

# The Fenton Arts Trust

Succurrere Artibus

Registered Charity No. 294629

Number 19

## Fenton News

**T**his newsletter comes to our beneficiaries and supporters at a time when the pandemic continues to frustrate so many of you, but the projects that feature in these pages relate to our financial year 2019/20, which ended in March 2020, and remind us of happier times for the arts world.

Mindful of all the challenges faced by everyone in the arts, since the beginning of our new financial year we have sought to respond to our 2020/21 beneficiaries and applicants with fair-mindedness, compassion, and encouragement. We have endeavoured to be flexible, where possible, while continuing to exercise the discernment that comes from over 30 years of experience. Determining how resilient new applicants' proposals may be in the continuing restrictions imposed by the pandemic has not been easy. But we have been impressed with really resourceful propositions from creative applicants.



▲ Fenton benefactor Pat Thompson, pictured during a walking holiday in the Alps in the 1970s

It's not all bad news. The Trust was a beneficiary itself, of a very generous legacy from the estate of Mrs Patricia (Pat) Thompson. Her daughter-in-law, our Trustee Fiona Thompson, explained that Pat's bequest to the Trust reflects a life-long interest in music and the arts, and her support for her family's activities and interests.

Finally, more good news of Fenton 'alumni': The publication of their first collection of poetry is a seminal moment in a poet's career, and for four years, between 2012 and 2015, the Trust took great pleasure in sponsoring The Fenton Aldeburgh First Collection Prize. Andrew McMillan, who won in 2015 with his collection, *Physical*, was this year elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, joining another prize winner, Helen Mort, who was elected Fellow in 2018. Helen's first collection, *Division Street*, won in 2014. Coincidentally, both poets are members of the Manchester Writing School at MMU, and feature regularly reading and presenting on national radio. Dan O'Brien, who won in 2013 with his collection *War Reporter*, has also been prolific in publishing a highly acclaimed body of work in the fields of poetry and playwriting.

We would like to wish all our beneficiaries and supporters a much more productive year in 2021, and assure you of our continued commitment to encouraging and supporting the creative arts in the UK.

Founder:  
Shu-Yao Fenton

Patron:  
Dame Maggie Smith, CH, DBE

Consultant to the Trustees:  
David Tong

Trust Manager:  
Christine Bisatt

Trustees:  
Shelley Baxter  
Paul Bayley  
Sue Davies-Scourfield (Chair)  
Gregor Logan  
Fiona Thompson  
John Wieland (Honorary Treasurer)

## Annual News 2020

### Lunchbreak Opera



▲ Scene from *Gianni Schicchi* (Photo: Rob Workman)

"In 2018, Lunchbreak Opera had managed two productions – both by the skin of our teeth! We had hopes and plans for bigger and better productions, but we needed a vote of confidence from a funder to make them happen. The Fenton Arts Trust's grant helped us upgrade everything we did, from developing our organisation to improving marketing, designing better sets, and finally, to paying our singers properly. After staging Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* in 2019 and *A Dinner Engagement* by Lennox Berkeley in early 2020, we feel we're in a far better place to plan for the future."

Matthew O'Keeffe, Artistic Director

### Kate Ive



▲ Kate and (inset) her Fenton-supported work 'John & Josephine's Timepieces' (Photos: Kate Ive)

"The generous support from The Fenton Arts Trust came at a crucial and pivotal moment in my art practice. The grant has allowed me to make significant and truly exciting progress in developing my sculptural artwork with my self-built, hand-operated lathe. It has allowed me to explore and establish unique 3D techniques for creating new hand-turned experimental pieces. I am very grateful to the Trust for such encouraging support."



# Beneficiaries 2019 - 2020

## Adam Russell



▲ Scenes from *Fairground Reminiscence* (Photos: Luke Waddington)

*"The Fenton Arts Trust helped support the creation and North East tour of Fairground Reminiscence. Over 2019 and 2020 the project visited art gallery spaces and a number of more unconventional performance venues such as community centres, festivals and a working men's club. We reached over 11,000 live audience members of all ages and continued to establish our work as professional artists within the dance sector. Through the Trust's support I have been able to develop and establish strong foundations as a dance maker. I hope to continue to make experiences that are meaningful, exciting and fun for audiences."*

## The Night With...



▲ Composer Timothy Cooper with his Ivors Shortlist certificate (Photo: Alice Cooper)

