

DaDaFest: Ghetto-blasters?

"Research into the affirmative cultural values and employment opportunities for disabled and deaf artists within a culturally distinct festival."

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Abstract

Disability and Deaf arts are a way of promoting not only 'arts for art's sake', but also allow deeply held issues from the lives and experiences of disabled and deaf people to be articulated and expressed through creative structures. In an ever changing society, and one where social inclusion has been heralded as an achievement towards a more culturally diverse Britain, the contribution of disabled and deaf communities have arguably not been elevated to the same level as other groups. The arts created from these distinct groups have been an important vehicle to express some of the issues affecting the lives of disabled and deaf people: issues such as the use of language assigned to them, through to high unemployment figures, institutionalisation and lack of access. Since 2001, DaDaFest has promoted a festival of Disability and Deaf arts which has been delivered annually, with 2010 marking its tenth anniversary. Over 400 disabled and deaf artists have worked on the festival, with audiences numbers ranging from 3,500 to 11,000 each year, with many more involved through public screenings and online activity. As it has reached a milestone in its development, the time is now ripe to reflect and identify if it has achieved what it set out to achieve: has it moved disability and deaf people 'out of the ghetto' and into more mainstream arts engagements. Therefore the research will use a series of questionnaires and focus group methodologies to examine two main questions: if DaDaFest is a means to employment and a vehicle to develop work opportunities for disabled and d/Deaf artists; and seek to test if the notion of a culturally distinct festival holds any value for disabled, deaf, hearing or non-disabled people alike.

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To the very many disabled and d/Deaf artists who continue to do their stuff. I also appreciate the support and expertise of Anita Morris, without whom this work would not have happened

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1.0. Introduction

This research will discuss and explore two key areas: firstly to identify if the development of a disability and deaf arts festival can support and encourage disabled and d/Deaf arts practitioners to gain employment in the arts and creative industries sector. Secondly, to explore the need or value for such a festival; a festival that focuses on arts work created by disabled and d/Deaf people.

The context for this dissertation is set within a disability perspective which will examine how external factors may affect the lives of disabled people. The issues raised will cover a wide range of concerns such as education, employment, career choices, leisure or social engagement and well being. The work will specifically examine disability engagement in the creative industries and investigate if a festival of disability and deaf arts has any value in affirming the identity of disabled people and encourages them to perhaps seek careers or opportunities in the creative industries sector. As an additional aspect the work will also seek to identify if this can be acknowledged or valued by disabled people and non-disabled alike.

1.1. Research Background

Disability as a term may arguably give rise to an enormous range of reactions, from the notion of charity giving as witnessed by such events as 'Children in Need', or in the vast array of media stories that portray issues of super-achieving as heralded in such events as the Paralympics or with recently the BBC's focus on 'Amputees become first to trek to the North Pole', (17th May 2010). It is possible that these contrasting stereotypes may continue to promote a 'them' and 'us' culture, the 'normal' and 'not normal'?

Within this context the questions are raised as to why a festival of different art works created by disabled and d/Deaf people has developed; and will explore if issues, perceptions and understandings that prevail around disabled lives may create mindsets that give rise to a 'sub-human' existence that is tolerated and not embraced. It will examine if the festival can help to develop and nurture the work created by disabled and d/Deaf artists, and if it generates opportunities to develop participation in the arts by disabled and d/Deaf people. It will also seek to discover if it is able to create pathways towards employment for the said artists.

The research is being undertaken within the organisational remit of DaDa – Disability & Deaf Arts. This company has been operating as a Disability Arts Development Agency from its base in Liverpool since 1984 and is rooted in the concept of Disability and d/Deaf Arts as being acknowledged and appreciated as distinct cultural diversities seen alongside Black Arts, Asian Arts, youth arts and the like, particularly with such organizations as the Arts Council England [ACE] and Department for Culture Media and Sport [DCMS]. It has developed an annual festival which claims to raise the aspirations and well being of disabled people to allow and encourage participation in the arts sector, not only as audiences and cultural consumers, but also to encourage disabled and d/Deaf artists and creative industries practitioners to establish social enterprises and micro businesses. This festival has been designed as a major vehicle in supporting these claims. However other factors do need to be considered in a changing society and one in which cultural identity is constantly being challenged and remoulded.

1.2. Terminology

"Noun (pl. disabilities) 1. A physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities.

2. A disadvantage or handicap."

OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY [www. http://www.askoxford.com](http://www.askoxford.com) 19th

April 2010

"Disability; a noun an illness, injury, or condition that makes it difficult for someone to do the things that other people do"

CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH DICTIONARY <http://dictionaries.cambridge.org>.

[accessed 19th April 2010]

So what does 'disability' mean? Why do we need to define what can be deemed as such a negative word – 'dis' from the Latin meaning 'lacking', so the word and 'ability' (dictionary definition 'power'). We can assume that for many years disabled people have been defined by a phrase that quite accurately says that they are a people who 'lack power'. What is this power, and more importantly, where does it come from? Disabled people may feel they have been in a long struggle to assert their rights (Shakespeare 2006) and have their feelings taken into account. Even descriptions and labeling can have a demeaning and negative affect as the very words used to describe impairments can dis-empower and stigmatize which in turn may have an effect of limiting social relations and a sense of acceptance. The deliberations of Oliver, Swain, Barnes and Finkelstein (1993), extensively on disability identity and the place of disabled people in society have formed insights that have affected many sectors from health care to social service provision. Finklestein (1993) especially noted that the very term, 'disability' was deemed as a stigma and stated, that as such few [disabled] individuals would willingly, 'identify themselves as disabled'. It can therefore be perceived that the very term 'disabled' causes dissent. As well the actual

meaning of 'disability' has evolved throughout the last 100 years, and it varies from country to country. It can be taken from many viewpoints, from that of a phrase that is highly stigmatized, through to one of empowerment as currently being reclaimed by the disability movement. It does remain fraught with complications and convolutions; as seen from the actual breakdown of the root meaning: '*dis*' which is a prefix that means the opposite, in this case '*able*', through to the medical definitions that now prevail in dictionary definitions or as used in many countries government papers and legislation.

It is important right at the outset of this thesis to understand the intent and descriptions for 'disability' contained within this document. It acknowledges the language that is used by the artists and stakeholders involved in this research. In reference to 'disabled and d/Deaf artists', the intent is to include all artists identifying as a disabled or, as a d/Deaf person including those who may not declare themselves as such. It covers all the usual terms used to describe disabled people from such phrases as, 'people with a disability', or a 'person with learning disabilities' through to older and more outmoded terms such as 'the handicapped.' There are many different political connotations associated with how people identify and the labels they use. There are some disabled people who prefer to use a capital 'D' before the term 'disabled' to indicate a political distinction akin to capital 'B' that is used in Black culture. Likewise, those of the deaf community will also prefer to use a capital 'D' when identifying as a 'Deaf person'. In the case of Deaf people this working of the word is in reference to their recognition as belonging to a linguistic minority in which British Sign Language is used. Deaf culture in itself is a very rich and strong community and as such could be included in some depth within this discourse. However, the author has decided to limit content around Deaf cultural development, as Deaf people have developed a great deal of work within their own cultural identity, to focus on how they engage alongside disabled people in using the arts, to articulate and acknowledge a joint political perspective or view of the world.

Therefore, to avoid misunderstanding from this point on, the term 'disabled people' will be used in referring to all people who have impairments. Their medical conditions include physical, sensory, intellectual or neurological states. It is important to note that people may also have with two or more different impairments which means labelling within a medical context would not be either an effective descriptor or a means that the researcher would endorse.

3. Literature Review - What is Disability?

It is important to not underestimate the impact of stereotypes and portrayals of disabled people and how they may be viewed in today's society (Barnes 2000, Oliver 1994). Attitudes about Disabled people's role in society have been steadily changing and segregation issues are now being addressed through civil and human rights perspectives as to how this cause is the last civil rights movement (Dreidger 1989).

Since the 1970's, the disability movement has not been a passive one and its campaigning has borne results. For example, lobbying through the Direct Action Network [DAN], the Community Care (Direct Payments) Act was passed in 1996. Direct Payments is a Social Services scheme which puts disabled people in control of their lifestyles by being able to choose and employ their own personal assistants and have the means to pay them for basic services such as washing, cleaning and interpretation and the like as the payments used for this support is paid directly to the disabled person. It is a means to empower people and giving direct control to services that historically were delivered within set times and systems, such as institutions and hospitals. This has been seen as a form of freedom as previously, disabled people had to fit into a system which affected their personal choices and freedoms. This service now creates the means to buy services chosen by them, and provide the assistance that they decide they need, when it is needed. It is one way that demonstrates how government support has

been changing to put disabled people in charge of their lives instead of being in a position to intervene and control what services they have traditionally been subject to.

2.1. Models of Disability

To explore these issues further, we will seek answers by exploring the different models of disability. This work will examine the notion of 'disability' within three frameworks: firstly, the Medical Model of Disability: secondly, the Social Model of Disability, and thirdly Disability Arts as a Cultural Model of Disability.

2.1.1. The Medical Model of Disability

The definition of 'disability' can be fixed within a medical framework and as such associated with being seen from a deficit point of view of what is considered 'normality'. It is a traditional way of viewing disabled people. As Davies (1997) says, "*We live in a world of norm*", and disabled people are often are viewed or accept a role as being on the outside of this 'normality'. Lives can be exposed to controlling forces which have determined such things as what the quality of life is likely to be, where or how to educate, what jobs [if any] can be done, to how disabled people can participate in cultural life or society [mainstream] at large in reference to their impairments as determined through a medical analysis, or the 'Medical model of Disability'. It is possible to view this as a form of oppression, as Price and Shildrik (2002) observe, that this medicalising and biological fixer has had a dangerous impact in that it has caused attitudes towards disabled people have been,

".. establishing a separation from non-disabled people that speaks to an implicit - if not explicit - hierarchy of oppression."

Cited Corker and Shakespeare (2002 P 62-75)

Education can be one of the biggest barriers in allowing participation in mainstream life which is ultimately affected by how a disabled person's biological state is analyzed. This can be traced back to the Darwinian theories of the late 1800's in which the concept of the 'survival of the fittest' had a knock on effect in the education system. This was typified by Dendy (b.1855 – d. 1933) a passionate eugenicist who in 1890 explained through a pamphlet produced by the newly established 'Lancashire and Cheshire Society for the Permanent Care of the Feeble Minded' , known today as 'people with learning disabilities' should be,

***"....detained for the whole of their lives as the only way to stem
the great evil of feeble-mindedness in our country".***

P161(Jackson 1996)

She proposed that this was the 'right thing' to do for society and expounded the principle to permanently exclude and institutionalise disabled people. This thinking caught on and led to mass exclusion and segregation. As the work of Eugenacists began to develop, more and more disabled people, especially those who are not able to be cured or 'fixed', were deemed to live lives of negative quality and productivity; they were seen as likely to cost too much money and be a burden on the family, especially upon the welfare state. Disabled people also began to be described in derogatory medical terms such as 'invalids', 'retards' and 'handicapped', until we finally came to the mass genocide as a solution offered by the Nazi regime in which disabled people were 'de-humanized' to the point where they were referred to as 'useless eaters'.

The medical professionals have come to hold a great deal of authority and control over the lives of disabled people. A great deal of research into how our 'social' problems became medical ones has been taken by such writers as

Foucault and Oliver (1993), who explain how doctors in the 19th century increasingly came to hold the power, "doctors became a very powerful social force," who decided on new systems in terms of social and economic controls that shaped and molded how disabled were accepted or segregated into society (Potts and Fido 1991) . Their words became all powerful with professionals coining phrases that labeled and categorized disabled people and set them into institutions that represented that particular impairment group. It had the effect of categorizing and setting them apart from any notion of normal, ordinary life and existence, and only being aware of people with the same conditions.

The change in perceptions and attitudes towards disabled people was greatly highlighted through the emergence of the UK's welfare state as this allowed disabled people's lives to be more controlled and defined in terms of what we were able to do against bench marks of 'normal' day to day activities. If disabled people failed the tests, they were destined to lead inferior, segregated lives all because their impairment would affect how they can participate in a particular activity. As Gooding (1994) explains that this power over disabled people's lives allowed the medical professionals to have, "...great power...through their functions as gate-keepers of the welfare state".

The Medical Model of Disability (Barnes, Oliver) and its prevailing view of assessing disability from a 'deficit' point of view, is seen today in the UK's Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and its definition of 'disability':

"A Physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities"

It is the traditional way of viewing disability and one that many people can feel trapped in. Their diagnosis may make way to them giving over control to

medical professionals and experts who know you better than you, and can therefore tell you what you can do or, more likely, what you cannot.

We can find historical evidence that disabled people's lives have been subjected to experimentation and extermination, from institutionalization, through to current interventions such as cosmetic surgery on babies with down's syndrome (to make them look more 'normal'), to cochlea implants being imposed on young children as opposed to non-intrusive solutions to deafness such as in the teaching of sign language, Davies (1997).

This medical model creates a fixed biological definer of disability and is one that is likely to remain in the foreseeable future. It is also one that is increasingly used as a determinate of how disabled people can participate or be involved. The recent Marmot Report (2010), highlighted findings that gives rise to fears that in an ever aging population there will be severe resource implications for disabled people especially; we are deemed to cost too much and the inference is there will not be the means to support this group of older people. Therefore the focus should be on the need to increase life-expectancy in 'disability-free adults'.

"The population has aged significantly over the past 25 years. In 2008, 16 per cent of the population was over 65 years old. If the current trend continues, 23 per cent will be over 65 years old by 2033, which represents 3.2 million people. The over fifties are the largest users of health and social care services. The impacts of the ageing population and levels of long-term illness and disability hold enormous [financial] implications for these services." (Marmot 2010 P 160)

There is no escaping this biological determinate of disability and with all the modern advances of technology and research we are still not be able to solve the issues associated with it which has a knock on effect as, according to Marmot (2010 P160) , it will increase as a 'medical concern', especially as more of us are living longer and acquiring more age-related impairments.

2.1.2. The Social Model of Disability

Since the early 1970's disability activists have come to explore what the word 'disability' actually means. From the earliest origins of Paul Hunt's (1972) challenge to form a [disability-led] lobbying group, there has been an investigation into what actually 'disables' disabled people? The reference gave rise to place this phrase within a social context and not related solely to their bodies limitations or impairments. Masefield, cites Crow (1989) who explains that it is not about her body and the difficulties she faces as a wheelchair user, but it was the factors outside her body that caused her issue, she was,

**"being 'dis-abled'; my capabilities and opportunities were
being restricted by poor social organization."**

Masefield (2006 P7)

This perception can be life changing to disabled people and has certainly formed new opinions about what exactly is the 'disabling' factor in their lives. Time and again disabled people have echoed the same sentiment, they may acknowledge that the world has created 'disabling barriers', and that what 'disables' them is societies structures which have a multiple affect from the physical environments to socio/economic factors. It is not impairments that disable, particularly as they usually manifest differently from person to person. These impairment/s by and

large cannot be fixed, whereas many societal barriers can by and large be eliminated or considerably reduced. The Social Model of Disability is extremely valuable as a framework of thinking and can allow the world and the place of disabled people within it, to be viewed very differently from the medical one. This has even more impact on the disabled individual as it can lead to create a sense of identity which takes away the focus on being analyzed or labeled medically which in turn often leads to the concept of being 'not-normal'.

The disabled people's movement through the Union of Physically Impaired Against Segregation [UPIAS] (1975), has put forward an alternative definition to disability, one that acknowledges the disadvantages or restrictions that prevail in mainstream society, that disability is caused by the fault of the current 'social' organisation; which largely fails to take the lives and needs of disabled people into consideration in its structures and systems.

The underlying premise of such a definition is that disability is therefore external to the individual and that disabled people are 'disabled' by societies restrictions or barriers preventing full participation in everyday life experiences. This point of view is called the 'Social Model' of disability. It is one which is being adopted by many key statutory bodies as a way of identifying and eliminating the 'barriers' to participation such as environmental, attitudinal and communication which prevent day to day involvement by Disabled People on an equal level to others within society. It has become recognised and adopted into many policies from local governmental bodies through to national and international statutory bodies such as the World Health Organisation and the United Nations.

Therefore 'disabled people' are those people who self disclose as being 'disabled' by and excluded from society because of issues around their mind, bodies or senses (Oliver 1993).

The founding figures of the UK's disability movement had counteracted the prevailing medical model through formulating the Social Model of Disability by exploring the very notion of 'disability'. Finklestein (1993 P 35 – 40), an early originator of such thinking assisted in this discourse and began working on a way of redefining the actual meaning of the word 'disability.'

