and autism friendly work. The successful applicants formed Season Two of 'In Your House'.

**In Your House Season One** (April to July 2020) **In Your House Season Two** (October to December 2020)

Reinventing and relocating TLP so that it could function primarily online enabled the project to maintain a healthy and varied level of arts engagement with the public. However, the lack of face to face contact with audiences affected who could or would engage. The IYH seasons would also potentially lack the social and well-being benefits that come with attending an activity with family, friends or as part of a local community. To address this, TLP offered four non-computer based opportunities for engagement to support those unable or unwilling to access technology and potentially allow interaction with others: Postal (**The Quarantine Quilt**), Radio (**Waltz in New Orleans**), and models that brought a return to live physical performances (**Dancing Jukebox Gems** and **The Puppet Van Presents**).

## CORE SEASON CONTENT:

Animation, Artist Resources, Artist Q&As, Arts Award, Audio Drama, Beatboxing, Carnival Mask Making, Comedy, Downloadable Activities, Documentaries, Dance, Film Making, Magic, Music, Origami, Podcasts, Poetry, Puppetry, Mime, Quilt Making, Radio Plays, Sensory Story Telling, Signed Stories, Song-writing, Theatre.

## FORMATS:

Online designed- Performances pre-recorded (Video / Audio)	17	Film Screenings (Ticketed)	3
Online Designed- pre-recorded workshops	15	Broadcasts - Radio	2
Free performances	13	Exhibitions	2
Online designed - Live Interactive workshops	10	Live to Digital - Radio	1
Online designed- Live stream performances	8	Live to Digital -Online	1
Online Designed - Toolkits / downloads	5	Postal Engagement	1

**Performances: 50 / Workshops: 19 / Art resources: 5 / Commissions: 4 (TOTAL 78)**

## ADDITIONAL TLP ACTIVITY:

- Partnered with **Babylon ARTS** to offer a day of drive in cinema (3 showings in Ely).
- Commissioned digital projections from **Collusion** ('Let the Leaves Change') for Ramsey and Wisbech.
- Promoted **Rural Touring Dance Initiative** work ('The Elephant in the Room' by Lanre Malaolu, 'The Head Wrap Diaries by Uchenna Dance and Protein Dance's Wapping double bill of 'Rain' and 'Stairworks').
- Supported an **Artsmark** school to utilise **Stute Theatre's 'Common Lore'** production & resources.
- Delivered **Arts Award** work with young people via **20 Twenty Productions**.
- Supported the creation and distribution of 2,000 **Cambridgeshire County Council 'Creative at Home' packs**.

## ACCESSIBLE & INCLUSIVE CONTENT:

Four organisations were programmed to deliver work that could be accessed by those with physical disabilities: **Collar & Cuffs, Paddleboat Theatre, Good Behaviour Collective** and **Tessa Bide**.

This included activities to engage deaf and hard of hearing audiences (using British sign language) and neurodiverse participants. The content featured interactive stories, creative activities and artist resources.

**Notnow Collective** presented the digital premiere of *Pepper & Honey*; a theatre and cooking show exploring themes of home, language and identity. The show incorporated Croatian language with translated subtitles.



Left to right:

**According to Arthur** (Paddleboat Theatre)

**The Anarchist's Mobile Library** (Tessa Bide)

**Crabby** (Collar & Cuffs)

## ENGAGEMENT:

- **Total engagement: 13,672** (Season One 8,485 / Season Two 4,799).
- 43% (5,879) estimated as Cambridgeshire based (A drop of 25% from Year Two = 68%).  
Despite this percentage drop in Cambridgeshire engagement it does maintain the desired upward curve of total Cambridgeshire engagement across the project. **Year 1 = 2,399 / Year 2 = 3,536 / Year 3 = 5,879.**
- The project reached an international audience (locations included Cairo, New York, Kuala Lumpur and Hot Springs). Feedback came predominantly from those living in the UK (98%).

