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**Young people in the criminal justice system – how can the arts respond?**

**Annual conference 2019**

27th February 2019, 10am – 4pm

The Crescent Theatre, Sheepcote St, Birmingham B16 8AE

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Image: Verona Road, Intermission Youth Theatre

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**Young people in the criminal justice system   
– how can the arts respond?**

Welcome to the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance’s (NCJAA) 2019 annual conference. Today we will be exploring how the arts can respond to the issues facing young people up to the age of 25 in the criminal and youth justice systems.

Children in custody (under 18s) face sharply decreasing standards of safety; a significant number lack regular contact with family, carers or friends; and overall, educational backgrounds are poor.[[1]](#footnote-1) Research also tells us that in the criminal justice system, young adults (18–25 years) are disproportionately represented and are not afforded the protections given to children, despite their distinctive needs.[[2]](#footnote-2) Most recently, a report by HM Inspectorate of Prisons has found that over half of the boys and young adult men held in youth offender institutions (YOIs) now identify as being from black and minority ethnic backgrounds – nearly four times the proportion of the wider population.[[3]](#footnote-3)

We know from evidence[[4]](#footnote-4) that the arts have the power to transform lives, support the reduction of crime, challenge stereotypes and enhance art and culture for all. So, how can the arts and culture sector help to support the complex needs of children and young people that come in to contact with the criminal justice system?

This conference will discuss how arts and criminal justice policy can improve outcomes for young people in criminal justice settings and good practice where creative activity helps address:

* Poor outcomes for young black, Asian and minority ethnic people in custody
* Adverse Childhood Experiences
* Mental health and wellbeing for young people in custody
* Leadership and role models.

We will also explore effective local partnership work, funding approaches and how research can be used to make change. We will hear from young people who have been in contact with the criminal justice system and see first-hand how creative interventions make a positive impact at both a local and national scale. The issues will be explored in workshops, performances, panel discussions and keynote speeches by professionals working towards the reduction of crime for young people and their rehabilitation through the arts.

**We very much hope this conference provides a space to share ideas, experiences and best practice promoting the role of arts in criminal and youth justice settings.**

**Please tweet throughout the day using #ArtsCJS2019.**

**Thank you for attending and being a part of this important discussion.**

**Agenda**

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| **Time** | **Title** | **Room** |
| 09:30 | Registration | Foyer |
| 10:00 | **How can arts and criminal justice policy improve outcomes for young people in the criminal justice system?**  **Opened by a short film from Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice, Edward Argar MP**  Chaired by Dr Alison Frater, National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance  with Professor Neal Hazel, Youth Justice Board; Dr Lynnette Kelly, West Midlands Assistant Police Crime Commissioner; Matt Griffiths, Youth Music; Abid Hussain, Arts Council England | Studio |
| 11:10 | **Spoken word performance** from Aliyah Hasinah | Studio |
| 11:15 | **Spoken word performance** from Jamal Khan | Studio |
|  | **Morning workshops** |
| 11:20 | **A:  Professional development in youth justice – using the evidence to make change**.  with Sally Brown, Unitas | Bar  (1F) |
| **B:  How can arts and culture improve mental health and wellbeing for young people in custody?** with Dr Daniela Varley, Curtis Wright and Nakiece Brace, Recre8; Lisa Rowles, Khulisa | Studio  (LG) |
| **C:  Why the significant rise of young Muslims in the criminal justice system demands a new approach to telling stories and ensuring equal rights.** with Raheel Mohammed and Suleman Amad, Maslaha; Aliyah Hasinah, Apples and Snakes | Committee room  (1F) |
| **D:  How can mainstream arts and culture seek to support young people at risk or in the criminal justice system?** with Ruth Williams, Watts Gallery | Rehearsal room  (LG) |
| 12:20 | Lunch | Bar |
| 13:20 | **Ice breaker** with Nathan Dennis, First Class Legacy | Bar |
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| ***First Class Legacy***  *First Class Legacy, a West Midlands-based organisation specialising in engaging young people and diverse communities, will be contributing throughout the conference. We will be recording the key messages that come out of discussions in each workshop to be fed back to First Class Legacy in order to inform a creative response to the conference. This will be shared in a short grime piece performed at the end of the day.* | | |
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| **Afternoon workshops** | | |
| 13:25 | **E:  Leadership and role models for young people.**  with Nathan Dennis, First Class Legacy | Bar  (1F) |
| **F:  Youth Offending Partnerships and tackling Adverse Childhood Experiences.**  with Helen Frost, Arts Connect; Michael Botham and Chad Smith, Sandwell Youth Offending Team | Studio  (LG) |
| **G:  How Youth Music funding impacts young people in the criminal justice system.**  with Jamil De Dominicis and Carol Reid, Youth Music; Ian Clarke, The Studio Project; Clare Annamalai, Finding Rhythms | Committee room  (1F) |
| **H:  How to effectively use theatre with young people at risk and in the criminal justice system.**  with Marie Vickers, London Bubble Theatre | Rehearsal room  (LG) |
| 14:20 | Refreshments | Bar |
| 14:40 | **Performance** from Intermission Youth Theatre | Studio |
| 15:00 | **What should happen after a young person is convicted?**  **What do young people want?**  Chaired by Daniel Pearce, Geese Theatre Company with Jamal Khan, Waltham Forest Council; Zimbo Freemind, Musician and community activist; Ilana Marriott-Lodge, Sara Mokonen, Intermission Youth Theatre | Studio |
| 15:50 | **Performance** from Talia Jay, Artist; introduced by Nathan Dennis, First Class Legacy | Studio |
| 15:55 | **Thank you and close** with Jessica Plant, National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance | Studio |
|  | **Networking** | Bar |