The conclusion, was to shift the focus from 'disability', pertaining to the impairment or medical condition, to placing it within a social context which became formulated through the publication of the 'Fundamental Principles of Disability' in 1975.

Over the last thirty years, the 'Disabled Peoples' movement has been increasing in strength and status and many impairment groups have now aligned themselves as a collective identity forming views within the 'social model' framework and challenging the pervasive negative perceptions about their lives. This has taken place through campaigns and active lobbying for social change and calls for inclusion in everyday life opportunities. In 1991, the British Council of Disabled People [BCODP – a collective of controlled-led disability groups in the U.K.] celebrated its tenth birthday and launched a campaign for anti-discrimination legislation which in turn has helped formulate the current Disability Discrimination Act [DDA] 1995.

"Disability is the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by contemporary social organization"

UPIAS 1975 cited Oliver (1993)

This has led to an emergence of controlled-led, disability groups who have encouraged a united voice to be heard and many other control-led groups have formed as a result. There is a great deal of difference as to what constitutes controlled-led within this context, but it usually refers to governing bodies or

boards having anywhere between 51% and 100% of their members as disabled people.

The earliest disability movement in the UK started by looking back at history and repeatedly witnessed that disabled people's lives have been controlled by non-disabled people for hundreds of years. There has been very little or no personal evidence or record from any peer groups, in fact there have been no peer groups. The only information recorded about disabled people's lives have come from 'professional's' such as scientists, doctors, teachers, story-tellers and the like in the form of scientific research or documentation. This history explains such things as how different impairments are expected to behave or manifest, or how to determine life chances and interactions with mainstream life, or what adaptations and aids can be given. This history had an effect in viewing disabled people in terms of being uneconomically viable or uneducateable, with some being put into institutions and nursing or residential homes to 'care' and support in a way that often took away personal choice and freedoms.

"Incarceration in residential homes has been practised long enough for it to be accepted as a perfectly legitimate way of 'caring' for the 'disabled'." (Gooding 1994)

It has been through activists such as Finkelstein and Hunt that the prevailing medical perceptions have been challenged. It was disabled people themselves and their experiences that made the difference: an early motto became 'Nothing about us, without us!' [Yeo and Moore 2003]. This newly emerging Social Model of Disability allowed disabled people to speak for themselves and identify with a human rights struggle along the same path as other oppressed groups.

Yet it is not a fixed viewpoint and is being challenged. With the publication in 2006 of Shakespeare's, 'Disability Rights and Wrongs', a huge challenge has been thrown up with the pre-dominant use of Social Model of Disability, and

particularly with the failure to address the personal impact of impairments as Shakespeare declares that we have gone too far in failing to acknowledge that,

"People are disabled by society and by their bodies"

Shakespeare (2006) P 29 - 32

This view point is now giving way to enhancing this model, towards an affirmative one that views the disabled person as a whole, recognizing the variables in their lives which,

"....encompasses positive social identities, both individual and collective, for disabled people being grounded in the benefits of life style and life experiences of being impaired and disabled".

Swain, Finklestein, Oliver & French (1994)

The Social Model of disability and its evolution is increasingly being adopted by controlled-led organizations. This framework continues to be worked into policies and procedures. Yet it can never be fixed, there must be a way of adapting to the changing society, and one in which more access is apparent, but still there are huge issues of exclusion and many struggles which continue to be voiced, especially through cultural channels.

2.1.3. Disability Arts – A Cultural Model of Disability

As an emerging political disability voice for change developed, the arts surfaced as a way of articulating the notion of, a different culture, one that conveyed the many issues of disability, from social oppressions through to creating work informed by living with impairments, the results being that many artistic expressions began to be created from these new and personal perspectives. This art articulated experiences of oppression, discrimination and highlighted

stereotypes in how disabled people maybe treated on a day to day basis making the lives and feelings of disabled people more visible. It has been a vital method in creating, according to Gooding (1994) that sense of, "*an alternative culture – which plays an important part in cementing the sense of a 'movement'*". Therefore the 'Disability Arts' movement can be said to be 'unashamedly political': O'Reilly (2007) and deemed to have been pivotal to the "self-emancipation of disabled people", which has gone onto affect and inspire the creation of arts across the world.

The key distinguishing factor with disability arts, is that all artistic creations are firmly set within the cultural context informed by artists living with personal experience of disability and disabling experiences. It upholds the notion that the experience of living or acquiring impairment/s can affect how you are able to interrelate and participate with the world around you. Being a disabled person can determine how you communicate, what issues affect your daily living engagements which in turn can also affect your self esteem, your sense of belonging, your ability to 'better' yourself, your feelings of being outside and excluded from 'mainstream' life and general well-being. The part disability arts offer in portraying different approaches to prevailing and mainly negative stereotypes is arguably very profound. As Masefield (2006) explains, as society continues to patronize and pity disabled people, the arts created within the disability arts context are inspired by the very experience of being a disabled person. Disability Arts can also hold up a mirror to the world and remind people that becoming a disabled person can happen to anyone, at any time, from any background and from any place, as disability, in the words of Gosling (2006) is an intrinsic human factor, not confined to just a few unfortunates. Disability arts work can place disability back into a central mainstream position, as anyone at anytime may become a disabled person.

So what is Disability Culture? Barnes (2003) states, ‘..is a minority, a sub or subordinate culture’. It has emerged from within the disability political movement. It has risen in impact and become part of the International Disabled Peoples Movement. It advances ideologies and values that come from the experience of living with impairments and facing disabling barriers each day. The absolute essence of this movement is that disabled people themselves define and shape this cultural expression. It has caused dissent in that many people [disabled and non-disabled] wish to express their own views of disability, but Disability Arts turns this notion around and clearly supports that only those people who have experienced living as a disabled person can create arts from this perspective. This context is fraught with complications and opposition as it could be argued that the very notion of arts created only by disabled people perpetuates the segregation of disabled people and their lives.

Yet for many disabled people it can allow them to view disability as an acceptance of their impairments and as such a powerful symbol of difference; a difference which defies the stigma and negative impressions to one that values and affirms their experiences of living as a disabled person. As at times, their very existence can be called into question, there is a need to be able to articulate in a fashion that allows a resonance, to promote the sensitive issues, to voice the pain as well as share in the humour that living as a disabled person can bring, as well as to challenge and provoke. As the Turner Prize winning artist, Yinka Shonibare has persistently heralded, Disability Arts is, to his mind, the ‘Last Avant Garde’ or as others declare (Finklestein, Barnes et al) the last ‘civil rights movement’.

Therefore for many, disability arts can be deemed as a call to arms, a call to allow the ‘unspeakable’ to have a voice, the ‘unlovely’ a platform to be viewed and the downright ‘disturbing’ a place at the table to eat. The work can and does remind people of their own vulnerability and mortality: it displays the frailty and degeneration of our bodies. The art it creates allows space to articulate unvoiced

feelings and deep expressions; it captures issues of oppression and exposes a negative history, allowing art to move into unexplored places as well as allowing space to develop humour and interest in an area always considered taboo. It comes from a place of human emotion and experience and as such can only be created as subject matter by those who live and deal with this on a daily basis to create credibility and sincerity to the work on show.

In the words of Sutherland (2007 DAO),

'The generally agreed definition of disability arts, the one that we in the disability arts movement have found most accurately reflects what we are doing, is that it is "art made by disabled people which reflects the experience of disability".'

Disability arts are Art. It is seriously intentioned creative work covering a range of art forms, from poems to painting or music or comedy or theatre and the like; all is made with a degree of aesthetic purpose. It is not a hobby to keep the 'cripples' hands busy, neither is it therapy or passive activities that amuse and pacify and keep disabled people occupied.

In 1981, Ian Dury (b. 1942, d. 2000) wrote a song in response to the first 'Year of Disabled People', 'Spasticus Autisticus'; this song was promptly banned by the British Broadcasting Company [BBC] largely as they did not comprehend its true intention. It was a song penned by Dury, himself a disabled person, to deliberately provoke thinking around what it meant to be a disabled being in the world. It heralded a 'battle cry and an appeal for understanding',
[http://wapedia.mobi/en/Spasticus_Autisticus. 20.04.2010]

***"Hello to you out there in Normal Land
You may not comprehend my tale or understand"***

***"So place your hard-earned peanuts in my tin
And thank the Creator you're not in the state I'm in***

Lines from Verses 2 and 3,

The message behind the song continues to hold a resonance for the work of disability arts as it continues to sound the battle cry, albeit with more than just music.

2.2. Disability Arts Cultural Festivals

Taking forward the cry to appeal for understanding and a need to be empowered as disabled people, the politicalisation of disability arts has meant that it has had various problems in finding places to promote its work. From reasons as plain as inaccessible art galleries or theatres, through to arts venues failing to acknowledge an emerging arts expression which leads to lack of programming and finding space, and also in creation of art that doesn't perpetuate a tragic, pitying aspect to disabled people's lives, the works acceptance has continued to be a difficult one. Since 2003, Arts Council England has pioneered in placing disability culture alongside other cultural expressions and this has achieved positive impact across England, especially elevating its status by using the Disability Discrimination Act '95, to provoke the arts council regularly funded organizations [RFO's] to specifically engage with the work of Disability arts and disabled artists. This has been monitored through funding criteria and also through the Arts Council's Disability Equality Strategy. Even with this provocation, the programming of such work is still hit and miss, and many venues only put on one or two events a season or focusing their disability inclusion programme to mean attracting audiences only with Signed performances and the like, failing to provide any disability content. This has the effect that some disabled communities have created their own opportunities

with disability arts cabarets and delivering some Disability Arts Festivals. However, they are far and few in between. In the UK there are two festivals that promote disability arts on an annual basis, the Liberty Festival in London which has been taking place in London every year since 2003, and is held as a one day celebration of disability in its widest sense, taking centre stage in one of London's most prominent landmarks, Trafalgar Square. The other is DaDaFest: more on this later. In the 1999, Degenerate was established as one of the first disability arts festivals alongside the Edinburgh Fringe in which a week long programme was based at one theatre venue, Theatre Works. This ran as a biennial event to 2005. Other festivals have come and gone as one off's, most notably, 'Above and Beyond' which took place over 4 days in Cheltenham in 2003. DASH [Disability Arts Shropshire] took place in 2003 and 2005 as an open air carnival parade for one day. There was an attempt by North East Disability Arts Forum to establish the Mimosa festival which took place in 2006 to celebrate the work of disabled artists in the North East region. It also used the festival to be a "catalyst for change," to reposition the work and impact of disabled artists based in the North East. Despite aims to develop as an annual event, it has failed to identify funding and has not been held again.

Internationally, there has been one regular festival that bases its work around the arts work that is *created* by disabled people as opposed to *Disability Arts*. It is delivered in Washington DC as a biennial since 1985, called VSA, an acronym for 'Very Special Arts'. It promotes itself as an international festival designed to,

"bring together over 2,000 artists, educators, researchers, and policymakers with and without disabilities from around the world for a multicultural celebration of the arts and arts education. VSA features visual, performing, literary, and media artists."

Other international festivals that are rooted in the notion of Disability Arts have been remarkably few: one, 'Giant Leap' held its first festival in 2005 based in Auckland, New Zealand. The planned second one was cancelled 4 weeks before its start in March 2009, through financial difficulties. In Australia, 'High Beam' has been established as a biennial disability arts festival from 1998 and has been developed alongside the internationally renowned Adelaide Festival and takes place at the same time as an additional, fringe event.

The only other regular festival is 'Kick Start' based in Vancouver, Canada. This started out in 2001, and has just had its third festival which took place within the Cultural Olympiad Programme to celebrate Vancouver's hosting of the Winter Olympics in February 2010. Its mission is to produce work again produced by, 'disabled artists using different art forms', and tends to shy away from the political notions associated with Disability Arts, specifically art created from a social model of disability perspective.

There is very little evidence of the impact of these festivals so it is hard to assess the effects apart from the feel good factor, which nonetheless remains hugely relevant. The author has not been able to source any evaluation reports or impact assessments from these festivals, as the work tends to take place then and there with little to show in terms of legacy or monitoring.

It is a bold claim to make, but the only Disability Arts festival that continues to thrive and be delivered on an annual basis is DaDaFest [an acronym for 'disability & deaf arts festival'], which was established in April 2001.

In comparison to other disability festivals, DaDaFest has been able to prove its economic impact through reports delivered by external bodies in 2004 and 2005. In 2004 The Mersey Partnership, was commissioned to undertake economic

impact assessments into DaDaFest delivered that year and in 2005. It was estimated that based on an average spend of £51.39 per person, in just eight DaDaFest events generated an overall total spend from its audiences of £89,418.60. In addition to these events in 2004, DaDaFest also included a number of exhibitions at the museums and arts centres in Liverpool, and included the candlelit vigil for World Aids Day on the 1st December. Including these events, the total audience figure for DaDaFest in 2004 was 9,120. Use that figure, at an estimated average spend of £51.39 per person, DaDaFest generated an estimated total spend of £468,677 throughout the festival period. In 2005 the average spend for all visitors was estimated at £53.52 per person. Over the course of DaDaFest 2005 there were a total of 28 performances, talks, workshops and events, attracting a total of 7,670 people. Based on an average spend, an estimation of 1,157 visitors, for just five DaDaFest events, the economic assessment was a total spend of £61,922.64. On estimation, the entire DaDaFest event generated a total spend of £410,498.40. These figures have assisted in assuring future funding support from the local authority.

Other factors from DaDaFest evaluation reports concentrate on the quality of the arts, the accessibility of the activities and the number of disabled and non-disabled attendees. Each year it has been proved that the festival is valued and seen as a key highlight in the North West of England's regional festival programme. DaDaFest has already won a Tourism Award for Best Small event in 2005, and has also been shortlisted for 3 other awards, including one of the ten best events of 2008 in Liverpool's European Capital of Culture year.

2.3. DaDaFest

DaDaFest has been mainly based in various cultural venues across Liverpool with satellite events taking place in Manchester, Wirral, Sefton, Knowsley, St Helens, Wigan and Carlisle. It has become the only disability arts festival in the UK to be

delivered annually for the last 10 years. The festival takes place in November and December to coincide with International Disabled Peoples Day (established by the United Nations in 1981) which falls on 3rd December each year. It has grown in reputation and profile locally, nationally and increasingly internationally. As a result of the festivals impact the host organisation has received steady core funding increases from its two main funders, Arts Council England (from £63,000 per annum [p.a.] in 2001 to £174,000 p.a. in 2010) and Liverpool City Council (from £15,000 p.a. in 2001 to £113,000 p.a. in 2010) due to the perceived importance and quality of its work.

DaDaFest is firmly rooted in the disability rights movement, and in particular the origins of disability arts as a political tool to perpetuate the ideas and notions of political oppression as detailed in the 'social model of disability' and its associated theories.

The festival is also multi-art form in nature and each year the programming has reflected the range of art work of the artists involved and of a given theme. Unlike other cultural festivals, there is not one pre-determinant art form that can capture the expressions of the arts on show, such as samba does for carnival, Bharata Natyam for Indian Dance, and Irish music which has its nuances and beats easily identified within a cultural parameter. This can cause problems, but it can also allow much more freedom in what can be programmed each year. Needless to say, the art forms within DaDaFest are not specific to this particular piece of research.

An important element of this research will also be to examine if the ethics within disability culture and its community members, artists and groups is one that is valued, and most importantly if there is a future to encourage a festival focussed on a diverse social group and associated activities.

"DaDaFest has fast exploded onto the North West Arts arena and continues to wow its growing audiences as one of the most significant national events in the Disability Arts calendar. The festival has grown from rags to riches in its professionalism and star quality, now boasting a plethora of talented artists with a wide diversity of skills and expertise. This is a cultural event to be proud of and offers far reaching potential to new disabled artists seeking inspiration and the wide range of emerging talent from the North West. It is to be hoped that funding bodies in the region have the imagination and commitment to make a lasting investment securing DaDaFest's future."

Julie McNamara, Artist: Sept 2007

2.3.1. Factors Effecting DaDaFest

With the recent election, the UK is now moving into a post-Labour Britain in which policies that have been introduced should enable us to increasingly work towards an 'inclusive' society, one where difference, be it race, gender, faith and in this case, 'disability', should no longer be a hindrance to accessing opportunities on an equal footing to others. Indeed the work of the last few years now means that a new 'Equalities Legislation' will be soon be adopted as law, with all the 'rights' bills to be merged under one legal framework. As Harman put it in the forward to the government paper, 'A Fairer Future' explaining the reason for the equalities merger;

"Race relations back in the 1960's, to the important steps towards equality for women in the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts in the 70's. From strengthening rights for

Disabled People in the 1990's (Racial Equality, Sex Discrimination, the Disability Discrimination Act '95) ... the government has led the way" Harman (2009)

On 8th April 2010 UK parliament gave formal assent to roll out this new equalities legislation which will become effective as law by autumn 2010. Given this change, is everyone now able to access all that the UK has to offer? Is there really a need for a diverse festival? Do disabled artists now have an open path to careers in the arts and creative industries sector? These are questions DaDa is faced with on a regular basis which creates an underlying assumption to explain and justify why the festival exists and what it is trying to achieve and what it already may have achieved. Increasingly, there is also some questioning by disabled and deaf artists themselves who are rejecting any reference to being labelled as 'disabled' or 'd/Deaf'. Unlike other arts organizations, DaDa has consistent problems in how it is defined and viewed. These issues may range from those who assume the work is about therapy and passive arts activities, through to disabled artists themselves not wishing to be identified as disabled through reasons such as feeling their work will be patronized, de-valued or even pitied.