## ENGAGEMENT BY ART FORM, ACTIVITY TYPE AND DEMOGRAPHIC FOCUS:

Art Form	
<b>Visual Art</b>	<b>4156</b>
Theatre	1842
Storytelling	1466
Music	1104
Film	756
Music & Animation	738
History	684
Comedy	667
Magic	419
Dance	329
Educational	315
Puppetry	288
Mime	182
Poetry	169
Writing	130
Arts Award	9

Format	
<b>Performance</b>	<b>7824</b>
Resource	3617
Workshop	1114
Commission	729

Activity Type	
<b>Online designed- Performances pre-recorded (Video / Audio)</b>	<b>3438</b>
Online designed - Toolkits / downloads	3332
Online designed- Live stream performances	1963
Online designed- pre-recorded workshops	1734
Broadcasts - Radio	800
Online designed - Live Interactive workshops	377
Postal Engagement	319
Live to Digital -Online	310
Film Screenings (Ticketed)	303
Free performances	287
Live to Digital - Radio	103
Exhibitions	100

### Demographic Focus (where applicable)

NB Not all activities had a specific demographic focus

<b>Families</b>	<b>2916</b>
Disability	603
BAME	418
Disability	206
All CYP (0-19 year olds)	149
Socio-economic	81
Older People	72

- IYH remote content mirrored much of the physical seasons. For three years running, Drama, Music and Puppetry have remained three of the most highly prominent art forms.
- **There were increases in Dance and Film content**, boosted by the drive-in cinema and Wriggle Dance.
- The year saw the **continued increase in the variety of content offered** (15 art forms in Yr3, Yr 2 (11), Yr 1 (9)).
- **Visual Arts content dropped** considerably due to the lack of in person workshops.
- **Content focused on families remained high** (56% of activities) but dropped from Year Two (66%).
- Despite representing most of the content, family activities did not bring the most engagers. Older audiences engaged in greater numbers.
- The top four Audience Spectrum segments engaged matched Year Two: **Dormitory Dependables** (31%), **Trips & Treats** (21%), **Home & Heritage** (11%), **Commuterland Culturebuffs** (10%).

## PREVIOUS TLP ENGAGEMENT:

- **75% (61) of those surveyed were new to TLP.** 26% of these engaged with a physical show.

Whilst developing the anticipated new digital audience, TLP also attracted new physical audiences during the year. This was partly be due to the new marketing approaches needed to ensure non-computer users were aware of physical content (e.g. door to door leafleting and an increased circulation of posters and leaflets). New audiences were also developed by staging outdoor activities in new locations.

## CHARGING:

All content (except for the Drive-in cinema) was provided for free. Such was the wealth of free digital content available during the pandemic that it would have been hard for TLP to compete. It was also not known if charging might deter engagers, nor how to set pricing and manage payments effectively.

In Season Two audiences were asked if they would be prepared to pay for the content provided. The limited responses (20) showed an **average price suggestion across all content of £5.25** (£5 digital £5 / £6.25 physical).

## PUBLIC RESPONSE:

- The project received public feedback on 29 of the 34 activities (85%).
- **An encouraging 93% placed the quality of activities as Very good (87%) or Good (6%)** and highlighted both content quality and the programme's wellbeing benefits during the pandemic. Of the small element who did not rate it as highly, half were for technical reasons as opposed to artistic merit. In Year Two, 99% rated activities 'Very Good (89%) or Good (11%).
- **61% of those returning surveys stated that they found the ease with which to engage digitally 'Very Easy'.** 3% found it 'Poor' and 3% 'Very Poor' (3%).