**Biographies (in order of appearance)**

**National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance**

The National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance (NCJAA) currently has 900 network members delivering creative activity with people in prison, on probation and in the community; with impressive, internationally recognised results. The NCJAA’s vision is to ensure everyone in the criminal justice system can engage in arts and creative opportunities as a springboard to positive change. The NCJAA provides a network for its members and conveys their collective voice to the government, supports the development of evidence and research through its online Evidence Library, encourages effective practice and raises the profile of the arts in criminal justice sector. In April 2018 the NCJAA joined Arts Council England’s National Portfolio as a Sector Support Organisation.

The NCJAA is managed by Clinks, the national infrastructure organisation supporting voluntary sector organisations working in the criminal justice system. Clinks’ aim is to ensure the sector and those with whom it works are informed and engaged in order to transform the lives of people in the criminal justice system and their communities. Clinks provides specialist information and support, with a particular focus on smaller voluntary sector organisations, to inform them about changes in policy and commissioning, to help them build effective partnerships and provide innovative services that respond directly to the needs of their users.

**Edward Argar MP – Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice**

Edward Argar has been a Member of Parliament for Charnwood since the 2015 general election and was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary for Justice in June 2018. His responsibilities include: victims (including domestic abuse and domestic violence), female offenders, youth justice, offender health, transgender offenders, Lammy Review and

Race Disparity Audit (in relation to Ministry of Justice policy areas).

**Dr Alison Frater - Chair, National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance**

Alison joined the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance in September 2015. Alison is an independent public health consultant with a strong interest in the arts. She recently retired from the NHS as Head of Public Health and Health in the Justice System in London. She has worked in public health at every level of government – including as Director of Public Health in Bristol – and has held lead roles in the voluntary sector. Her past work has required expertise in research and implementation of evidence, always with a strong focus on advocacy for social justice and reducing inequalities.

**Professor Neal Hazel – University of Salford, and Youth Justice Board member**Neal is the Chair of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Salford. He has previously held posts as Director of the Institute for Public Policy and Director of the Centre for Social Research at the university. He has delivered more than 40 funded research projects, mainly in youth justice and family support, including several national surveys and evaluations. He specialises in producing useful policy and practice messages, most recently through his Beyond Youth Custody research with Nacro. In January 2018, Neal was appointed to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.

**Dr Lynnette Kelly - West Midlands Assistant Police Crime Commissioner**

Lynnette is a member of Coventry City Council and a former Cabinet Member for Business, Employment and Enterprise on the authority. She was previously a member of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership and has a Doctorate from the University of Warwick. Lynnette has 13 years’ experience as a councillor, in which she has campaigned for safer, cleaner and more united communities. Prior to entering politics Lynnette worked at the University of Warwick researching issues relating to public policy and equalities.