*"The support from The Fenton Arts Trust was key in allowing us to support Timothy Cooper through the development of ...Shadows That In Darkness Dwell... for Ensemble 1604. This support meant giving him the opportunity for increased rehearsal and development time with the ensemble which included a sharing to get direct feedback from peers. We are delighted that the work was shortlisted in the Ivors Composer Awards (Small Chamber) and that Ensemble 1604 is planning future performances."*

Matthew Whiteside, CEO/Artistic Director

## Soft Fiction Projects

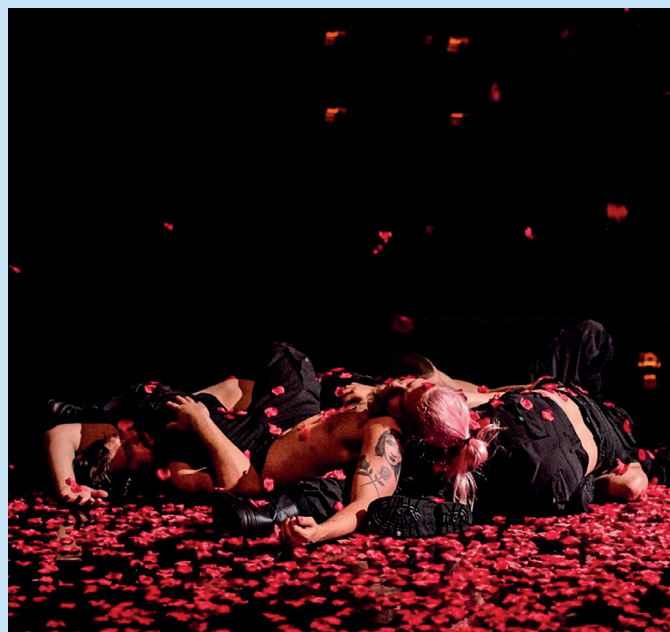


▲ Clockwise, from top left:

- 1) Pamphlet about the self-organised nursery in Hackney
- 2) Screen Prints with quotes from former residents of Hackney neighbourhood
- 3) View of the research materials table
- 4) Map of Hackney in the 70s (Photos: Soft Fiction Projects)

*"Soft Fiction Projects is a Northern-Irish based artist-initiative run by Alessia Cargnelli and Emily McFarland. In 2018 we were awarded a residency at Guest Projects, a prestigious artist-led space in Hackney, founded by artist Yinka Shonibare MBE and managed by Shonibare Studio. The Fenton Arts Trust grant enabled us to develop a new research project focused on the history of feminism, housing and urban change in Hackney. The generous support of The Fenton Arts Trust has been invaluable in the planning, researching and delivering of our ambitions for Making Space residency project in London. It also gave us the chance to receive further art opportunities, both in London and in Northern Ireland/Republic of Ireland."*

## Transform



▲ Performance makers 70/30 Split at Transform 19 (Photo: JM Photography)

*"Support from The Fenton Arts Trust was invaluable in enabling us to support early-career Northern artists as part of the Transform 19 festival. We were able to support exciting and dynamic performance makers with commissioning and producing support, aiding the creation of two fantastic productions which premiered in Leeds before touring. Funding from the Trust enabled us to work closely with visionary artists to help realise their potential."*

Amy Letman, Creative Director, Transform



## Stephen McAllan



▲ Stephen and new guitar (Photo: Kathleen Stosch)

The Trust was happy to support Stephen with his request to buy a guitar in 2019. He and his band Constant Follower recorded their first material with his new instrument in Summer 2019 and this Autumn he contacted us again, with good news, despite the pandemic:

*"I'm not sure if I shared the news with you but, due to the quality of my recordings thanks to the guitar I was able to purchase with your grant, I got signed to my dream label, USA's Shimmy Disc."*

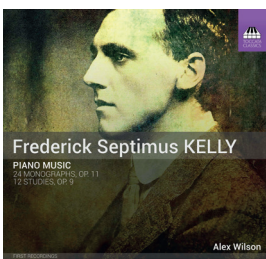
## Samantha Potter

*"I have been lucky enough to receive support from The Fenton Arts Trust twice and it has been invaluable in enabling me to establish myself as a playwright."*

*The Trust first supported me in 2015 to be Writer in Residence at Papatango. That position led to me writing my second full length play, Hanna, which was produced at the Arcola Theatre and subsequently toured the UK. Hanna was the first play I had published and it really helped to launch me as a playwright. Unbelievably, despite the pandemic, Hanna is currently being produced at a theatre in Greece which is something I never imagined could happen to my work."*