These complexities are due by and large to shifting and evolving understandings of what disability and more specifically what 'Disability Arts' actually is. In this research paper it is important to understand the context of the work of Disability Arts and how it is perceived.

2.4. Creative Industries Sector

"Britain is a creative country and our creative industries are increasingly vital to the UK. Two million people are employed in creative jobs and the sector contributes £60 billion a year – 7.3 per

cent – to the British economy. Over the past decade, the creative sector has grown at twice the rate of the economy as a whole and is well placed for continued growth as demand for creative content – particularly in English – grows.”

Creative Britain: New Talents for A New Economy Published by DCMS (Feb 2008)

The Creative Industries sector is without doubt one of the most vibrant sectors in the UK's modern economy, especially in terms of the digital developments which are making it possible to gain better access through the modern advancements of technology,

".....(the web) will transform the ability of all citizens to tailor the services they need to their requirements, to feedback constantly on their success, to interact with the professionals who deliver them and to put the citizen not the public servant in control”.

Gordon Brown PM, 22 March 2010 from his speech, BUILDING BRITAIN'S DIGITAL FUTURE [www.number10.gov.uk [accessed 10th May 2010]

With more choice and more opportunity, one would expect that disabled people are raising their prospects and getting work in the arts sector. Traditional barriers such as lack of level access or communication aids should be dealt with under legislation, such as Disability Discrimination Act '95 and its legislation on service provision as well as Part M of the building regulations (Disabled Access To And Use Of Buildings) which have definitive standards for all new or refurbished public buildings to adhere to. On the face of it, things have changed considerably and more opportunities ought to be taking place to ensure disabled people are no longer excluded and a valid part of the creative sector. To explore this in more detail, we will start by examining disability facts and figures in the UK.

Exact figures and data on the number of disabled people in the UK vary and to get an insight of the different, albeit similar statistical breakdowns, it is necessary to view various sources. According to the last UK census in 2001, data shows that almost 9.5 million people or 1 in 7 of the population define as having a long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits their daily activities or the work they may be capable of doing. These figures relate to all disabled people, young and old. These figures change depending upon where you live; for example Merseyside has one of the highest rates of disability with 24.78%, or almost 1 in 4 of the population adhering to this descriptor.

However, a different and contrasting picture emerges in figures presented by The Department for Work and Pensions in 2004, who cited that the numbers of disabled adults living in the UK is on the rise, but not consistent with the last consensus in 2001. In 2002/03 they state that there were 9.8. million disabled adults in UK, or around 22% of the population. This has grown from 8.5. million adults [19%] of the population in 1996/97.

Disabled people also represent the largest group of unemployed people in the U.K. (source www.dwp.gov.uk [accessed 2nd May 2010]. In comparing two reports, four years apart it is easy to note that very little has changed in terms of the numbers of unemployed disabled people. In a report by the National Employment Panel in January 2005, commissioned by the Prime Ministers Strategy Unit [PMSU] it stated that,

“ Fifty percent of working age Disabled people are economically inactive – neither working or seeking work – compared with just 15% of non-disabled people – this amounts to almost twenty percent of the U.K.’s work force”.

Page 7, Able to Work, NEP, published January 2005

Has this picture changed? Figures collated from the Office for National Statistics [ONS] Labour Force Survey taken in the first quarter of last year (Jan - March 2009), shows that there are currently 1.3 million disabled people in the UK who are available for and want to work and figures continue to show that half of disabled people of working age are in work (50%), compared with eighty percent of non-disabled people. This is also compounded by ONS which shows that as many as 23% of disabled people have no qualifications compared to just nine percent of non-disabled people. [www.statistics.gov.uk – 20.04.2010 Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey, Jan - March 2009]. The U.K. is not the only country that is affected by this as an issue, (Refer to Appendix 1 for unemployment figures for USA & Australia).

Many disabled people simply do not have access to environments which encourage them to set goals, gain qualifications to assist with work-ready skills, identify career paths or choose training themselves. This is particularly true of people with additional support requirements such as people with learning disabilities and those with a high level of personal support or those who are institutionalised. The prevailing mainstream culture is still one that encourages disabled people towards dependency and being looked after.

By using these figures as a benchmark one can help to identify how involved or represented disabled people are in various activities: in the UK this should be expected at or near the twenty two percent mark if disabled people are truly included on an equal level to others.

The results are no surprise. The arts are increasingly seen as a viable career path for disabled people, reasons are multiple from the ability to be employed in micro and/or social enterprises and freelance positions that can fit into the lifestyle needs of many disabled people, to the fact the arts and creative industries are a

growing sector, especially here in the North West of England. There are also more opportunities to gain arts training than in previous years through policy changes, legislation and the fact that more training institutions are generally accessible. As the Creative Industries sector is deemed as the UK's fastest growing industry, it makes sense that disabled people should be gaining more opportunities to work and train in them.

The Creative Industries, excluding Crafts and Design, accounted for 6.2% of [the UK's] Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2007.

The Creative Industries grew by an average of 5% per annum between 1997 and 2007. This compares to an average of 3% for the whole of the economy over this period.

[Department for Culture Media And Sport, www.culture.gov.uk accessed 12th May 2010]

The Digital and Creative Industries sector are seen as pivotal to the North West region's knowledge economy. It is estimated that they generate 16% of the Northwest's Gross Value Added (GVA), employing 10.6% of its workforce and forms the second largest creative cluster in Europe. [North West Development Agency; www.nwda.co.uk accessed 10th May 2010].

There are great difficulties with existing data in that very little has been collated specifically in reference to the Disabled people's involvement on a regional level. Therefore to gather data about disabled peoples participation in the arts as audience or artists, the greatest source of consistent information can be taken from Arts Council England [ACE] who have been collating data annually through its 'Taking Part Survey', which is a continuous survey of cultural engagement figures among adults as reported by ACE's Regularly Funded Organizations [RFO's]. Scotland and Wales undertake their own surveys as they have a different funding system to England and it is difficult to establish a comparator.

The definition of disability used within the survey is, 'limiting disability/illness' and comes from the definition used by the UK Office for National Statistics. Its findings consistently show that disabled people are not as engaged in the arts as non-disabled people. [*Refer to appendix 2 for more information on Taking Part Survey*]

The Arts Council England commissioned Davies & Lindley (2003) to undertake research to examine the numbers of artists working in England. They report that a high number, or 27% of artists working in the creative industries sector claim sickness or disability benefit compared to those of non-cultural occupations, yet this is not evidenced in ACE Taking Part Survey.

DaDa has been aiming to redress some of these national findings through various interventions from 2002 onwards, and will be presented further in this paper. It is worth noting that these figures have remained constant over the last 10 years with the ACE surveys showing that disability employment figures in particular tend to hover around the one to three percent mark of total work force numbers. The participation figures have increased as Disability Discrimination Act legislation has ensured more rights to service provision, especially once the DDA's Public Duty Bill came into force in 2006 for all statutory, publically funded bodies.

There are great concerns amongst the disability arts community and very little data is evident from elsewhere. Masefield (2006) in his discourse on Disability Arts, states that,

"In the entire arts industry of more than 650,000 people, disabled people only show up as 1 in 500. Surely that is not only the entertainment industry's great vanishing act, but also the most shameful act in the play of arts history's"

3. Research Methodology

It is useful that the writer identifies their personal tactics within this research as there is a propensity to approach all work through a 'deductive' approach to analysis. To base research within this positivist frame work may create biased results and therefore invalidate any findings, therefore any deductive research needs to be balanced though 'qualitative' or 'phenomological' analysis. However, it is imperative that the writer does not make assumptions about the anticipated findings, but balances up the demands through a combination of 'Qualitative' and 'Quantitative' methods. This is especially important in this work as an element of 'cultural identity', (that of 'disability arts') needs to be measured, which happens to be,

" ..A cultural analysis as a crucial criterion for ethnology...which is typically broader and gives richer, more qualitative material..."

(Flick 1995)

There is a concern that the questions, and particularly qualitative approaches are biased which may create invalid evidence and data, but the point that this research is coming from a viewpoint of disability and the question to develop disability arts businesses should not be perceived as negative. Indeed Flick (1995) says,

".... the research and its findings are unavoidably influenced by the interests and the social and cultural backgrounds of those involved [which] ...influence the formulation of research questions and hypotheses as well as the interpretations of data and relations".

Questionnaires have been sent and received by Disabled and Deaf artists who have performed at DaDaFest, with a mix from across Merseyside, the North West and the UK with even some international responses. There has been a focus on current arts practice, participation, common arts activities, and how, if at all, DaDaFest has supported or otherwise any work opportunities, ascertaining the need for the festival, specifically if those supporting Disability & Deaf cultures aid enterprise initiatives.

The Questionnaires have been sent to key funding bodies, venues, partner organizations and stakeholders. Just one focus group with Disabled and d/Deaf artists has taken place. Evidence has also been collated through analysis of currently held data about disability arts and enterprise developments

The following approaches have been developed in order to undertake this research:

3.1. Research Tools

A variety of research tools have been used to capture as much useful material as possible to inform findings.

3.1.1. Questionnaire Designs

Three different questionnaires have been developed to capture data from three distinct sources; disabled/deaf artists involved in past festivals, arts funders and arts organisations in an association with DaDa, and an on-line audience survey.

The type of questions asked have been to ascertain data to support or reject the principle of DaDaFest as a valued and relevant Disability Arts festival and secondly if it encourages the employment of disabled artists. They have been

formulated using the Likert scale of five possible answers with a scale of positive to negative with the central designate as a neutral indicator.

It was important to keep the questionnaires interesting and relevant to the respondents and therefore kept to a range from nine to a maximum of nineteen questions, depending on the survey group. The three targeted groups are: audiences and supporters of DaDaFest, arts organisations and funders, and disabled artists and companies.

The formats varied due to the nature of the respondents. Not all have been able to complete a hard copy therefore it was essential to provide alternative formats such as e-mail questionnaires, ability to complete the answers on tape and make arrangements to provide for other formats if requested (Braille, note-takers or assistance, video in the case of Deaf people BSL users).

As previously stated the last census in 2001, showed that almost around 25% of the population of Merseyside are thought to be disabled people or living with long-term sickness which will last over twelve months and has an adverse effect on their day-to-day living activities [Office of National Statistics]. Therefore, to send out a sample for 10% of this figure would prove to be a costly and labourious exercise. Therefore the sample group was taken from newsletter of disability arts organisations and also targeted arts organisations and networks. In total over 250 forms were distributed. Questionnaires were also posted on the website of DaDa and through Facebook, MySpace and twitter social network sites.

The aim was to generate over sixty responses by targeting three specific interest groups (i.e. Disabled Artists already known to DaDa), inviting responses voluntarily from the wider disability community and thirdly through a general arts community. In total sixty-four questionnaires have been returned.

3.1.2. Sample Collation

The questionnaires have been distributed over a two month period, giving time for people to respond, particularly bearing in mind the different formats. The information has been received and the information collated for an overall analysis.

One focus group with Disabled/Deaf artists has taken place with nine disabled and deaf artists and practitioners.

3.1.3. Focus Group Questions

A focus group has been developed as an appropriate means to glean information and identify key themes or issues from a sample group of disabled artists and key individuals. The questions formulated have captured some of the issues related to disability as well as taking on board the main elements of this research. One, two hour focus group has been held with disability arts business and freelance disability and d/Deaf artists.

3.2. Accessible Formats and Requirements

In terms of the provision of information, the Disability Discrimination Act '95 requires alternative formats, equipment, and sign language interpreters and the like to be provided in order to ensure that disabled people are not prohibited from taking part. As a research project, it is imperative to keep to these same guidelines and principles to ensure no-one is prevented from being included due to lack of accessible formats or communication methods.

There are a whole variety of formats that can be used to convey information, many of which would benefit non-disabled people too. The provision of information should be made as flexible as possible, since people may have more than one impairment and therefore may require a combination of formats. It is also worth noting that some disabled people may not have English as their first language, so information systems should be flexible so that information in other languages can be presented in alternative formats too.

3.3. Suitability of Researcher

The writer's current position and probably only 'qualification' in undertaking this research is within her role as CEO for DaDa. Under her leadership the organisation is now an established disability arts development agency which has grown in turnover from £139,000 in 2001/02 to an estimated turnover in excess of £700,000 for 2010/11. The organisation is 'controlled-led' and comprised of over 80% disabled board and staff members. The company is aligned to the wider Disability Movement and sees its 'positive action' principles as a means to creating opportunities in the arts that empower disabled people. Since 1994 it has developed a training aspect to its work and attracts many disabled people wishing to develop careers in the arts. The researcher's current job role gives rise to identifying initiatives and actions to support these aims.

One last point is that as a self-disclosing 'Disabled person' she has experienced the almost daily discrimination from being told she was 'uneducatable' at school in the 1970's through to being excluded from many career paths due to her impairment. The disability arts sector has been the place where her career has been able to develop. This factor needs to be borne in mind at all times, as it could be deemed that she could prejudice the outcomes.

4.0. Research Findings

The amount of information collated has been extremely useful in gaining data that tests the key research aims. The following information has been divided into four sections and will explain the findings of:

- questionnaires to artists
- arts organisations
- audience on-line survey
- responses from a focus group

To understand the breakdown of participant types, results from data indicating gender, disability status, demographics, ethnicity and age can give an overall insight to the scope of respondents involved in the research.

4.1. Respondent Information

4.1.1. Disability and d/Deaf Cultural Identity

The breakdown of disability as a cultural definer helps to ascertain the creditability and focus of the research, it is about Disability Arts and if disabled people may gain employment through DaDaFest. It is important to note that the questionnaire deliberately separated disabled and deaf people, as Deaf people take enormous pride in their distinct cultural identity and not all Deaf people readily identify as a disabled person. The researcher was aware not to just target disabled or deaf people, but to open the opportunity as widely as possible so as to not limit responses. The categories also included non-disabled people as they may work within the field of disability or deaf arts and also have opinions about the research questions. There were also arts organisations returns. In total disabled and deaf people have amounted to 83% of the research respondents.

<i>Category of respondents</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>%</i>
Disabled	41	49%
Deaf	12	27%
Non –Disabled	8	10%
No Answer	23	14%

Table 1: Disability & Deaf Cultural Identity**4.1.2. Gender and Ethnicity**

The gender mix does show a larger proportion of women than men responding, with an ethnic breakdown that indicates a racial mix, but with much larger proportion of 'White British'.

Gender	64	%
Male	24	37%
Female	38	59%
Prefer not to say	1	2%
Other	1	2%
Ethnicity	64	
White British	44	69%
Black British	4	6%
Asian British	1	2%
Indian	1	2%
Other	6	9%
Prefer not to say	8	12%

Table 2: Gender and Ethnicity**4.1.4. Age Range**

This information has been collected from just two sources, the artist and on-line survey respondents of forty-nine. The range indicates more post thirty-six participants, with three post fifty-fives.

Age Range	49	%
16-25	4	8%
16 – 35	9	18%
36 -45	18	37%
46 – 55	15	31%
55+	3	6%
	40	100%

Table 3: Age Range**4.1.5. Location**

As the invites to participate went through on-line sources, it has been possible to glean information from across the UK and even with some overseas respondents. As expected there are a higher number from the Liverpool/Merseyside area, but with a 19% of London based artists and fifteen percent from across England (a total of 34%), it demonstrates the impact of the festival nationally.

Artists Location	54	%
Liverpool/Merseyside	29	55%
London	10	19%
England	8	15%
Scotland	1	2%
International	3	5%
Blank	3	4%

Table 4: Location of Respondents**4.2. Disabled and Deaf Artists**

The information from the artists questionnaires were categorized into four main response areas, which included the respondent's personal information. A total of thirty-six questionnaires have been collected from disabled and non-disabled artists who have worked in the festival; this gives a sample of roughly 9% of the estimated four hundred artists involved over the years and acts as a useful

benchmark for analysis. This is lower than anticipated, but as a sample size its findings do give a baseline of relevant information to the findings of the research questions.