**Matt Griffiths - Chief Executive Officer, Youth Music**

Matt originally trained as a percussionist and was a professional musician and music educator for ten years. This work included leading workshops and projects in prisons, young offender institutions, special schools and mental health settings. He is a member of the Music Education Council forum, chairs the Cultural Learning Alliance strategy group and is a speaker with Speakers for schools. Youth Music is a national charity investing in music-making projects for children and young people who don’t get to make music because of who they are, where they live, or what they’re going through.

**Abid Hussain – Director of Diversity, Arts Council England**

Abid leading the organisation’s work on Equality, Inclusion and the Creative Case for Diversity. He is an alumnus of both the U.S International Visitor Leadership Programme and the Salzburg Global Seminar responding to themes of art and social change, migration, displaced artists and conflict transformation. Abid has led on the development of Arts Council England’s strategic equality and diversity framework since 2014, including the development and launch of the transformative Elevate and Change Makers programmes, which have made a significant contribution to diversifying the arts and cultural landscape in England.

**Aliyah Hasinah – Artist, Apples and Snakes**

Aliyah is a poet, curator and aspiring filmmaker based in Birmingham whose writing focuses on personal understandings of history, politics and culture. Aliyah recently co-curated The Past is Now exhibition at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. She is also part of Art against the grain collective and one third of the podcast Who Got the Juice? on Newstyle Radio. Aliyah's poetry is published in several zines, a colouring book and most recently, in Saqi Book's anthology The things I would tell you: Muslim Women Write as edited by Sabrina Mahfouz.

**Jamal Khan – Author and Young Advisor, Waltham Forest Council**

Jamal is Waltham Forest Council’s Young Advisor and award-winning author of Words within walls. He was released back into the community after serving a five year prison sentence at the age of 15. Ever since then, he has been using his negative experiences to make a positive impact. He believes that in order to better the world outside of us, we must first understand the world within ourselves. Because his life started to change only when he healed himself from within, through writing in the journals he kept during his time in prison.

**Sally Brown – Development, Unitas**

Sally has worked with Summer Arts Colleges since they started in 2008. She has been closely involved in the development of a robust theory of change for SACs, drawing on the findings from the extensive evaluation and research programme that is part of the SAC initiative. Her primary role has been in the area of staff development, in particular designing and delivering evidence-based training for artists and other staff working with young people in the youth justice system. Sally is also the primary author of learning content for the Foundation Degree in Youth Justice and the BA (Hons) Youth Justice.

**Dr Daniela Varley – Director, Recre8**

Daniela has over 13 years of experience working with young offenders both in custodial and community settings. Her main focus is to affect change using a variety of creative strategies which enable young people to create positive lasting change. Daniela obtained her PhD at Birmingham City University, evaluating the effectiveness of the Recre8 model, which is used within all of the programmes. The PhD has a strong focus on effective interventions for young offenders and she has designed numerous programmes that engage, motivate, challenge and desist young people from crime, both for custodial and community settings.

**Lisa Rowles - Director of Innovation and Evidence, Khulisa**

Lisa has been with Khulisa since its inception in the UK and leads on the design and development of Khulisa’s programmes. As the author of Khulisa’s methodology, Lisa has been responsible for incorporating a range of theories and techniques in our programmes that enable a trauma-informed approach to the development of social emotional wellbeing for those who struggle to regulate their behaviour. Lisa is also leading on the development of our trauma-informed training for sector professionals, based on 10 years’ experience working with Khulisa’s service users and support staff.

**Raheel Mohammed – Director, Maslaha**

Raheel is the director and founder of Maslaha and named as one of Britain’s 50 New Radicals by the Observer newspaper and Nesta. Under his direction Maslaha creates long-term interventions tackling inequalities in areas such as health, education, gender inequality, the criminal justice system and negative public narratives. Raheel also currently sits on a couple of advisory boards to the Ministry of Justice, looking at the disproportionate number of young Muslim men in the criminal justice system following the launch of the Young Review and the Lammy Review. He has written on diverse issues such as countering negative public narratives, how to make cities more inclusive and discrimination within the criminal justice system.