*The Trust has now supported me for a second time by funding a young graduate director to work with me as Assistant Director on an R&D workshop. The new play I was writing is technically very complex and the workshop to explore it was invaluable. That project is sadly on hold because of Coronavirus but hopefully once theatres are able to open again, production will be able to go ahead."*

## Alex Wilson



*"I have just received notification of my successful application to The Fenton Arts Trust for my recording of the unpublished piano music of F.S. Kelly. Thanks so much to the Trust for your support, I am so pleased to hear of your interest in my project and I am really looking forward to recording the music in April."*

Despite the Lockdown the recording went ahead almost as scheduled, and we were delighted to receive an invitation to attend Alex's CD launch and recital by Zoom. Another example of the resilience and tenacity of artists, despite extraordinary challenges.

## Cove Park



▲ Cove Park in winter, and resident artist at work (Photos: Ruth Clark)

*"The Early Career programme has supported 11 artists over three years and made an enormous difference to their work. The residencies have enriched our annual programme considerably, introducing Cove Park to some wonderful artists and allowing us to extend our support of early career artists to those specialising in music and composition. On behalf of everyone I would like to thank The Fenton Arts Trust for their very generous support of our programme over three years."*

Alexia Holt, Associate Director, Cove Park

## Anna Alvarez



▲ Scene from Moonlight (Chi'isi) (Photo: Carole Edrich)

*"The money awarded from The Fenton Arts Trust was incredibly helpful and enabled me to explore 2D video graphics showing footage of Mapuche tribal lands, animation and motion graphics which was used at The Arcola. The money was used to create an original sound-score for the piece which will be adapted to match changes in creative technology. It was also used to create original artwork which I look forward to creating into posters and media. None of the above would have been possible without your funding, and I and the rest of the team are hugely grateful for this support. Moreover, the support has helped give longevity and a future to the work and I look forward to sharing this with you all!"*



# Financial Support 2019 - 2020

The Fenton Arts Trust awarded 31 individuals and organisations a total of £104,718 in support of the arts in the UK during the financial year 2019-2020.