4.2.1. Art Form Breakdown

The arts disciplines presented in the returned forms shows that some artists do work in more than one area of the arts. This mix was indicative of DaDaFest as a festival that profiles a wide variety of art forms which change within each yearly programme. In total a mix of fifty-one art forms were detailed by the thirty-six artists. They are:

Art Form	No. of Artists 36	%
Visual Arts	3	6
Design	1	2
Film & Video	8	16
Music	10	19
Performing Arts	22	43
Writing	6	12
Arts Consultant	1	2
Total different Art Forms	51	100%

Table 5: Art Forms

4.2. 2. Responses to Disabled Artist Questionnaires

The questions in the artist's questionnaire were grouped into three main areas. The first section was designed to ascertain values that the artists may feel about the festival; then the benefits to the artists involved, followed by statements which they could answer as true or false, or leave comments if no answer could be provided or as a way to clarify why they gave that answer.

4.2.3. Cultural Identity

By examining the cultural importance and identifying how many of the respondents actually recognised themselves as part of a culturally diverse group could provide knowledge around identity. The findings show that 54% strongly agreed with 22% percent agreeing in identifying as part of a culturally diverse group. Just 8% disagreed that they felt part of a cultural identity and perhaps significantly this backs up the numbers of non-disabled people who completed the form. The findings support the work cited earlier by Barnes, Finkelstein, Oliver and Masefield [1993] that a distinct 'disability cultural identity' has emerged over the last thirty years.

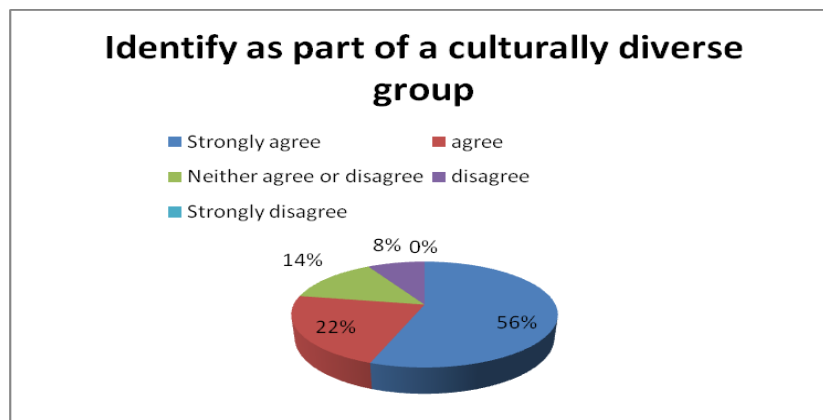


Figure 1 : Identify as Culturally Diverse

4.2.4. Recognition of Disability & Deaf Arts within a Cultural Context

From this determinate it was important to discover if people felt that DaDaFest did promote this notion of cultural identity and distinction: that of Disability & Deaf arts. This could test if there was a need for the work to be aired within a more 'inclusive' frame. The answers indicate that 64% strongly agreed with this concept, with 31% agreeing. No one disagreed, with neutral responses at 5%.

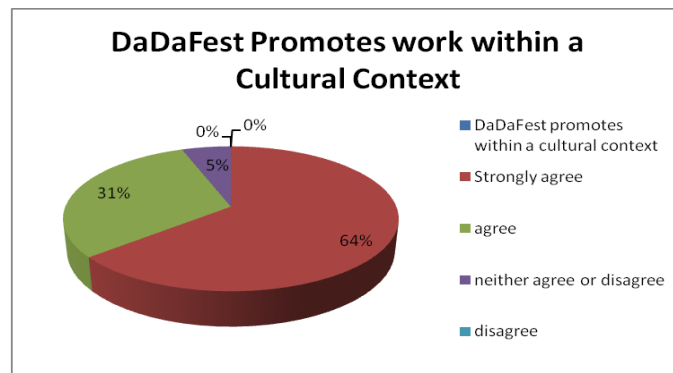


Figure 2: DaDaFest Promotes work within a Cultural Context

4.2.5. Promotion of Disability & Deaf Arts

How do people see the festival in terms of promoting disability arts as a stand alone expression? At 83% a large number of respondees strongly agreed, with 17% agreeing, creating a 100% positive recognition of the festival. No other views were made. This again backs up the information contained earlier in the literature review and also goes against the current thinking that all disabled artist want to work inclusively and not within a Disability Arts environment.

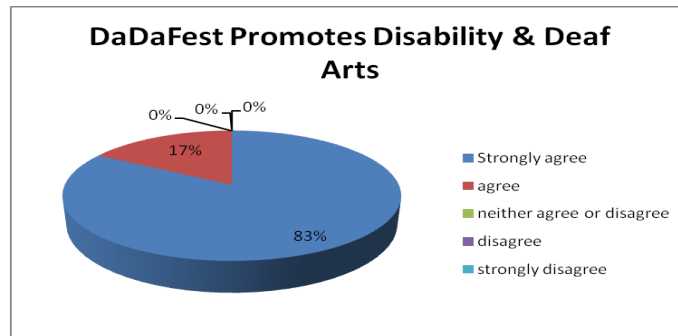


Figure 3: DaDaFest Promotes Disability & Deaf Arts

4.2.6. Promotion of Disability & Deaf Artists

The next area was to identify if respondees felt that the festival did actually promote the art work of disability & deaf artists. There has been some questioning around this in the past, as some have expressed the notion that the work has now compromised on areas such as the Social Model of Disability. The answer was very positive with 80% strongly agreeing that it did and seventeen percent agreeing. Just 3% neither agreed or disagreed.

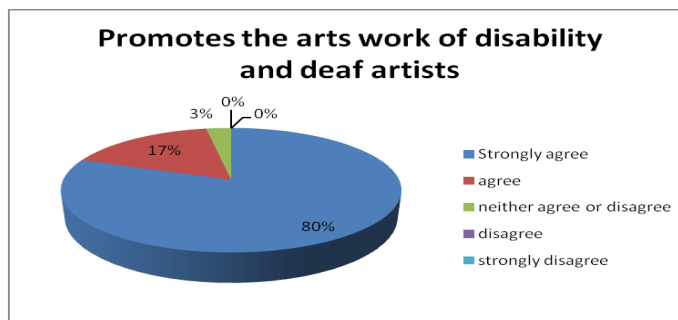


Figure 4: DaDaFest Promotes Disability & Deaf Artists

4.2.7. Would you Recommend DaDaFest to Others

To ascertain if the festival has value, it may be assumed that respondants may inform others about their involvement. Word of mouth is a powerful tool and an indication of how positive or otherwise people may feel about it. A high number,

80% strongly agreed, with 17% agreeing. Those who neither agreed or disagreed totalled 3%.

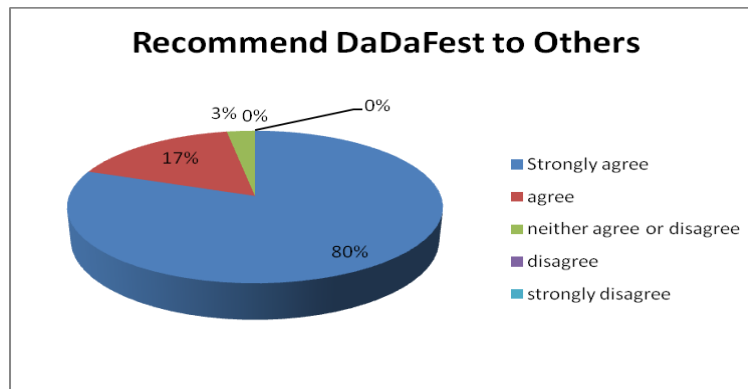


Figure 5: Would you recommend DaDaFest to others

4.2.8. Direct Benefits through Networking

A total of 94% of artists agreed that this was an important factor of the festival, with 6% disagreeing. Many comments were noted which have helped back this benefit: some points raised included people being able to network with new and well known disabled artists, or just with 'artists'. This was particularly important for people to meet others from different places, which also included being able to meet overseas contacts. This adds greatly to the sense of cultural identity and belong to a 'peer group', refer to Barnes and Oliver (1993). Some artists have benefitted greatly in new work developments and one explained that they have,

'strengthened links across Indian organisations working with disabled women around violence...using arts as a medium to address it.'

The festival does give artists the opportunity to meet people they would not otherwise have met, even the forming of friendships, with the importance of meeting, 'like-minded' people cited as a valuable one. It was also mentioned that networking included meeting promoters, arts venues and the press with

DaDaFest creating a space for these interactions to take place. One artist who was able to launch new work at the festival felt the impact from others helped them to gain confidence to tour the work to new venues. They also made mention that they can feel isolated and spending time with interesting people is most beneficial. One person mentioned about being diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis [MS] in 2007, through involvement in DaDaFest she was brought into contact with other disabled people and has since developed collaborations with them. The DaDaAwards events was heralded positively for meeting new people and gaining higher profiles for the said artists.

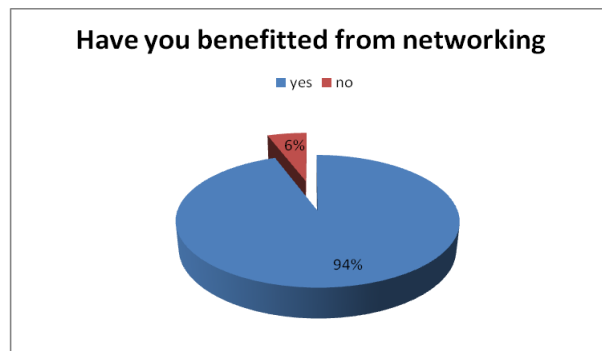


Figure 6: Have you Benefitted from Networking

4.2.9. Direct Benefits for the Artists through DaDaFest

The next area asked about work opportunities; did artists feel that DaDaFest gained them work opportunities? Given that some of the respondents have been involved as volunteers, 94% agreed and 6% said no. Positive comments included gaining gigs and having articles written about their work, to being asked to perform and sing as a result of being seen at the festival. The person who was diagnosed with MS detailed that they now work in other disability gigs, events, and talks. The festival had also given people the opportunity to try out new skills which they have now gained extra work through. Another artist mentioned they have had more exhibitions as a result and have also been invited to talk about their work. At least two of the respondents having achieved new commissions

through DaDaFest stated that this has helped and being able to test and redefine their work to have a sellable 'product'. One person mentioned that having DaDaFest on their C.V. was a benefit. Another person responded that their work, 'had enhanced slowly', but had created more opportunities. Of the no's, one person felt it was irrelevant to them as they are not a disabled person, but others did say they did it unpaid or clearly that no other paid opportunities had emerged from their involvement in the festival. One company had not gained other paid work outside the festival as they were 'not asked.'

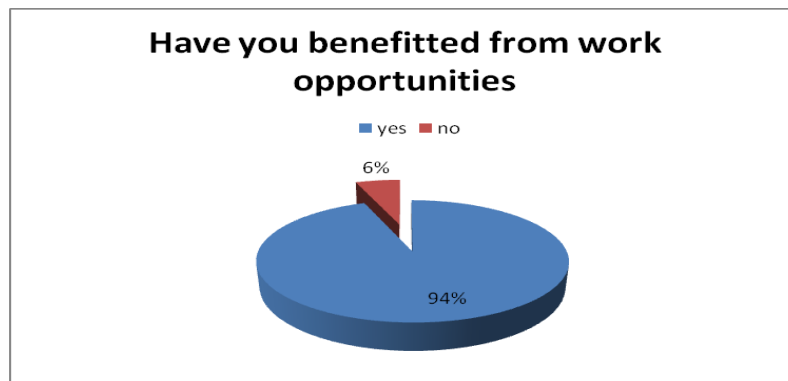


Figure 7: Have you benefitted from DaDaFest with work opportunities

4.2.10. Have you Benefitted through Increased Income

In being involved it was vital to know if their level of income had changed, afterall DaDaFest was developed to try and gain more employment opportunities. It was an exposing questions to ask and not all respondants completed this question. Of those who did, 55% agreed that it had, 17% felt it had not, with 28% of respondees leaving the question as a blank. Answers varied from 'a little' to those who mentioned that it has developed partnerships and 'cultural ones too', through gaining extra work and gigs, through being able to develop new commissions. Various sources of incomes were mentioned from freelance, artist and speakers fees. One person noted that creating work at DaDaFest had given them a chance to 'work things out', and as a result had led to increased

income. It was also noted that increased income was linked through gaining a higher profile at the festival.

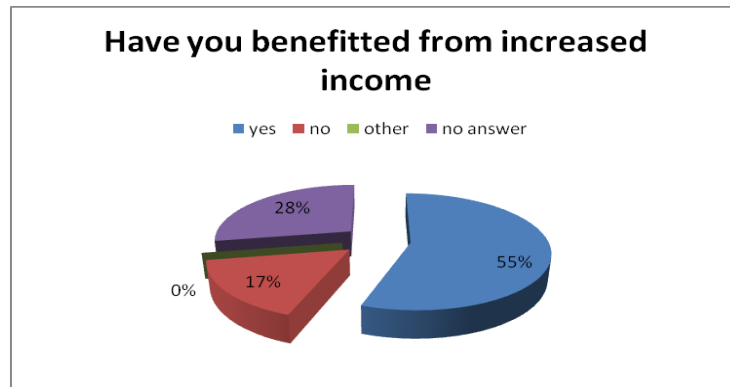


Figure 8: Has being involved in DaDaFest increased your income

4.2.11. Has being involved in DaDaFest Raised your Profile

Another important early aim of the festival was to increase the profile of disabled and deaf artists, 64% of respondents agreed that it had, with 11% giving a negative response; 17% left the question unanswered with the remaining leaving comments. These ranged from having more fans in the UK with increased email traffic as a result, through to media and marketing opportunities expressed by a few respondents; 'exposure at the festival has definitely led to other opportunities'. One artist also stated that they felt they were a 'positive role model to the young and adults who are Deaf'. Another stated that they presented their work on a 'truly diverse international platform'. Another stating that they were appreciative of the support that they were given by being part of the festival, whilst others appreciated the profile raising as given through the festival publicity and on-line presence.

One award recipient of the DaDaAwards had felt that it showed how their work is 'respected in the arts community' which has also led to other collaborations with artists. An award nominee felt that it gave 'credibility' to their work, whilst another stated, 'definitely'. Profile raising has also been factored into artists

creating new work opportunities to develop a project to support other disabled artists. One person cited that the profile raising was, 'amongst disabled and artistic communities'. Someone was able to cite that they put in their involvement in the festival in an Arts Council funding bid. Another person felt the profile was, 'on a regional level'. On a more cautious note, one artist felt it had helped their profile, 'temporarily' with the other saying they were, 'not sure' and 'not really'. Neither of these last two respondents gave any further details to their answer .

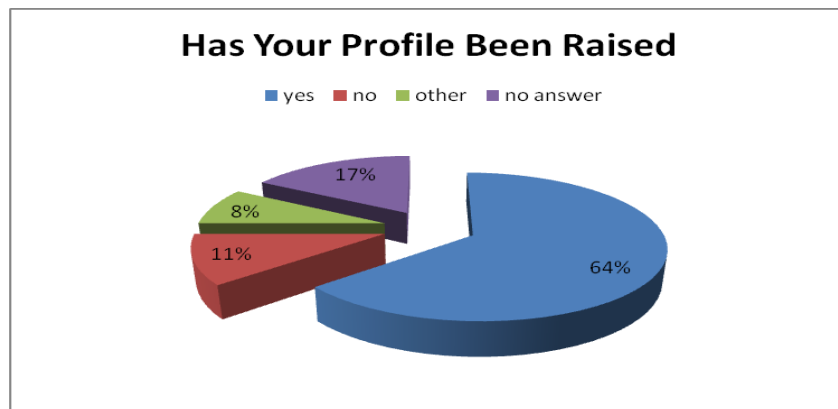


Figure 9: Has DaDaFest Raised Your Profile as an Artist

4.2.12. Has being involved in DaDaFest Increased Employment Opportunities

It is important to identify if DaDaFest has actually increased employment for the said artists; 47% agreed that it had, with 11 negative responses; 39% of people left this question unanswered with 3% 'other' comments; 'my participation in DaDaFest has not affected my employment opportunities'. For others it was a different picture: many of the respondents detailed factors that have helped them to achieve this, from winning an award, to gaining Arts Council Funding, through to being heard or seen at the festival, showcasing work and being able to convey achievements and consequently being booked elsewhere. One person stated that it had given them the, 'drive to design a new project to help disabled

artists', which in turn gave, 'some confidence and self-esteem back'. One person mentioned that being involved with DaDaFest gets them work, as people, 'contact them through DaDaFest'. One person mentioned that they have been offered, 'more gigs than they can manage at times'. Another felt that they have been given a grant to help develop their work and that they will be developing workshops; one person stated they they now teach in Birmingham every Saturday, 'employment is increasing, slowly and positively.'