**Suleman Amad – Consultant, Maslaha**Suleman is an independent consultant working in criminal justice. A graduate in Criminology and Security Studies from Birmingham City University, Suleman has worked extensively in the youth justice field with many different organisations including Clinks and The Howard League for Penal Reform. Suleman has a personal experience of the youth justice system and has worked to highlight and discuss issues faced by those in it, especially from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background.

**Ruth Williams – Youth Support Coordinator, Watts Gallery**

Ruth studied sculpture and printmaking and worked as a freelance sculptor for ten years. After studying for a Diploma in Teaching Specific Learning Difficulties and an MA in Art and Autism she worked in a Special Secondary School for several years. When she spotted the advert for the Community Support Coordinator post at Watts Gallery she knew it was the perfect job for her, and has since had the privilege to work in partnership with HMP YOI Feltham, HMP YOI Bronzefield, The Amber Foundation, Surrey Care Trust, STAR, Youth Surrey Services and Surrey Young Carers delivering Art for All workshops.

**Nathan Dennis – Director, First Class Legacy**

Nathan is an award-winning social entrepreneur, author and youth and community specialist consultant. He connects young people and local communities, and helps organisations build improve their engagement and diversity awareness and build lasting relationships with those deemed traditionally hard to reach. His values based methodology and theory of change has led to real impact across the criminal justice system, health, education, arts and construction sectors. Recently First Class Legacy produced and delivered the Your Life Matters youth summit and opportunities fair on behalf of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

**Helen Frost - Senior Programme Manager, Arts Connect**

Helen is a keen artist and loves that her role ensures that other young people can be passionate about the arts and have great arts experiences in school. Helen oversees the strategy, management and delivery of the Artsmark Award in the West Midlands. The Artsmark Award is an accreditation scheme for schools and education settings that helps develop excellence in the teaching of arts and culture. It’s Helens job to make sure as many schools, Pupil Referral Units, Youth Offending Teams and Sixth Form Colleges as possible get to know about how great Artsmark is.

**Michael Botham - Head of Service, Sandwell Youth Offending Team**Mike has worked in the YOS as a seconded Probation Officer and Team Manager. Mike cares a great deal about trying to effectively engage with young people known to the service and is always trying to explore modern and creative ways to keep the service developing. Embedding the use of arts in the YOS is a very exciting project to be involved in.

**Chad Smith - Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Case Manager, Sandwell Youth Offending Team**

Chad has been working at Sandwell Youth Offending service for six years, having worked previously with young people in various roles and settings, including schools, youth centres and other community settings. Chad’s educational background is drama and performing arts. Having had the opportunity to use drama as a tool throughout his career to engage with young people, he has had the pleasure of experiencing first-hand how arts can be used to give young people a different way of expressing themselves. Chad is really excited by the prospect of using the skills and experience gained as a YOS practitioner and introducing arts based interventions to enhance their YOS journey.

**Jamil De Dominicis - Grants and Learning Officer, Youth Music**

Jamil is responsible for managing the portfolio of grants in Yorkshire and the West Midlands, and developing the charity’s Youth Justice priority area.

**Carol Reid - Programme Director, National Foundation for Youth Music**

Carol leads Youth Music’s grant-making, evaluation and research work. Youth Music is a national charity investing in music-making projects that help children and young people aged 0-25 who face barriers to making music because of who they are, where they live, or what they’re going through.

**Ian Clarke - Multi-instrumentalist and music producer, The Studio Project**

Ian co-ordinates Arts Council England and Youth Music funded projects. The inclusive music-making activities have increased the level of compliance and the successful completion of court orders for young people with Birmingham Youth Offending Service. He now works as a project co-ordinator and music leader for The Studio Project which engages with a wide range of vulnerable young people from across Birmingham Children’s Trust.

**Clare Annamalai - Business Director, Finding Rhythms**

Clare has worked in arts management since 2014, after a twenty year career in sales and marketing, including senior European roles at Alliance Boots. Clare is a Trustee of Lightbox Theatre, Managing Editor of Everything Theatre and campaigns on built environment issues.