| Beneficiary                          | Award   | Amount   |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------|
| Adam Gilbert                         | Funding to support new vocal recordings following a change of voice from Baritone to Tenor.   | £500     |
| Adam Russell                         | Artistic spending to support early stage choreographer and other professional performer. Mentoring from established industry professionals.                 | £2,500   |
| Alex Wilson                          | Debut CD recording of the unpublished piano music of F.S.Kelly, released on Toccata Classics. Unearthing exciting music for a new audience.                 | £1,500   |
| Animikii Theatre                     | Animikii Theatre will follow up their award-winning play 'Origins' with their first cross-artform collaboration with Manchester's Vonnegut Collective.      | £6,000   |
| Anna Alvarez                         | Chi'isi (Moonlight) a group dance project rooted in native Mapuche culture, selected for CASA festival and programmed for The Roundhouse.                   | £4,000   |
| Chinese Arts Now (CAN)               | Music programme offering professional and artistic development for early career British Chinese composers/musicians.  | £4,433   |
| Cove Park                            | Early Career Artists Residencies: a programme for emerging UK-based painters/sculptors, designers, writers and musicians/composers.                         | £5,500   |
| Directors Charitable Foundation      | Six-month UK-wide mentoring scheme supporting ten early-career directors.   | £2,800   |
| English National Opera               | ENO BAME Chorus Fellowship  | £3,500   |
| Ex Cathedra                          | Ex Cathedra Choral Scholarships aim to support talented music graduates make the transition from student to professional choral singer.                     | £4,000   |
| Film London                          | Supporting twelve early career moving image artists with comprehensive development programmes to strengthen careers and facilitate production of new works. | £5,100   |
| Fuel Productions                     | Three seed commissions and a 3-year programme of support for diverse, early stage theatre makers Tom Stuart, Racheal Ofori and Rosemary Kingsley.           | £2,000   |
| Glasgow Sculpture Studios            | Glasgow Sculpture Studios (GSS) is looking for funding to support its annual MFA Graduate Fellowship over two years (2019 and 2020).                        | £2,000   |
| Highly Sprung Performance Company    | Offer two artists a programme of training, performance experience & pedagogic practice to become facilitators of arts and education projects.               | £5,000   |
| Iris Theatre                         | Iris Theatre seeks funding for development of our programme support and launch careers of the next generation of costume designers.                         | £3,000   |
| Kate Ive                             | This project develops innovative techniques on a little-known hand-operated lathe, cross-pollinates materials/processes to make new artworks.               | £1,860   |
| Lunchbreak Opera                     | Artist fees for the 2019-20 season of Lunchbreak Opera consisting of two operas to be performed within the City of London for the public for free.          | £5,000   |
| Mid Wales Opera                      | Young Artists' Support for <i>Tosca</i> Spring 2019 Tours.  | £3,000   |
| National Youth Jazz Orchestra (NYJO) | Provide vital studio experience for our emerging musicians and advance the big band genre by recording and releasing an album of new works.                 | £5,000   |
| NoFit State Community Circus         | NoFit State will create a year-long launchpad programme for emerging circus artists and fledgling companies to develop their creative and business skills.  | £5,000   |
| Old Vic Theatre Trust                | CONNECT 'Create' gives emerging artists the chance to develop and perform new work together, as part of our CONNECT network project.                        | £5,000   |
| Samantha Potter                      | I would like to fund an Arts Lab Graduate Director to work with me on my R&D project, <i>Charlie Charlie</i> , at the North Wall in Oxford.                 | £1,413   |
| Sinfonia Cymru                       | 'Curate' - a series of four cutting-edge contemporary concerts created and performed by young professional musicians from Sinfonia Cymru.                   | £5,000   |
| Soft Fiction Projects                | 'Making Space - A Project on Housing, Feminism and Urban Change' by artist-run collective Soft Fiction Projects at Guest Projects London.                   | £3,270   |
| Soho Theatre                         | Support one emerging playwright on Soho Theatre's year-long development programme for early-career artists, Soho Six 2020.                                  | £5,417   |
| sound                                | Supporting five emerging Scottish composers through a residential weekend developing works for oboe and cello to be performed at soundfestival19.           | £2,500   |
| Stephen McAllan                      | Assistance with the purchase of a professional instrument to enable the recording of the debut album by Constant Follower.                                  | £400     |
| Swaledale Festival                   | Funding three concerts in Swaledale Festival 'Young Artists Platform' 2019 to showcase 'endangered' instruments played by aspiring artists.                 | £2,000   |
| The Night With...                    | Support Timothy Cooper in the development of a new work for baroque quintet and electronics for première in The Night With... 's 2019 season.               | £3,125   |
| Transform                            | Commission fee and associated mentoring costs for emerging artists 70/30 Split to perform as part of Transform 19.  | £2,900   |
| Virtually Opera                      | Presenting <i>The Perfect Opera</i> (a new work by Peter Davis and Leo Doultun) in London and Edinburgh, demonstrating a new approach to opera.             | £2,000   |
| TOTAL                                |   | £104,718 |

## Chinese Arts Now (CAN)



▲ (Photo: Lidia Crisafulli)

Image from CAN Festival 2019's performance of *Lao Can Impression*: a fusion of the music of Debussy with a dramatic adaptation of the classic story 'The Travels of Lao Can' by the famous Chinese writer Liu. The production was directed by previous Trust beneficiary An-Ting Chang (of Concert Theatre).

Support for the current financial year (2020-2021) includes the following beneficiaries from around the UK:

|                               |                                    |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Art in Perpetuity Trust (APT) | James Rogers                       |
| Asia House                    | London Sinfonietta                 |
| Castlefield Gallery           | The Peaceful Defeat                |
| Edward Nesbit                 | Performances Birmingham Ltd (THSH) |
| Film London                   | Photographers' Gallery             |
| Fuel Productions Ltd          | Psappha                            |
| Glasgow Sculpture Studios     | Rifco Arts                         |
| HighTide                      | Samuel Little                      |
| Khidr Collective              |                                    |

## Supporting TFAT

We aim to help individuals and artistic institutions by awarding grants and funds in keeping with founder Shu-Yao Fenton's wishes.

We would welcome any donations in pursuit of this, which can attract further Gift Aid. Please make cheques payable to *The Fenton Arts Trust*, or by bank transfer: *Lloyds Bank, Sort Code 30-00-08, Account no. 00979513*.

If you would like to support the Trust with a legacy amount, please add the following details along with your gift figure to your will:

*The Fenton Arts Trust (Registered Charity no. 294629)*  
*PO Box 268825, London SE23 9DG*

If you do decide to do this, we would be delighted to hear from you.

**The Fenton Arts Trust, P.O. Box 68825, London SE23 9DG | [www.fentonartstrust.org.uk](http://www.fentonartstrust.org.uk)**

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