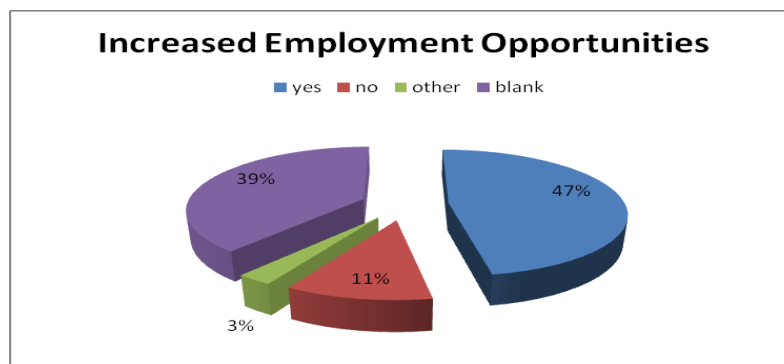


Figure 10 : Has DaDaFest increased your employment opportunities

4.2.14. Is DaDaFest Valued by Deaf & Disabled Communities?

The first question has been included to see if DaDaFest is valued by deaf and disabled communities? A high number, 92% answered true with 8% giving an 'other' answer; no one saying it was false. Some comments made that it is valued more in the North West and is 'hit and miss' across the UK, with one person echoing this in relation to the Deaf community. Someone answered this in more general terms in that as a community, 'we are bad at giving credit', going on to say that the festival deserves, 'to be better valued and publically valued,' ending this with, 'DaDa is good at this'. Two comments had an air of inquiry, one said, 'I hope so' and the other 'not sure'. The results may echo the 'call to arms' and the need to ascertain a distinct disability/deaf identity.

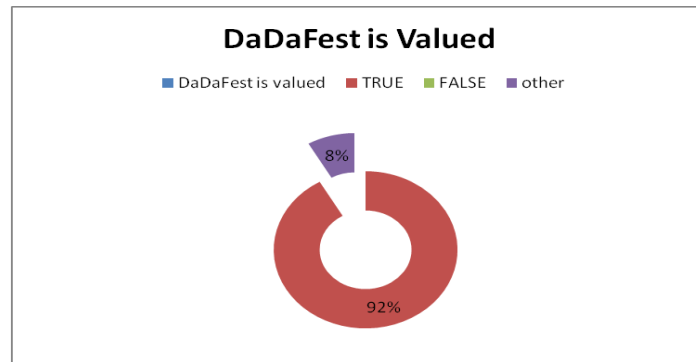


Figure 11: Is DaDaFest Valued

4.2.15. Does DaDaFest Fulfill the needs of Deaf & Disabled Artists?

This next statement intends to perceive if DaDaFest can evidence this point: 72% of the respondents agreed that it did with 3% saying this was 'false,' 25% had other answers which ranged from, 'don't think any organisation can,' and, 'it can for some of us, but a lot don't know about it or not involved'. Some people held a cautious note in that the festival can fulfill some needs, but, 'should not be expected to fulfill all, ' or ' as with all these things, some gain more than others.' One person felt there was room for improvement, 'as in any arts organisation.' More negative responses were that local artists are losing out to more international artists, and that, 'it does [fulfill needs], but only a small percentage of them.' One respondent felt confused by the question, stating that in terms of celebration then, 'yes.'

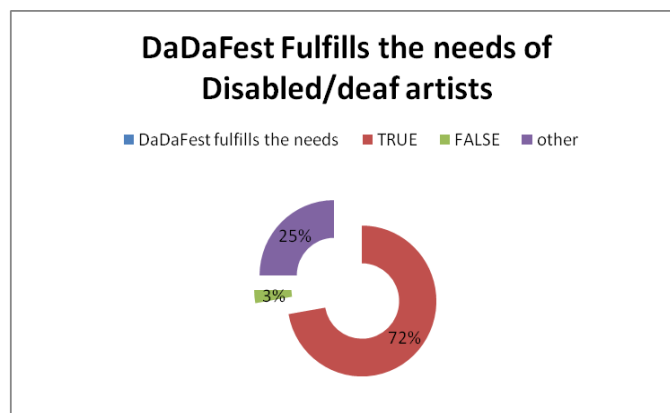


Figure12: Does DaDaFest fulfill the needs of Disabled Artists

4.2.16. Does DaDaFest Showcase the work of Deaf & Disabled Artists?

In terms of DaDaFest's main aims to celebrate the work of disabled and deaf artists, the next question asked if respondents felt that DaDaFest showcases the work of Disabled and Deaf artists; a very high number agreed that it did, 97% agreed with no-one marking this as a 'false' answer. The only 'other' comment was not dismissive, but stated that, 'it can, for some of us but there's a lot who don't know about it and aren't involved.'

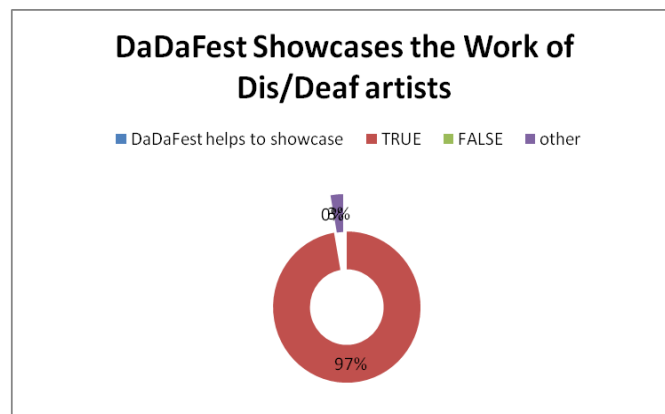


Figure 13: Does DaDaFest Showcase the Art of Disabled Artists

4.2.17. Does DaDaFest helped in gaining further work?

To test out the research premise about the festival helping artists to gain other work, this was included as a question. In total 64% of respondents agreed that it did with 14% feeling that it didn't. There were additional 'other' comments made by 17% with 5% giving no answer. Respondants gave a range of feedback, from, 'possibly, 'to valuable experience,' 'I have not been looking for work,' and , '50/50'. Those who gave more detailed responses stated that they were in the area of developing new work, gaining work as a support worker for

other artists and, 'not sure yet; too soon to tell! But please invite me back next year.'

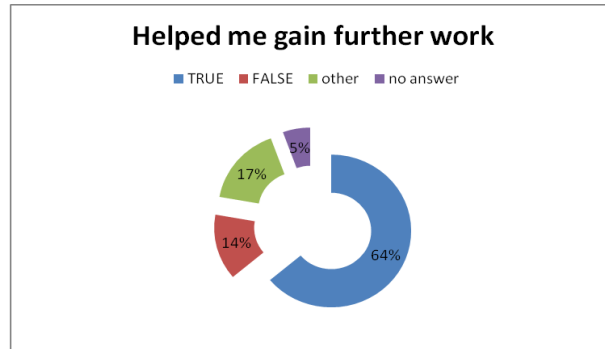


Figure 14: Has being involved in DaDaFest Helped Gain further Work

4.2.18. I Readily Tell Others that I Have Been Involved in DaDaFest

This was designed to test the value and word of mouth aspect of the festival, it could be argued that this question was repeated from question five in the first section of the questionnaire, albeit worded differently, but it has added to create a comparator about readily telling others about the festival. In total of 92% of respondents gave a true answer with 3% saying they did not. The other 6% marked the 'other' category, but offered no additional information. One person stated, 'I wear my DaDaFest T shirt at the Gym.', through to DaDaFest is 'used as a major part of my 'pitch' and 'it's on my performance C.V.'.

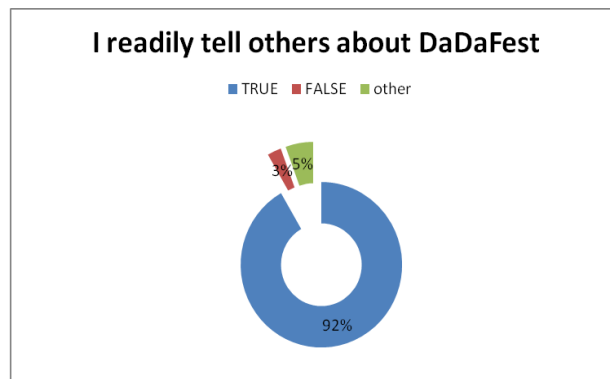


Figure 15: I readily tell others about DaDaFest

4.2.19. Should DaDaFest Commission New Arts Works?

In asking if the festival should be a commissioning one, 94% agreed that it should with 6% disagreeing. One comment highlighted the need to keep in contact with others, referring to those artists who have been involved in past festivals. One person stated that to collaborate with the media industry would, 'really bring artists to the mainstream.' Another person felt that should be a key element of the festival, with one person stating that they would like to see more collaborations with 'disabled and non-disabled artists.'

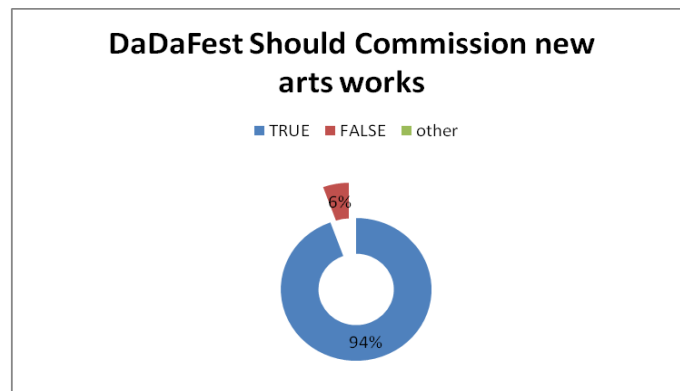


Figure 16: DaDaFest should Commission New Art

4.2.20. Does DaDaFest perpetuate the 'ghettoising' of Deaf & Disabled Artists?

As it can be said that Disability Culture has had its roots in fighting for rights to inclusion, there have been times that this very strong sense of identity has created a 'them' and 'us' distinction, especially as some disabled people have rejected any notion of non-disabled people playing a part in creating what they feel is 'political' work (Gooding 1994). This has created some issues with accusations towards DaDaFest, that by doing a disability arts festival may actually create a 'disability or deaf ghetto' which has no or very little relevance to non-disabled peoples' lives. This point needed to be asked and 53% of respondents felt that it did not do this, with 14% feeling that it did do this; with

30% other comments, it has shown that people feel quite strongly about the issue. A variety of comments explained their reactions to the question: 'some may perceive it as such,' was a thought from two of the respondents. Others felt it may, 'potentially' giving this impression, but without it, work would not be seen and 'possibly,' and as long as the work was kept out of community centres. Of others were not sure, with one person failing to understand what this meant. In depth responses were given by way of solutions to prevent this: 'perhaps DaDaFest should hold strands in others festivals working around the country,' and it is seen as a festival in the same way others are, for example, 'punk or jazz festivals.' Someone had a lot to say about the word 'ghetto', that we need to be careful as the value of DaDaFest as it creates a 'protected and separatist' space for younger disabled and deaf artists, who, 'cannot find access to mainstream arts opportunities,' thereby creating a much needed platform to present work by international artists; a point that was repeated by another. Two people felt the need to err on caution; that we had to work hard to prevent it from becoming so and that the festival has to be careful not to offer an excuse for the mainstream to do nothing. A positive comment was made that the festival has now,

" Grown big enough to be beyond a ghetto and it now forms a space where other non-disabled artists and arts venues want to join in with DaDaFest."

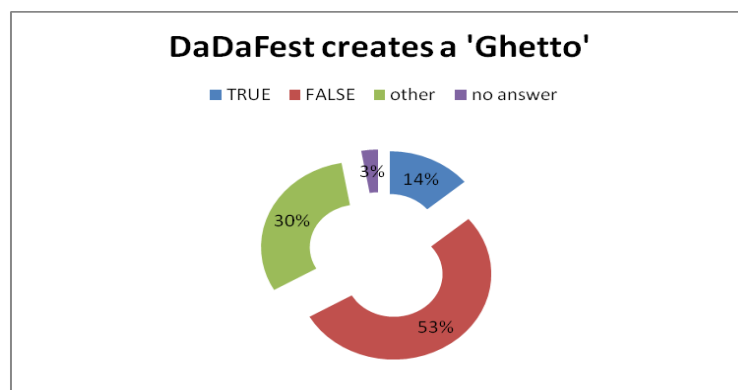


Figure 17: DaDaFest Creates a Ghetto

4.2.21. Does DaDaFest Affirm the Cultural Identity of Deaf & Disabled People?

The last question of the section returns to the heart of the festival 'raison d'être': does it affirm the cultural identity of disabled and deaf people. Out of the respondents, 3% did not answer the question and 70% felt that it did, leaving 19% feeling that it did not. One person made mention of the difference between the two cultural groups who make up the festival and felt it created, 'confusion'. The eight percent 'other' gave rise to some varied comments from affirming through giving decent access and moving the debate on from 'narrow notions of identity', thus allowing, 'the festival to showcase the diversity and fluidity of disabled and deaf peoples identity.' Another person wanted it stressed how true this statement is. They explained,

" These sorts of events are huge in enabling us to keep on keeping on: its sustenance for the rest of the year."

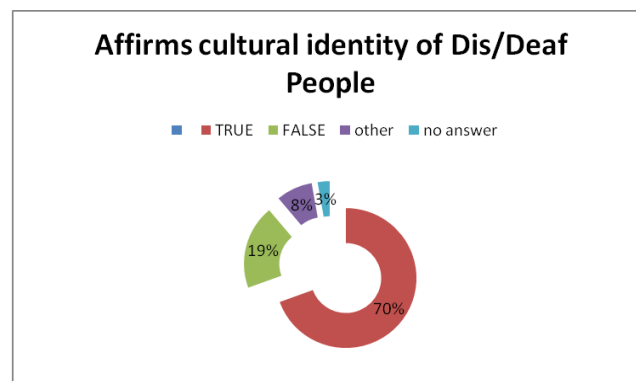


Figure 18: DaDaFest Affirms the Cultural identity of Disabled People

4.3. Arts Organisations Questionnaires

A low number of forms have been returned. Over thirty arts venues and funders were contacted with forms returned by just five organisations. They do however, yield some useful information which is worth including.

The demographic area covered by these respondents covered Liverpool, the North West with one London based organisation. The arts forms represented included a dance development agency, an arts business organisation, a photographic gallery, a development agency to encourage disabled and deaf people to get involved in the arts, and a key funder of DaDa's activity.

4.3.1. Recognition as a culturally diverse group.

This question was asked to see the comparison with how disabled artists answered the same question, albeit from a disabled person's perspective. This showed a big disparity between the arts organisations and the artists with 78% of artists 'strongly agreeing or agreeing', with 40% of the arts organisations 'agreeing', none 'strongly agreeing'. The 'neither agree nor disagree' totalled 40% of artists, and a comparator, the arts organisations was at 60%. The indication is not a dismissive one, but it is worth noting that people who do hold any form of control may not feel the need to identify with those who do not, in this case the disabled artist.

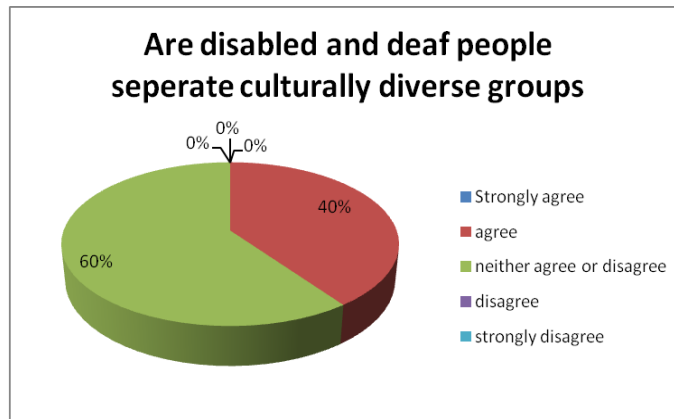


Figure 19: Are Dis/Deaf People Culturally Diverse Groups

4.3.2. DaDaFest is a Festival that Promotes Disability & Deaf Arts work within a cultural context

This was consistent with the artists responses in which 95% 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed'. The arts organisations gave a response of 20% 'strongly agreed' and 8% 'agreed.'