## PUBLIC COMMENT SAMPLE:

(Drawn from Survey Money, Emails, Facebook, YouTube)

*'Your work is so important, seeing how you have tackled digital sensory productions has set the bar very high. The quality and interplay of live and filmed elements, the signing are all spot on.'* Collar & Cuffs (Crabby)

*'It can be tricky to get my 3-year old to focus on regular dance classes, but he loved being able to explore the stuff we have around the house in a new and fun way.'* Dot Dot Dance (The Imagination Room)

*'The perfect poetry video.'* Edalia Day (Animated Wordsmith)

*'My daughter loved it –said she was going to show her teacher what she had learned.'* Garlic Theatre (Mime)

*'Hypnotic!'* Lee Mason (Digital Horizons)

*'We used your song writing videos to inspire us in our Y6 bubble. We had a lovely week of lessons thanks to you, and it's definitely inspired me for future projects.'* Louise Jordan (Song writing)

*'The radio drama could have been done by the BBC!'* Time & Again (Greyhounds)

*'Thanks for a fun afternoon, in what is turning out to be a pretty poor year.'* Big Howard and Little Howard

*'Well-written, well-performed, well-produced on a subject of great interest.'* Lucas Keen (Waltz in New Orleans)

*'Professional and fun event, for all ages. Very cheering in challenging times.'* Wriggle Dance (Jukebox Gems)

*'I love everything about this!!! Inspiring.'* Gallagher & Perrin (Neurodiversity & creativity)

*'My children thoroughly enjoyed the performance and were fully engaged from start to finish.'*

*'Such a clever concept, and well executed and the rain held off!'* Half A String (The Puppet Van Presents)

- **The year saw a 7% increase in positive comments received to 95%. (Year 2 = 88%)** This may be driven by an appreciation for TLP offering any creative activities during the pandemic; but this should not detract from the fact that this evidences content that has satisfied public tastes and standards.
- Gathering feedback digitally presented challenges. This effected TLP's ability to assess content and artists said they missed being able to gauge public response whilst delivering. **Artists that were available for live social media chats or who encouraged the posting of comments felt more in touch with their audiences.** When artists interacted live on Zoom the risks were often balanced with some wonderful moments.



Big Howard drawing his Zoom front row



Garlic Theatre sharing puppet theatre designs

## PUBLIC INPUT:

The pace at which the first IYH house season unfolded, meant there was neither the usual time nor systems in place for public consultation over content; something exacerbated by the fact that libraries were closed. Fortunately, the high call out response enabled TLP to draw upon their experience to construct a programme that reflected popular choices from previous TLP seasons.

## LIBRARY STAFF:

There was a significant increase in staff survey responses (32 as opposed to 19 in Year Two). This was in part due to the change in methodology which included new questions, the opportunity to respond anonymously and the use of SurveyMonkey to streamline and speed up survey completion time.

- The survey confirmed the suspected disengagement of staff with TLP during 2020. Though many staff will have valid reasons for being preoccupied by the pandemic, a considerable **87.5% (28) stated that they had not watched any of the content.**
- More positively, **59% (19) had missed the TLP programme** and 13 had recommended it to others.
- **31% (10) stated that they had missed interacting with the artists.** This is a positive by-product of the programme and potential selling point when training future staff / volunteers. It also shows how comfortable library staff have become at working with artists.
- Whilst 9% (3) welcomed the break only 6% (2) took the opportunity to say they had not TLP missed it at all.
- **34% (11) acknowledged the fact that the library offer was weakened by not have physical TLP activity.** Proof that TLP is achieving its aim of becoming embedded within library provision and staff consciousness.
- 3 people felt TLPs presence had been maintained, such was the strength of the IYH offer.

## VOLUNTEERS:

Volunteer input was reduced due to the pandemic and because activity was predominantly online.

- **15 volunteers supported activity** (77 supported TLP across Years One & Two).
- TLP received anonymised equality and diversity data from 9 volunteers. **Despite the small sample, the figures reflect the lack of diversity in the current volunteer team** (7 of the 9 were white British, 8 had no disability and 8 were heterosexual).
- To help incentivise volunteer engagement TLP has signed up to become Digital Time Credit earn partners.

## TRAINING:

Being unable to offer face to face training in 2020, TLP took the opportunity to produce **7 training films**. These captured all that had been covered in previous sessions (room layouts, technical equipment, refreshments etc). They will act as a useful refresher for all staff who have received training - especially valid due to the long gap without physical content. The films will also serve as a valuable introduction to TLP's resources for all new staff.