**Marie Vickers – Project Leader, London Bubble Theatre**

Marie is a theatre practitioner with over a decade’s experience of engaging vulnerable and hard to reach young people. Since graduating from the Acting and Community Theatre course at East 15 Acting School, Marie has designed and delivered projects for young people and vulnerable adults around the country. She currently leads young people’s programmes for London Bubble Theatre Company, where over the last six years she has developed a programme of theatre projects in partnership with Southwark Youth Offending Service, including four separate interventions which form part of their desistance strategy.

**Intermission Youth Theatre**

Intermission Youth Theatre (IYT) is a pioneering youth-mentoring scheme that works with young people at risk, lacking in opportunity, or ex-offenders. The charity has engaged over 8,000 young people through both its youth theatre and its outreach work with schools, pupil referral units, youth offending teams and young offenders’ institutions, with the aim of raising aspirations and inspiring young people to make positive choices. IYT uses Shakespeare as a mirror to explore difficult choices and social issues, such as gang rivalry, identity, bullying, relationships and knife crime. IYT makes Shakespeare’s works uniquely accessible by reimagining the plays in a contemporary setting and fusing Shakespearean text with street language.

**Daniel Pearce – Actor and Groupworker, Geese Theatre Company**

Daniel joined Geese Theatre Company in June 2013 as a result of his passion for facilitation and using theatre as a tool for social change. With a BA (Hons) in Community Theatre from East15 Acting School and having previously worked for numerous theatres and education departments across London including: the Almeida, Old Vic and GLYPT, as well as regularly working in schools, Pupil Referral Units and Youth Offending Teams, he has a wealth of experience.

**Zimbo Freemind – Musician and community activist**

Zimbo featured in the award winning Channel 4 documentary One Mile Away and BBC Panorama on Birmingham’s gun crime, and featured on ITV, BBC, Channel 4 News and radio. Co-producer and presenter of BBC Radio 4 documentary Spitting Blades, Zimbo also writes blogs for the Huffington Post and the Metro newspapers. He is the Chief Executive of Dats TV Limited.

**Craig Pinkney - Criminologist and Urban Youth Specialist**

Craig is an experienced youth worker with over 15 years of experience as an outreach worker, transformational speaker, international gang exit strategist, mediator, mentor and filmmaker. He is well known for working with some of country’s most challenging young people, potentially high-risk offenders, victims of gang violence and youth who are deemed most hard to reach. Craig is also the UK lead for the EU Gangs Project, specialising in youth violence, urban street gangs, social media and violence, trauma and Black men’s desistance

**Ilani Marriott-Lodge – Actor, Intermission Youth Theatre**

Ilani is a member of Intermission Youth Theatre and performed in the company’s latest production, Guilt Trip, which was adapted from Shakespeare’s Much Ado About Nothing. Ilani recently performed with the Royal Shakespeare Company in Romeo and Juliet, at the Barbican.

**Sara Mokonen – Actor, Intermission Youth Theatre**

Sara is a member of Intermission Youth Theatre and has performed in the company’s productions My Music, My Story, My Monologue; Love Me To Death; and Double Trouble. She made her professional debut in the Young Vic’s West End transfer of The Jungle in 2018.

**Talia Jay - Artist**

Talia has been song writing for two years and has a passion for anything that involves bringing out her creative side. She’s motivated by different things around her as most of her creations are inspired by something she’s seen or heard and the better version she sees of herself in the future.

**Jessica Plant - Director, National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance**

Jessica has led the National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance since June 2012. The current role involves supporting and engaging the membership and influencing policy to raise the profile of arts in criminal justice settings. Jessica sits on the Arts Forum, which is administered by the Ministry of Justice. Throughout her career Jessica has worked to further education and cultural opportunities for socially-excluded adults and young people. Jessica is also a trustee for Streetwise Opera and the newly formed arts and homelessness internal network With One Voice.

1. Prison Reform Trust. (2018). *Bromley Briefings Prison Factfile Autumn 2018.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Howard League for Penal Reform, Transition to Adulthood Alliance. (2019). *Sentencing Young Adults.* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. HM Inspectorate of Prisons. (2019). *Children in Custody 2017–18*. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. NCJAA’s online Evidence Library, [www.artsevidence.org.uk](http://www.artsevidence.org.uk) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)