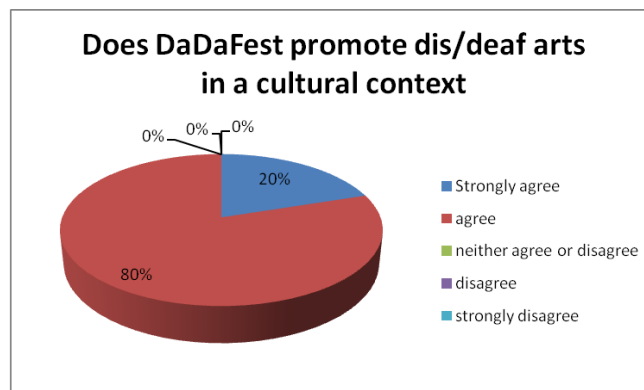


Figure 20: Does DaDaFest Promote Disability Arts in a Cultural Context

4.3.3. DaDaFest Promote Disability & Deaf Arts

The answers from the arts organisations are positive with 60% strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing with the statement. This was very similar to the artists responses.

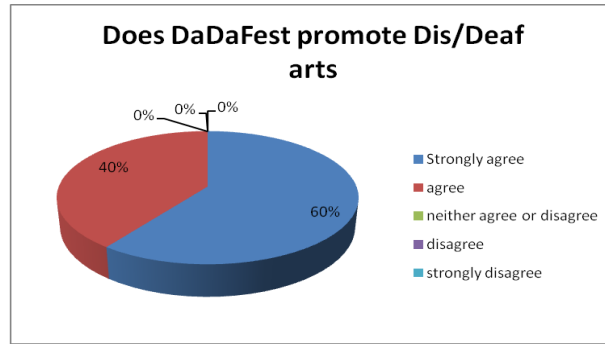


Figure 21: Does DaDaFest promote Disability & Deaf Arts

4.3.4. DaDaFest Promotes the Arts work by Disabled & Deaf Artists or companies

Similar results are seen again, but with more emphasis on agree, at 80% with 'strongly agree' on 20%. 83% of artists' strongly agreed', and 17% with 'agree.'

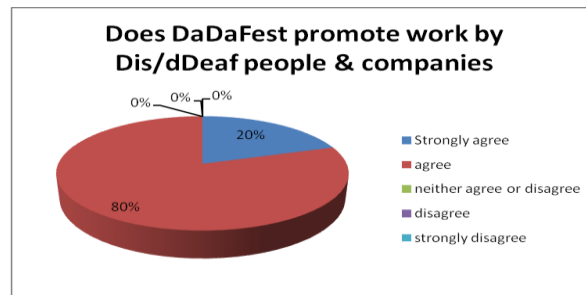


Figure 22: Does DaDaFest promote the work by Disabled people and companies

4.3.5. Would you recommend other dis/deaf artists to get involved in DaDaFest

The responses were in the agree sector, 40% 'strongly agree' and 60% 'agree', compared to 93% strongly agree of artists, with 5% on agree.

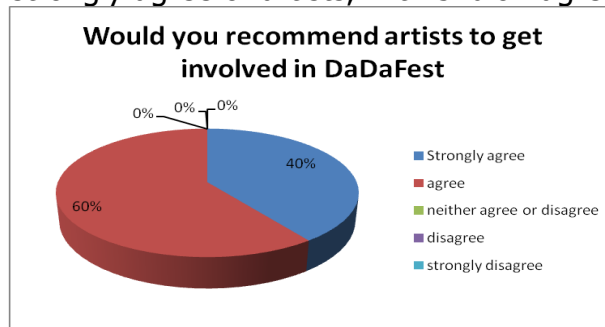


Figure 23: Would you recommend Artists to get involved with DaDaFest

4.3.6. The work of DaDaFest is an important festival and should continue to be developed.

The answers were again in the affirmative with the split as 40% 'strongly agree' to 60% 'agree'. This statement was not presented to the artists and was designed to identify the interest from arts venues and funders.

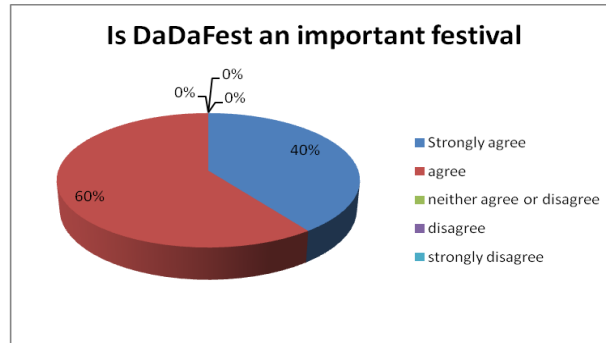


Figure 24: Is DaDaFest an Important Festival

As very little response to the arts organisations has been collated, the following tables will categorize the findings of the next two sections of the questionnaire.

4.3.7. Arts Organizations Responses: Questions 7 – 10

Question		Yes	No	No Answer	Other
7	Have you benefitted from networking at DaDaFest	60%	0	40%	0
8	Have you benefitted From Programme Opportunities	20%	60%	20%	0
9	Do you feel the Festival has increased Audience Participation	20%	20%	60%	0
10	Have you benefitted from Partnerships & Collaborations	60%	20%	20%	0

Table: Questions 7 - 10

Many of the answers in this section were left blank. There may be several reasons for this, from not knowing the work of DaDaFest in any great depth, to

not having an effective working relationship with DaDa, the host organization. Though some benefits have been gained through networking and partnership work.

4.3.8. Arts Organizations Responses: Questions 11 – 19

Question		True	False	No Answer	Don't Know
11	Is DaDaFest valued by Disabled & Deaf Communities	60%	40%	0	0
12	Is DaDaFest valued by the Arts & Cultural Industries Sector	40%	60%	0	0
13	Does DaDaFest fulfill the needs of Disabled and Deaf Artists	40%	40%	0	20%
14	Does DaDaFest help showcase the work of Disabled and Deaf Artists	100%	0	0	0
15	Does DaDaFest help raise understanding of Disability & Deaf issues	100%	0	0	0
16	Do you readily tell others of your involvement in DaDaFest	100%	0	0	0
17	DaDaFest should commission new works	100%	0	0	0
18	DaDaFest perpetuates a 'ghetto' for disabled and deaf artists	40%	60%	0	0
19	DaDaFest affirms the cultural identity of disabled and deaf people	20%	0	0	80%

Table 7: Questions 11 - 19

There were a great many affirmative responses to this section of the questionnaire, with a total consensus gained in four of the main areas of DaDaFest aims, to raise awareness, showcase art works, create new

commissions and partnerships. The question around 'ghetto' has consistently shown a mixed response with a 40% to 60% answering by these respondents.

4.4. On-Line Survey

This was developed at a rather late stage to gather a little more information on how the DaDaFest may be viewed by audiences using some of the same questions that had been designed in both the artists and arts organisations questionnaires. The survey was developed as a 'survey monkey programme' and advertised through DaDa's email newsletter with a quick turnaround rate of just 4 days. In total fourteen surveys were returned, but one was not completed properly and marked as void.

Figure:

These research questions were kept deliberately short

Number		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3	DaDaFest - Cultural Festival	85%	15%	0	0	0
4	You identify as being part of a dis/deaf culturally diverse group	83%	0	17%	0	0
5	DaDaFest promotes Disability Arts	77%	23%	0	0	0
6	You would recommend others to attend DaDaFest	62%	23%	15%	0	0
7	DaDaFest is valued by Non-Disabled/hearing communities	31%	23%	23%	23%	0

8	DaDaFest perpetuates the segregating of Disabled People	8%	8%	38%	15%	31%
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Table 8: On-Line Survey Responses

4.5. Artist's Focus Group Results

This took place in the DaDa office with nine artists, and included a note taker and a British Sign Language Interpreter. In total, sixteen people were contacted to participate therefore the over 50% response was a positive result.

4.5.1. Focus Group Mix

In total three men and six women attended, with a cultural mix of six declaring as white British, one Irish and one as Black British. Ages ranged from twenty-eight to fifty-five. All had at least five years association with DaDaFest, with five having been involved since its beginnings in 2001.

The art forms and disciplines practiced by the artists reflected more than one art skill per person with five performers, four writers, a visual artist, a film-maker, community artists a musician and an arts consultant. This is a typical mix as artists are more adept at multi-skilling in making a living in a flexible and sporadic market place.

They have had a mix of training in the arts, one having no arts training or qualifications, two having received a Certificate of Professional Development in arts workshop skills [based at Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts and established by DaDa], three had post graduate qualifications with two trained at degree level. One person did not provide any exact details saying that they had lots of qualifications and experience.

They have been involved in the arts from a range of twenty-five to five years. Their employment status varied, five stating they were freelancers with one working towards social enterprise status, one also undertaking voluntary opportunities and one also working as a community artist, two stating they worked as a volunteer. One person did not allude to any current status. Three of the artists stated they were full time in the arts, five working on a freelance basis with one undertaking voluntary work.

The researcher has not requested any breakdowns of impairment type in any of the questionnaires or surveys. This has been intentional, as to do so would be deemed medicalizing the issues and may be offensive to many disabled or deaf people who aim to move out of being labeled by their impairments alone. The one exception will be with the focus group as some of the responses were very firmly fixed from their medical identity and reflected in how they responded to questions. The focus group consisted of four Deaf people, three mental health survivors and one learning disabled person who also had a mobility impairment present, plus one non-disabled person who has worked with DaDaFest since 2005.

4.5.2. Involvement with DaDaFest

To set a context the first question asked each person in turn what was their most exciting experience of DaDaFest. This was designed to be lighthearted, but also to make them think on how they have engaged or been impacted in the past.

Answers ranged from experiences of being a curator for a photography exhibition (in 2004); through to impact of working with community and professional dancers to create work. Some of this development lasted for a number of years. One Deaf performer said that their work prior to DaDaFest was based in Liverpool's Deaf Centre on an annual pantomime run by amateurs purely for fun.

The opportunity to work in DaDaFest raised their game and they began to create serious performance works, which included a BSL work of Chekov's, The Proposal. It raised their skills and confidence, allowing them to get work outside Liverpool mainly within other Deaf communities, and even in Spain.

Other experiences raised varied from fond recollections, but some highlighted real ground breaking events such as the DaDaAwards events (started by DaDa in 2003) and one particular year in which many Deaf Arts practitioners won an award. The questions certainly achieved the right loosening up effect with all contributing equally.

The next question was more serious. There is a need in these types of environments to create an open and honest dialogue. Therefore the next topic was around the worst experiences they may have encountered in their time in DaDaFest. They had a lot to say.

One of the members was creating a dance piece based in an old furnace factory. They had used the building as an inspiration which included a well which used to collect the run-off from the smelting process. When the stage was built four days before the festival, the well was covered up and they had to change their choreography at the last minute. They felt it affected the performance: but another member said they felt it was the best performance the group (Common Ground) had ever performed.

Clearing up after their work was not a positive experience, echoed by a few artists. One person mentioned the marketing of the first International Festival in 2008. They felt badly let down by DaDaFest as things had been left too late. The other big factor that affected that particular year was the programming clash of the La Machine: a huge mechanical spider that was paraded around the

streets of Liverpool during the exact same time. This affected audience attendee figures considerably.

One person also felt let down by DaDaFest as they had failed to take up his services to organize BSL Interpreters for the events. He has offered every year for the last five years and feels ignored. One person has been involved from 2001 and had been involved each year until 2008 when they were not included. They felt left out and did not attend any events as a result. They felt that DaDaFest had started from a community based initiative and now it had become too professional with high quality; but the community must remain part of it and programme accordingly.

An artist mentioned issues they had had with some of the venues: their technicians were not very understanding of Disability issues and had actually upset her crew when setting up the production of 'Crossings'. This was echoed from experiences of another venue when the attitudes of the main staff were abusive and patronizing. Some of the venues have not been in particularly safe places and there have been some security concerns late at night, especially for those venues outside the city centre.

4.5.3. Set Questions

These questions were designed to test out some of the issues raised throughout the duration of the research and covered in the literature review. It was felt important by the researcher to ascertain if there continued to be elements of stigma or issues that concern the artists in how they are or continue to be viewed. This was a potentially challenging and offensive start to the more in depth questions, but the results revealed some very provocative responses. The questions were based around feeling stigmatized and if demeaning or offensive labeling was experienced. It was an overwhelming consensus that they lived with

issues which they felt undermined or excluded them from society at large. In this section, the focus group related very clearly to their medical conditions and how they affected their interactions with others. One person said that they regularly come across terms such as '*nutter*' or '*physcd*'; they said they felt treated like they were an axe murder. Another person echoed the sentiment and said what were once told to '*pull yourself together*', they felt that this lack of understanding did not help. They also felt that people avoided them. One person related an experience she had with the Arts Council England, in that she walked into a meeting and overheard a group of three of their workers say that '*she (I) has got a personality disorder and she's mad*'. She was only asking for people not to park in accessible parking space outside the venue.

Another member had been called '*inhuman*' as they are also a member of the Black Community, they get a '*double whammy*' and that the issues they face are double-edge due to being a disabled person. This greatly upsets them as many other culturally diverse groups are not getting included in disability issues as they are fighting this '*double oppression*'. In referring back to the section on terminology (1.2. page 7) earlier in this research document, one can surmise that language is still a negative barrier to disabled artists, (Finklestein 1993).

A Deaf focus group member had a great deal to share about how hearing people worked with them; from issues such as not taking forward their offer to work when they realized that access support was required, their unwillingness to employ or take on Sign Language Interpreters [SLI]), through to not being spoken to by the person, but noting that they always talk to the SLI first. This made them feel patronized and not respected. They felt they people didn't see their activity as a legitimate dance company, or recognize their individual status as an Arts Director, but continued to be viewed only as a deaf person. To get points across one person said that have to use their voice more as people are not willing to work in sign language. Another Deaf member said that even when

in a position of authority like teaching or leading dance workshops, they have noted that people will not ask her for help, people just do not take her advice, but refer to others, often less qualified. Someone else observed that Deaf people are thought of as uneducated, not intelligent as they don't use their voices: this they feel lowers their status. This is especially true when people start to shout to try and make them heard, failing to grasp that they required a BSLI. One person observed that they get worried when doing presentations that it won't sound right and they will get criticized. This in turn has an effect on confidence levels.

One member disclosed as a person with a learning disability, once when he needed to explain this, people started shouting instead of just talking to him. Other thoughts were a bit more general: *'mainstream is very patronizing, and work is not judged on artistic ability, as the focus stays on your disability'*. One person mentioned how the media portray disabled artists,

"With disabled artists, they always mention the wheelchair or other adaptations; they wouldn't say a (non-disabled) comedian had to stand to deliver his comedy"

Someone also said that they too can be guilty of making assumptions about other disabled people's lives (Models of Disability 2.1. P. 70). One artist who debuted at DaDaFest in 2001 came to use a computer. He is a wheelchair user and has an impairment that affects his motor skills and speech. They immediately set to showing him how to work the computer not knowing he had a doctorate in Computer Science. They acknowledged that they were guilty of also judging; 'We can all be guilty of making assumptions!'

The subject had the focus group quite animated and to dispel the negative that seemed to dominate the meeting, the question was raised if anything had changed over the last ten years. One person observed that with DaDaFest,

people actually talk about the arts work and not the politics and it was heralded as *'good and a change from the past'*.

Others really struggled to answer this: one person expressed that there *'must be some'*. One person felt that attitudes towards Disabled People were deteriorating compared to the early part of the last decade, but they did feel that things have become, *'much worst in the last two years'*. A viewpoint was expressed that they felt people viewed disabled people as, *'money grabbing for equipment or always on benefits'*.

One member felt that legislation for mental health users has become much worse. This is expounded by articles in the mainstream press which make them feel bullied and seen as vicious people with an *'immediate attachment to violence'*. With the new mental health act, people with any personality disorder, can be sent to hospital, *'just in case'*.

One person expressed that there have been some *'sporadic instances of success'*, namely DaDaFest in that it is an *'isolated success story'*. With future UK legislation, the Single Equality strand (refer to 2.2.2 P 25) was seen as a threat, as many individual groups may lose their (cultural) identity.

Someone mentioned unemployment and observed as they lived in London last year; that there was a *'great split between north and south of England in terms of the employment of disabled/deaf people'*. He noted that lots of Deaf people are in work there, whereas in Liverpool, around 80% of deaf people are unemployed. He went on to say that he felt attitudes in the North were still in the *'dark ages'* and at least twenty years behind the South.

One person made a comparison to gay rights and disability issues. They felt that both communities had similar concerns ten years ago, issues such as

discrimination to lesbian and gay people. This community group were discriminated against, but;

'Now their rights have really moved on and they have much more equality. Ten years ago it was so different; when you compare this to disabled/deaf people things are still the same.'

Education was picked up as a topic, for example the current younger deaf generation 'is weak because of inclusion'; it was felt that a deaf school environment gave Deaf people a clear sense of identity and a '*strong culture*', which is much less now. Through mainstream and inclusive school practices the young Deaf people have lost confidence and identity.