Left to right:

**The Quarantine Quilt** (Glimmer Theatre)

**The Animated Wordsmith** (Edalia Day)

**Bulltastic Carnival at Home** (Oblique Arts)

## MARKETING:

- Due to the pandemic, **84% of those questioned heard about TLP through external sources** (as opposed through visiting a library). This was a 41% increase on Year Two (43%).
- External promotion included: TLP emails, website, social media and posters.
- TLP promoted content at the Ely drive-in cinema and circulated 8,000 'In Your House' bookmarks.
- The year saw an increase in door-to-door leafleting to promote physical content to non-computer users.
- TLP contracted **Conscious Communications** to coordinate and deliver media coverage. This generated 9 pieces of editorial coverage and 3 broadcast interviews. **Total estimated reach of coverage: 1,863,945.**

**How did the public hear about 'In Your House'?** (Responders could tick more than one box):

Other social media	36%
Word of mouth	23%
TLP Facebook	17%
TLP Website or blog	7%

TLP Email	7%
Other	6%
Poster / Outdoor advertising	3%
Leaflet / brochure / other print picked up	1%

- TLP continued to use Facebook and Instagram to celebrate successes and promote content. Whilst followers continued to rise, the rate of growth matched Year Two (an average of 16 new followers per month).
- In Year Three, TLP adopted [www.library.live/the-library-presents](http://www.library.live/the-library-presents) as its primary website. This proved an effective platform for displaying information and ticket links all in one place. It was also mutually beneficial for TLP to be promoting its content directly alongside other library offers. Public website usage was less than Year Two. This can be attributed to the reduction in printed material promoting the website, less library traffic due to closures and artists promoting directly from their own sites.

## LOGISTICS:

Moving TLP delivery to remote formats, did not equate to a reduction in the input required from TLP staff to facilitate smooth promotion and delivery. Considerable time, learning and support were required to draw together a programme that met the standards of quality, quantity and variety expected of TLP. In addition, Covid protection measures and their implementation methods had to be established. Feedback from the public indicated that this was achieved successfully:

*'Audience able to distance but also feel totally connected to the engaging performance.'* (Wriggle Dance)

*'The Library staff were excellent; we were well distanced socially.'* (Half a String)



**Dancing Jukebox Gems** (Wriggle Dance)



**Ely Drive in Cinema**

## ARTISTS:

- **206 artists and arts organisations submitted Expressions of Interest for In Your House** (Yr2 = 180).
- **40 artists or arts organisations were programmed across the two seasons** (12 based in the East of England).
- TLP received anonymised equality and diversity data from 140 employees and freelancers connected with the work delivered. **48.6% identified as having protected characteristics.** (Year 2 = 28.5% / Year 1 = 13%).
- **In Season One, 53% of artists were engaging audiences digitally for the first time** (Season Two = 46%).

Artists appreciated the flexibility of TLP staff and the support they provided. In many cases there was a mutual understanding that both parties were 'learning whilst doing' and adapting to the situation as it unfolded.

**Sample of artist experiences of adapting their practice and working with TLP:**

*'I have been pleased that the numbers of participants outstrips what I would expect in a live circumstance.'*

*'It has been very challenging, but very rewarding and spawned more paid work - softening the impact of losing touring work. It has taught me so much, has been very stressful but also kept me sane!'*

*'TLP gave my team great purpose and momentum as creatives. We learned and improved measurably, gaining fresh confidence, validation and skills.'*

*'The experience with TLP has been excellent. We have been helped to realise our artistic vision and structure it so that it made sense to an online audience.'*

*'Because we hadn't ever produced anything like this before, we quickly realised the process was more complex than we had imagined and would take longer, and cost more money, than we'd originally estimated.'*

*'TLP provided our small organisation with crucial funds at the crucial time. We enjoyed making the show Cambridgeshire specific. With the funding we were able to make the show fully accessible, offering Closed Captions and Audio Description versions.'*

*'The experience has been really clear and frictionless throughout. It is great to work with an organisation who are up-front organised and passionate about what they do.'*



Left to right:

**Dream Maker** (Paddleboat Theatre)

**The Awesome Adventures of Aidy** (Gramophones Theatre)

**Mime for all the Family** (Garlic Theatre)

Despite the challenges involved, the resilience and enthusiasm of the artists prevailed.