'Inclusion is good for social stuff, but not for education'

Continuing on some deaf issues, one person felt that the, '*Deaf (people) aren't involved in arts, (it's) hard to get in. I feel more outside*'. They observed that younger deaf people are more involved with the digital age and technologically minded, and as such they are less involved or interested in fine arts & performance. It could be that there are not the opportunities: education should create these. They certainly felt that things are worse with many more Deaf community members '*taking to drink and giving up*'.

Attention was then turned to artist development and specifically if DaDaFest holds any value for them. One person felt that this was a bit of a question mark. Their involvement has been through a dance company as Artistic Director, so they have always had regular work outside the time frame of the festival. They did acknowledge that it had been very useful, but limited to their particular work.

Meeting other dis/d/Deaf artists was of constant value from personal meetings to being inspired by their art, through to the experiences and skills that working in the festival has created. There were also some comments about how people have valued being part of a success story and watching it grow. The festival is deemed a good place to *'meet other people, see their work and move you on'*. It was felt that over the years the standard of work has grown and really improved, especially visual arts. The networking is highly valued as it can link new people and allow them to become aware of new ways of working, some of which has created new collaborations and partnerships. This takes away the isolation the artists.

"I have valued and learnt from the opportunities given by DaDaFest"

There was some mention of deaf arts work in different countries. In Spain the culture is more visual than here in UK: this is seen as a direct contrast which is perceived as more word or aural based. Likewise a deaf film festival in Reims is very well attended by deaf people. The mainstream culture often excludes deaf people through its focus on humour and play on words. There was a feel in some respects that Europe was generally ahead when it comes to deaf arts activity. Not so with disability culture.

People have felt that the festival is very useful for individual and freelance workers, questions were raised over companies. One company member did actually say that it has allowed them to grow in confidence and try out new works as there was a place to present work to a peer audience before embarking on a mainstream tour. One person said that they had been requested by people in London to bring the work to them after it had been in DaDaFest. He was unable to do so due to lack of resources.

One element that has been particularly welcomed is the emergence of Young DaDaFest which has grown from forty young people in 2003 to over five hundred

in last year's festival. This gives young disabled people a voice in the arts and a sense of belonging through an associated strong cultural identity. This is important for their confidence as it reaffirms a,

'Strong and positive identity against the prevailing negative stereotypes'

The question was asked if they felt DaDaFest had an effect on other disabled people's lives. People agreed that it gives an opportunity to identify themselves as dis/d/Deaf people; a '*coming out*'. One person felt it challenged the '*status quo*' in that they could voice issues from a very public place and this should be encouraged. Notions of the work being produced to challenge inequality came across quite strongly in this part of the discussion.

"People will never change if people sit quietly. DaDaFest has screamed out the issues which affect our lives."

Another aspect of this was picked up with Young DaDaFest as all members are very pleased that it has grown and really trained young people to take charge of their events.

'Everyone listens, even Phil Redmond was there and Paul McCartney's brother. They hear us'.

Moving the debate on, the focus came to identifying if the artists felt there was any indirect affect the festival may have. It is all well and good feeling included in disability and deaf communities, but how do other people perceive the work or become affected by it, if at all? One artist was performing in Sefton Park Palm House, Liverpool in 2006. Mothers from her toddlers group had heard that she was performing here as part of the festival, so attended. They viewed her work

and *'saw our culture, which really surprised them'*. There was dismay that schools or other groups hear about DaDaFest, but don't come to events; the curiosity and interest is there and they will, *'ask questions about it'*, but fail to get involved.

It also has an impact for other dis/deaf people who may not have identified or experienced positive notions of disability. The work on show may create a catalyst to start to question and open their minds to other ways of seeing themselves and how they fit into the world.

The group discussed the impact actually made on the lives of disabled people. People agreed that it gave them opportunities they wouldn't have had; a chance to take part. Before the festival there were few opportunities for disability art to be viewed in mainstream venues. *'Artists like Laurence Clark came from nothing, debuted at DaDaFest and is now working all over (the UK).'* People felt the festival certainly increased artists ambition, *'people can get employment and can become freelance.'* Another example was mentioned of a poet who had become withdrawn after acquiring his impairment, but in being encouraged to come and perform at the festival, he turned his life around and is now involved as a poet *'all over the place'*.

The artists were next asked about the effect the festival may have on non-disabled and hearing people, if any. The response was immediate,

"It is hugely important that non- disabled and hearing people see the plethora of talent on this platform."

Another commented that it gives opportunity for them to meet disabled people in a positive way, creating an opening through social events. In Liverpool's Deaf Centre, they have now started a choir after being inspired by last year's festival,

to such an extent they are thinking of trying to get on Britain's Got Talent. There is also hearing people adopting sign language, *'they are adopting our culture'*. This was described as a positive thing, but immediately someone retorted, *'is not that cultural piracy?'*

Non-disabled people do view the work as high quality. This was said by one of the main arts organizations in the city, previously the work was not seen as high quality, but increasingly people are affected by it with the added factor of having,

'their perceptions changed, and their attitudes towards disability.'

Someone stated that they thought of the festival as, *'a massive awareness raising vehicle: (it has) helped people to consider others.'* One of the main factors of the festival is that the all its work is automatically accessible, which has had a knock-on effect to how the artists produce their work, *'(It) makes me think when I do things - is this accessible to everyone?'* When this happens a change can happen with people starting to, *'care and consider more and think about others.'* One artist explained how seeing her on stage had an effect on her immediate family, all of whom are non-disabled people,

"My children think my work is a hobby, but when they see a full audience and me onstage it impacts them and raises my status in their eyes."

The involvement of the venue and its staff was important; often they are staffed with non-disabled people who may not have come across disability issues before. It is therefore an important *'awareness raising vehicle'*, which can be enormously positive too and as one person said, *'it affects them and they change.'* An example of this has been with the Everyman/Playhouse Theatres Trust who have

now trained key front of house staff in basic BSL as a direct result of hosting a Deaf Culture event as part of DaDaFest in 2005.

We went on to look at issues around the impact of the festival to key funders and stakeholders, Liverpool City Council and Arts Council England particularly. One thing that was felt was that the funders gave you the money and then you had no more relationship with them,

'Funders give you the money and that's it. A ticked box.'

One member detailed that they had tried to set up a dance performance and had recruited people. The City Council refused to assist them with funds and alluded to DaDaFest and said they didn't need to do the work, *'we don't need it as there's DaDaFest'*. This was not a criticism of DaDaFest, but more of a way of acknowledging how others viewed the work of disabled artists and associated communities are put under the banner of one disability festival. Someone went on to say that they felt DaDaFest raised the profile of Liverpool, and it is seen as a big contribution to the cultural life of the city. Many, *'other places wish they had it.'*

A member said we need to congratulate DaDa as this type of work is not happening elsewhere, and we have, *'kept going for ten years'*. A couple of artists said they were thinking of moving back to Newcastle where there is a strong Deaf community. They decided to stay in Liverpool as it is, *'a good place to be as an artist.'* This led to a few mentioning other places, and it was expressed that deaf people in London complain about lack of [arts] opportunities. *'They need to make it happen.'* Someone brought up about Liberty Festival that takes place in London one day a year. They had only recently heard about it. It has a different feel to DaDaFest with the London Mayors Office funding it. It is a

different set up as it takes place on just one day, whereas DaDaFest which takes place over a number of weeks each year.

This concluded the set questions, but the focus group still had more to say about the festival.

The group was familiar in how DaDaFest has developed over the years and its international focus. Artists felt that they wanted to create links, *'with different parts of the world, to work outside of England.'* There is an International Guild of Disabled Performers that has been established as a network from New Zealand. The person administering it just can't find resources to continue it and it was suggested that DaDaFest should take it on, particularly as it has a huge international membership.

A deaf member of the group mentioned that there is and always has been a problem with Disability and Deaf distinct cultures, *'disability is hearing. Deaf culture is different. No sound.'* They felt this made non-disabled people view them and their issues in the same way, *'when they are not'*. Another deaf member picked up on this and said they felt excluded with word based humour, in that *'deaf (people) can't laugh, (the) culture is different even with an interpreter'*. It was felt that people are unable to appreciate this difference. Someone else mentioned that they felt Black culture was more recognized, whilst, *'deaf culture isn't'*.

A different Deaf person mentioned that they felt DaDaFest has helped to promote deaf culture. A non deaf member of the group felt that this was getting to be a sensitive area of discussion and wanted to remind people how the disability arts culture in the early 1990's separated out Mental Health survivors from other disability arts and set up on their own, they wanted to be seen as, *'ill*

people who would get better' and not identify as disabled. This argument is the same type of thing,

"DaDaFest has brought us together culturally and promoted the social model of disability, we are getting stuck into a medical model of thinking.

All issues present different cultural aspects, but linked together we are a force to be reckoned with."

One of the deaf members agreed that deaf and disability should continue to work together on DaDaFest, '(there was) *no blending years ago, (we're) more blended now, (I) think that it's important to support each other.'*

The last comment made picked up on the openness and some criticisms that they have experienced during their years of working with DaDaFest,

"People [disabled/deaf artists] relate to DaDaFest like a family; they might bitch and complain, but if it is attacked publically or directly then the positive comes out."

5.0. Conclusions

The findings of the research have, by and large been able to endorse the original aims of the festival. These aims will be examined in turn.

5.1. DaDaFest: Arts Created Within a Cultural Context

The three surveys have all shown similar results, with some differences, for example over cultural identity with the on-line survey and artist questionnaires revealing 100% and 75% as affirmative responses. The results certainly support the views of Masefield (2006), Finkelstein (1993), Oliver (1994) and Barnes (2004) in how the 'Social Model of disability' has created a sense of identity for people who view themselves as 'culturally diverse', which in turn led to the development of a Disability Arts Movement. The results indicate that this is still of enormous value to the beneficiaries of the festival: that they want to partake in arts that reflect disability and deaf issues.

The areas about the value of disability arts identity was consistent across all three questionnaire responses, though the focus group debate certainly made more mention of a distinct deaf culture, though debate moved people to understanding that they were stronger together.

The question around ghettoising has provoked a range of reactions and no clear consensus can be ascertained. Many people feel that DaDaFest does not perpetuate a ghetto with results at 53% of artists, 46% from the on-line survey, and 60% of arts organisations; however many are undecided, 38% from the on-line survey, and 30% of artists. Some did feel that the festival did perpetuate this notion; 40% of arts organisations, 16% from the on-line survey, with 14% of artists. The lower figures with the artists may reflect that they create art and are therefore more aware and involved in the issues than perhaps audience members. The arts organisation surveys have such little return that perhaps not too much should be read into this figure.

As with all data, perceptions on what is meant and how one may view such concepts can vary enormously. The answers have not provoked a response as to whether this is a negative or positive aspect to the festival.

Consensus around values and work of the festival in terms of Disability Arts, showcasing art and promotion is consistent across all respondents. Respondents have engaged willingly to complete the questionnaire, and one may surmise that they do already rate the work of DaDaFest and value it.

5.2. Employment Opportunities

Questions were grouped around aspects of key employment indicators pertinent for the working life of artists. The artist questionnaires are the main source of information in this section as they are the people with direct experience who can also tell if there has been any effect on them in their arts careers. The focus group is too exposed as a method to glean such confidential information.

On the whole, the results are extremely positive, however mention should be made that these are artists who have chosen to engage with the process and as such are likely to have a more positive experience of DaDaFest. However, the answers do indicate that they have a commitment to the festival; a point that was endorsed especially from the focus group.

Networking, Profile Raising, and Increased Income yielded very positive results, with 94% percent of artists agreeing that they had directly benefitted from working at DaDaFest. The point on raised income was a very encouraging one, as this can indicate that artists have possibly gained financial independence and self-sufficiency. However, 28% of the artists did not complete this section which may show that over a quarter have not been able to achieve sustainable incomes.

To surmise the research has been able to test out these two main questions and find that DaDaFest has achieved by and large these aims. There is still some

way to go, especially in how arts organisations and funders may perceive the Disability & Deaf arts work, but the findings do endorse a strong sense of cultural diversity, with strong values aligned to DaDaFest especially demonstrated through word of mouth, and a means to promote the work of disabled & d/Deaf artists.

6.0. Recommendations

As a response to the research findings, a series of recommendations have been suggested on ways to disseminate and sustain the learning gained.

Some of these recommendations will need to be developed within the remit of DaDa, but other may be developed through partnerships with key Arts funders, agencies and partners.

- Develop the scope of the research within this year's festival, to artists, stakeholders and audiences, using the information collated within this research as baseline data.
- Recruit the services of an independent researcher with no prior experience of working on the festival to ensure unbiased and objective results.
- Develop more focus group analysis with an independent researcher, and widen the scope to ensure that more disaffected members of the disability community, (such as those with learning difficulties) have the opportunity to contribute.
- Develop one-to-one interviews with the key funders and other arts organizations.

- Ensure the values and ideals are maintained, promoted and enhanced in subsequent festival programmes and through continual on-line presence
- Disseminate findings of research to key funding agencies, arts organisations and disability arts development agencies

7.0. Reflections on Research

There have been many learning points for the researcher gleaned over the months they have been working on this document. As DaDaFest is in its tenth year, the impacts of its achievements have often been overwhelming. It is incredibly difficult to remain objective when so much of my working life has been invested into making something a success, especially a programme of activities that can change lives and enhance well-being.

However, the learning gained has been incredibly productive. The aims of DaDaFest are multiple and this research focused on just two of them: to test the value of Disability & Deaf cultural identity and its place within an inclusive society, and if the festival has encouraged employment opportunities for Disabled and Deaf Artists. The findings have endorsed both elements to a much higher degree than anticipated. This has had an added effect on the researcher to glean more information and start to build more of a business case to support the work and ensure more and more people can benefit from its activities.

However, as with everything, there are some elements of the research which would be developed differently. It was when leading the focus group that the researcher realised how compromised they could be in gaining information from the members. The group members could perceive the researcher as a future employer and be eager to impress. This was certainly not helped by her sense of loyalty and subjectivity. In hindsight the focus group would have been better

served by having a different researcher to facilitate the discussions. It was a highly enjoyable experience as so many positive comments were expressed.

The researcher would have valued one-to-one conversations and feels that this is a gap in the report. The timing could not be helped and the information gained to date can help take this research a little further and I will be adding this information at a later date.

8.0 Research Limitations

The researcher is also the instigator and driving force behind DaDaFest and as such has been working to develop its work from humble beginnings. It could therefore be assumed that she is extremely passionate and predisposed in being able to identify positive outcomes with the research. This factor must be borne in mind when examining the results of the research.

The questionnaires coincided with a time of 'purdah' as the general election was announced early in April 2010. This had an effect by not being able to gain interviews with key arts officers in both the Arts Council and Local Authority, especially as the researcher was also standing as a local council member. The planned one-to-one interviews did not take place, and few funders returned their questionnaires. This has had an impact on the scope of information that the researcher was aiming for.

The focus group was made of extremely vocal members who had a great deal to impart. The researcher had to be aware to not lead any of the questioning and allow easy flow of conversation from the group members. This was not easy when criticisms of the festival emerged and once or twice the researcher did start to justify or explain reasons. This was quickly picked up by researcher who

then reminded the group that they had to work, with their assistance at remaining neutral and refraining from further comment.

Illustration 2: Deborah A Williams: 'Let My People Go' a new commission on the life Harriet Tubman DaDaFest 2007



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10.0 Appendices**Appendix 1: Unemployment Figures in USA & Australia**

This is not only a UK problem: in the USA employment rates for disabled people in 2005 show that thirty-seven percent of disabled people were unemployed compared with seventy-four percent of non-disabled people. The population of disabled people in the USA accounts for 15.1% or 41.3 million people. [www.census.gov/hhes/www/disability/GQdisability.pdf 15.05.2010]. In Australia statistics show that in 2003, 53.2% of people with disabilities participated in the labour force as compared to eight-six percent of those without a disability. This has been sourced from the 'Australian Human Rights Commission', in which it also states that twenty percent of Australians 'have a disability' or 3.96 million [www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/employment_inquiry 15.05.2010].

Appendix 2: Arts Council Taking Part Survey 2008/09

The employment data should help provide some indication to show if the equalities legislation is assisting in creating opportunities for disabled people to work in the arts. Out of a total of 15,700 staff, just 398 or three percent of staff declared themselves as 'disabled/deaf people'. This has grown ever so slightly in that in 2007/2008, the total staff was 15,036 with 321 or two percent of the staff disabled. The survey delves even deeper with data on contractual staff, a large proportion of these being freelance artists or practitioners. In a total of 45,422 where 627 declared as disabled people or one percent of the total, compared with 39,830 in 2007/2008, in which 643 or two percent were declared as disabled people. On the face of it, it appears that more disabled people are working more regularly with an increase of one percent on 2007/2008 figures, but the number of contractual staff has gone down on previous year's figures.

In the survey taken in 2008/09, people determined to be living with a 'limiting disability/illness' attended at least one arts event in the past year to be at 52.7%, compared to adults with a 'non-limiting disability/illness' or non-disabled people at 70.1%. In the same survey, 41.7% of adults with a 'limiting disability/illness' participated in at least one type of arts activity in the past year compared with 45.8% of non-disabled adults. It shows a statistical difference, but it is much less marked than the difference in rates of arts attendance. This showed that of the adults with a limiting disability/illness who were not current attendees, 31.2% would like to attend the arts, compared with 40.2% of non-disabled adults. The reasons for non-attendance are likely to be multiple from being too ill to leave home through to barriers to participation in terms of lack of access support, such signed performances, no audio description, or other factors that can include lack of transport, drop off points or even the cost.

Appendix 3: Accessible Formats

The following formats have been offered to all respondents:

- i. Large print – experience has shown that font styles and sizes need to be specified by person requesting them
- ii. Large print with pictures and symbols – mainly for learning disabled people
- iii. Braille
- iv. Computer disc containing the file in plain text format
- v. Audiotape
- vi. Videotape with plain, spoken language, audio description and British Sign Language.
- vii. Phone calls and face-to-face meetings will also be available alternatives to written communication.
- viii. Note-Taker

Appendix 4 Copy of Disability and d/Deaf Artists Questionnaires

NB: Please contact the office if you require this form in a different format

Part A] Personal Information – this will be kept confidential

Name:.....

Gender: **Female** **Male** **Prefer not to say [*please circle*]**

Post Code:.....

Do you consider yourself to be: [*please circle*]

Disabled Person Deaf Person Non-Disabled person Rather not say

other [please state].....

What do you consider your ethnic background to be: i.e. white British etc

.....

Rather not say.....

Age group – please circle: 16 – 25, 26 – 35, 36 – 45, 46 – 55, over 55

What are your Art Disciplines?

.....
.....
....

How often have you taken part in DaDaFest stating earliest date if possible

.....
.....
....

Part B]

Please underline or circle the most appropriate answer in the following statements:

1. You identify as being part of a disability or deaf culturally diverse community group

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. DaDaFest is a festival that promotes Disability & Deaf Arts within a Cultural Context

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. DaDaFest promotes Disability & Deaf Arts

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. DaDaFest promotes the arts work by Disabled or Deaf artists or companies

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. You would recommend other Disabled or Deaf artists to get involved in DaDaFest

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

Part C]

Have you benefited in being involved in DaDaFest in any of the following ways? *Please provide details against all your answers*

6. Networking:

how?.....

.

7. Work opportunities:

how?.....

.

8. Increasing income:

how?.....

.

9. Profile raising:

how?.....

.

10. Increasing employment opportunities:

how?.....

Other:

how?.....

.

Part D]

In the following statements, please indicate if you feel the statement is true or false by circling 'true or false' or making your own comments

11. DaDaFest is valued by dis/deaf communities

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

12. DaDaFest fulfills the needs of dis/deaf artists

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

13. DaDaFest helps to show case work created by dis/deaf artists

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

14. DaDaFest has helped me gain further other work opportunities

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

15. I readily tell others that I have been involved in DaDaFest

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

16. DaDaFest should commission new arts works and collaborations

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

17. DaDaFest perpetuates the 'ghettoising ' of disabled/deaf artists

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

18. DaDaFest affirms the cultural identity of Disability & Deaf people

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

Please feel free to add or make any further comments:

.....

..

.....

..

Thank you for taking time to answer these questions

Please return completed forms by 18th April 2010 to

DaDa: Disability & Deaf Arts

The Bluecoat, School Lane, Liverpool, L1 3BX

email to: ruth@dadahello.com, Fax: 0151 708 9533

Appendix 5: Copy of Arts Organisations Questionnaires



NB: Please contact the office if you require this form in a different format

Part A] Contact Information

Organisation:.....

Main aims of the company:.....
.....
.....

Date established:.....

Relationship to DaDaFest:

Name of person completing form:.....

Position in company:.....

Email contact:.....

Post Code:.....

What are your companies main Art Activities?

.....
.....
....

How have you been involved in DaDaFest and from when, stating earliest date if possible?

.....
.....
....

Part B]

Please underline or circle the most appropriate answer in the following statements:

- 1. Do you acknowledge disability and deaf people are separate culturally diverse community groups?**

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree
 Strongly Disagree

- 2. DaDaFest is a festival that promotes Disability & Deaf Arts within a Cultural Context**

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree
Strongly Disagree

3. DaDaFest promotes Disability & Deaf Arts

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree
Strongly Disagree

4. DaDaFest promotes the arts work by Disabled or Deaf artists or companies

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree
Strongly Disagree

5. You would recommend other Disabled or Deaf artists to get involved in DaDaFest

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree
Strongly Disagree

6. The work of DaDaFest is an important festival event and should continue to be developed

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree or Disagree Disagree
Strongly Disagree

Part C]

7. Have you benefited in being involved in DaDaFest in any of the following ways? *Please provide details against all your answers*

8. Networking:
how?.....

9. Programming opportunities:
how?.....

.

10. Increasing audience participation?.....

11. Collaboration and partnering arts work for the festival:
how?.....

.

12. Other:.....

Part D]

In the following statements, please indicate if you feel the statement is true or false by circling 'true or false' or making your own comments

13. DaDaFest is valued by disabled/deaf communities

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

14. DaDaFest is valued by the wider arts & cultural industries sector

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

15. DaDaFest fulfills the needs of disabled/deaf artists

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

16. DaDaFest helps to show case work created by disabled/deaf artists

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

17. DaDaFest has helped raise understanding of disability and deaf issues

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

18. We readily tell others that we have been involved or support DaDaFest

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

19. DaDaFest should commission new arts works and collaborations

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

20. DaDaFest perpetuates the 'ghettoising' of disabled/deaf artists

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

21. DaDaFest affirms the cultural identity of Disability & Deaf people

TRUE FALSE

OTHER:.....

Please feel free to add or make any further comments:

.....

..

.....

..

.....

**Thank you for taking time to answer these questions
Please return completed forms by 23rd April 2010 to**

DaDa: Disability & Deaf Arts

**The Bluecoat,
School Lane,
Liverpool,
L1 3BX**

email to: ruth@dadahello.com, Fax: 0151 708 9533

**For more information on DaDaFest visit
www.nwdaf.co.uk and www.dadahello.com**

Appendix 6: Samples of On-Line Survey

Browse Responses

Displaying 15 of 15 respondents

Next » Jump To:

Response Type:

Normal Response

Collector:

DaDaFest Questionnaire
(Web Link)

Custom Value:

empty

IP Address:

90.203.123.26

Response Started:

Monday, May 17, 2010 8:20:09 PM

Response Modified:

Wednesday, May 19, 2010 6:46:40 PM

1. Please tell us the following personal information: This will be kept confidential

Name: -

Gender: - man

Male: - ☒

Post code: -

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person: - yes

What do you consider your ethnic background to be (e.g white british): - white British

36-45: - ☒

2. How often have you been to a DaDaFest event? (Please state from earliest date if possible).

I have been to 5 which I have performed at 4 of them and the first performance that I did for DaDaFest was at Cream in Liverpool.

3. DaDaFest is a festival that promotes Disability & Deaf Arts within a cultural context?

Strongly Agree

4. You identify as being part of a disability or deaf culturally diverse community group?

Strongly agree

5. DaDaFest Promotes Disability & Deaf Arts

Agree

6. You would recommend other people to attend a DaDaFest event?

Strongly Agree

7. Do you think DaDaFest is valued by non-disabled/hearing communities

Disagree

8. DaDaFest perpetuates the segregating of disabled and deaf people

Agree

9. Please feel free to add any further comments

I would like more gigs in proper venues and with disabled and none disabled performers performing together.

10. Would you like to be added to the DaDa-Disbaility & Deaf Arts newsletter?

No Response

Browse Responses

Displaying 14 of 15 respondents

« Prev Next » Jump To: 14 Go »

Response Type:

Normal Response

Collector:

DaDaFest Questionnaire
(Web Link)

Custom Value:

empty

IP Address:

87.252.46.200

Response Started:

Wednesday, May 19, 2010 10:51:33 AM

Response Modified:

Wednesday, May 19, 2010 10:55:00 AM

1. Please tell us the following personal information: This will be kept confidential

Name: -

Gender: - male

Post code: -

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person: - yes

46-55: - yes

2. How often have you been to a DaDaFest event? (Please state from earliest date if possible).

I think the first Dada-Fest was in 2001

3. DaDaFest is a festival that promotes Disability & Deaf Arts within a cultural context?

Strongly Agree

4. You identify as being part of a disability or deaf culturally diverse community group?

Strongly agree

5. DaDaFest Promotes Disability & Deaf Arts

Strongly Agree

6. You would recommend other people to attend a DaDaFest event?

Strongly Agree

7. Do you think DaDaFest is valued by non-disabled/hearing communities

Agree

8. DaDaFest perpetuates the segregating of disabled and deaf people

Neither Agree or Disagree

9. Please feel free to add any further comments

I think Dada-Fest provides an important opportunity for disabled and deaf people to come together and share our art

10. Would you like to be added to the DaDa-Disbaility & Deaf Arts newsletter?

Yes please, this is my email address: - editor@disabilityartsonline.org.uk

Browse Responses

Displaying 12 of 15 respondents

« Prev Next » Jump To: 12 Go »

Response Type:

Normal Response

Collector:

DaDaFest Questionnaire
(Web Link)

Custom Value:

empty

IP Address:

92.28.182.185

Response Started:

Tuesday, May 18, 2010 6:09:51 PM

Response Modified:

Tuesday, May 18, 2010 6:12:15 PM

1. Please tell us the following personal information: This will be kept confidential

Name: -

Female: - Yes

Post code: -

A non disabled person: - Yes

What do you consider your ethnic background to be (e.g white british): - Mixed white asian

26-35: - Yes

2. How often have you been to a DaDaFest event? (Please state from earliest date if possible).

Once

3. DaDaFest is a festival that promotes Disability & Deaf Arts within a cultural context?

Agree

4. You identify as being part of a disability or deaf culturally diverse community group?

Neither agree or disagree

5. DaDaFest Promotes Disability & Deaf Arts

Strongly Agree

6. You would recommend other people to attend a DaDaFest event?

Agree

7. Do you think DaDaFest is valued by non-disabled/hearing communities

Disagree

8. DaDaFest perpetuates the segregating of disabled and deaf people

Neither Agree or Disagree

9. Please feel free to add any further comments

No Response

10. Would you like to be added to the DaDa-Disbaility & Deaf Arts newsletter?

No Response

1. Please tell us the following personal information: This will be kept confidential

Name: -

Gender: - male

Post code: -

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person: - yes

What do you consider your ethnic background to be (e.g white british): - white english

Over 55: - over 55

2. How often have you been to a DaDaFest event? (Please state from earliest date if possible).

since 2003

3. DaDaFest is a festival that promotes Disability & Deaf Arts within a cultural context?

Strongly Agree

4. You identify as being part of a disability or deaf culturally diverse community group?

Strongly agree

5. DaDaFest Promotes Disability & Deaf Arts

Strongly Agree

6. You would recommend other people to attend a DaDaFest event?

Strongly Agree

7. Do you think DaDaFest is valued by non-disabled/hearing communities

Neither Agree or Disagree

8. DaDaFest perpetuates the segregating of disabled and deaf people

Neither Agree or Disagree

9. Please feel free to add any further comments

DaDaFest is valued by non disabled /hearing communities when they actually attend DaDaFest Events . In the last eight years DaDaFest has made a huge transition from its embryonic local stage to its now International profile . If DaDaFest is to maintain this massive development and embed its concept in the minds of non disabled and Deaf community its vital that funding is maintained to enable DaDaFest to progress.

10. Would you like to be added to the DaDa-Disbaility & Deaf Arts newsletter?

No Response

Appendix 7: Focus Group Questions

21st May 2010 - Focus Group Questions

1] To test if DaDaFest increases employment opportunities for Disabled/deaf artists

- Do people get opportunities to showcase, to get further work opportunities, to increase skills, to network and profile themselves?

- Are disabled artists/practitioners getting opportunities elsewhere
- 2] To test the validity of promoting a Festival of Disability & Deaf arts
- Do we need to keep on separating our work as disability and deaf art
 - Does this perpetuate a ghetto
 - What are the main ways DaDaFest contributes to dis/deaf culture – if at all.

Intro's:

Who's who and what do you do in your art?

How have you been involved in DaDaFest

What is the most exciting experience/opportunity you have had at DaDaFest?

What is the worst experience you have had at DaDaFest?

1. Do you ever feel stigmatised as a disabled/deaf person
2. What words or phrases make you feel this way?
3. Have you had any arts training?
4. What value has DaDaFest had in the development of your work?
5. Do you feel that DaDaFest has an impact indirectly on dis/deaf people going into the arts – any examples?
6. What do you feel is the most important contribution that DaDaFest makes to:
 - a. The lives of disabled/deaf people
 - b. The lives of non disabled /hearing people
 - c. The impact on funders and key stakeholder
 - d. The arts organisations and sector at large
7. What training either specific arts training or business training have you had
8. What further training, if any do you feel you may need

Open discussion:

Other aspects of the festival and how DDF can contribute to future work opportunities

Appendix 8: Focus Group Attendees

Denise Armstrong	Dancer/ Choreographer
Barry Avison	Performer
Faye Christiansen	Performer/Writer
Anne Cunningham	Film-maker

Simeon Hart	Arts Director
Steph Hugan	Volunteer & Participant
Pat Joliat	Performer and BSLI
Julie McNamara	Performer, Singer, Director, Playwright etc
Peter Ogunsiji	Visual Artist

Appendix 9: Comments from DaDaFest Questionnaires: May 2010

'Seeing other peoples work. Meetings others to discuss projects, ideas and information'

' It is a solid and credible accolade which is beginning to have UK wide recognition'

'Gives me a stronger connection with the North West'

'Gets me out of the house'

DaDaFest certianly played a key role in helping me secure arts council funding'

'It was an important step for me to show my work to an audience largely comprised of disabled people. Wanted peer critique'.

'I think that DaDaFest is an important event and should have as much support as possible to ensure its continued success.'

'DaDaFest pulled me from comparative obscurity reaffirmed my belief in myself – gave me an opportunity to perform and develop

my work. It's the only platform that provides such an opportunity for a major group of excluded people. Young DaDaFest is now reaching out to young deaf and disabled people and giving them role models to aspire to.'

'I am always looking forward to work with DaDaFest in the near future every year there is any opportunity available. Many thanks to all the wonderful staffs in DaDaFest who makes this opportunity happen for every artist.'

'I think DaDa in future organise travels to other international festivals for artist's exchange.'

'DaDaFest has help me gain much more understanding and experience.'

'Fabulous organisation. Has raised profile of lots of artists, skills and confidence has developed as well.'

'DaDaFest helps to promote mainstreaming on our own terms as proud Dis/Deaf artists. This echoes the examples of feminist and black artists.'

'I believe that because of the way DaDaFest is promoted it raises the cultural identity of Deaf & disabled. It proves that disabled people can work and operate on equal terms with able bodied arts.'

'I strongly would like to collaborate/ partner and network with DaDa on the new project I am still designing and developing to

support/promote talented disabled artists in the area of music and signing to be packaged as a Talent TV programme.'

'I think that DaDaFest is a valuable way for disabled artists to self promote, however there is limited resources to move beyond the region and that can be the worst part of getting profiled in the festival. So maybe it's not less that is needed but more, and a wider context than deaf and disabled. Hopefully the engagement with capital of culture will open some doors at to where the next few years may lead.'

'It is important that we constantly work to ensure this (ghettoising, my addition) doesn't happen. It is easy (it happens here in the north east constantly that we are written off- I think it should be DaDafest plus (I know you kind of do that already and it's growing stronger)- i.e. working with the non disabled venues (ACE does say 'great art for everyone' so we should be there anyway, but too frequently aren't)) to really help professionalize them year-round so DaDaFest yes absolutely – show them who we are, what we make etc and how bloody good it is! And then 'hold their hand' where necessary to take 'em through it year round so it is a constant strand of their thinking. That way the festival becomes perhaps a celebration of the best-past, present and future - perhaps highlighting certain areas, or seed commissioning new work prior to the 'big tour' of it, awards ceremonies and general good times plus the campaigning. Keep at it especially through the coming lean times with government and arts council.'