**100% stated that they would (or already were) increasing their digital output.**

*'We will continue to use and integrate digital channels as part of our practice after lock down. We have really enjoyed how the digital channels increases the opportunity to reach and connect with a wide range of audiences. It allows for a more inclusive approach.'*

*'We'll definitely put more of an emphasis on our website as a platform for community art. It has made us think more about live streaming and making things more available digitally so that it can reach more people.'*

*'We're already planning more digital projects - it is a great way of engaging with and reaching people who might not go to a more traditional theatre. The equipment we bought with the grant will enable us to continue to produce work to a high standard.'*

*'We have learned a fantastic amount and will definitely develop our online work to offer content to hard to reach families and those not able for whatever reason to attend shows in a theatre. This project has shown us the huge potential to change lives through engaging with digital audiences.'*

## ARTIST SUPPORT:

### Babylon ARTS – Artist Surgeries (All 26 places were taken up)

During the pandemic, Theatre remained the top art form requesting surgery support. Covid influenced what was discussed e.g. suitability for the digital programme and the logistics of digital working. Support was given to Autism Friendly work – which led to a successful In Your House application, and a dyslexic artist.

### Babylon ARTS – Artist Development Training

Babylon ARTS offered 3 digital training sessions to artists over the course of the year all delivered by Collusion.

- **98 artists attended across the three sessions.**
- 50% stating that they had used their new skills between completing a session and submitting feedback.
- 100% stated that they would like to be involved in future The Library Presents artist support events.
- Scored out of 6, the engagement rating averaged 4.6 across all sessions.
- 50% of attendees were based in the East of England.

## GOING FORWARD:

### Serving local audiences:

TLP's considerable engagement during the pandemic (over 12,000) should not obscure the fact that many previous TLP engagers and local library communities were not engaging with, or benefiting from, the content. If restrictions continue, this can be addressed by increasing targeted commission work (digital or physical).

### Live 'in person' content:

The few outdoor events held in the autumn were very much appreciated. Although logistically challenging, the numbers were good and they enabled valuable live arts interaction for local communities.

Outdoor performances also generated new audiences in new locations (often with TLP target groups). Outdoor activities should continue as part of TLP promotional and audience development work.

### Staffing:

There is a risk of front-line staff not feeling the same level of ownership of content as they would if it was in a physical library building. This can be mitigated by increasing their involvement in the logistical preparations for 'non-library' activities, involving them selection, promotion and sourcing suitable venues.

### Returning to libraries:

Central to TLP is bringing great arts to friendly, trusted and welcoming community venues. Previous TLP evaluation has proved that libraries serve this purpose very effectively. Even though many of the library spaces will remain inappropriate whilst high levels of Covid continue; these spaces should not be forgotten. Pilot events can be run in larger hub libraries where there is room for social distancing and good ventilation.

### Social & well-being benefits:

This year, the social and wellbeing benefits of attending an activity with family, friends or as part of a local community were reduced and may have been a reason for some not engaging with IYH content. In previous seasons, when recording attendees motivations, we have seen high scores for 'Spending time with friends and family' (48% of all who returned feedback), 'Atmosphere' (30%) and 'To escape from everyday life' (12%). Exploring how to integrate these elements into remote working will be necessary.

### Digital systems:

The increased use of digital methods for ticketing, promotion and feedback should be continued in future years. Digital systems can also be explored for the 'menu' selection process for when customers cannot dedicate time to read it at a library.

