



Learning Highlights

2024

Nottingham Contemporary

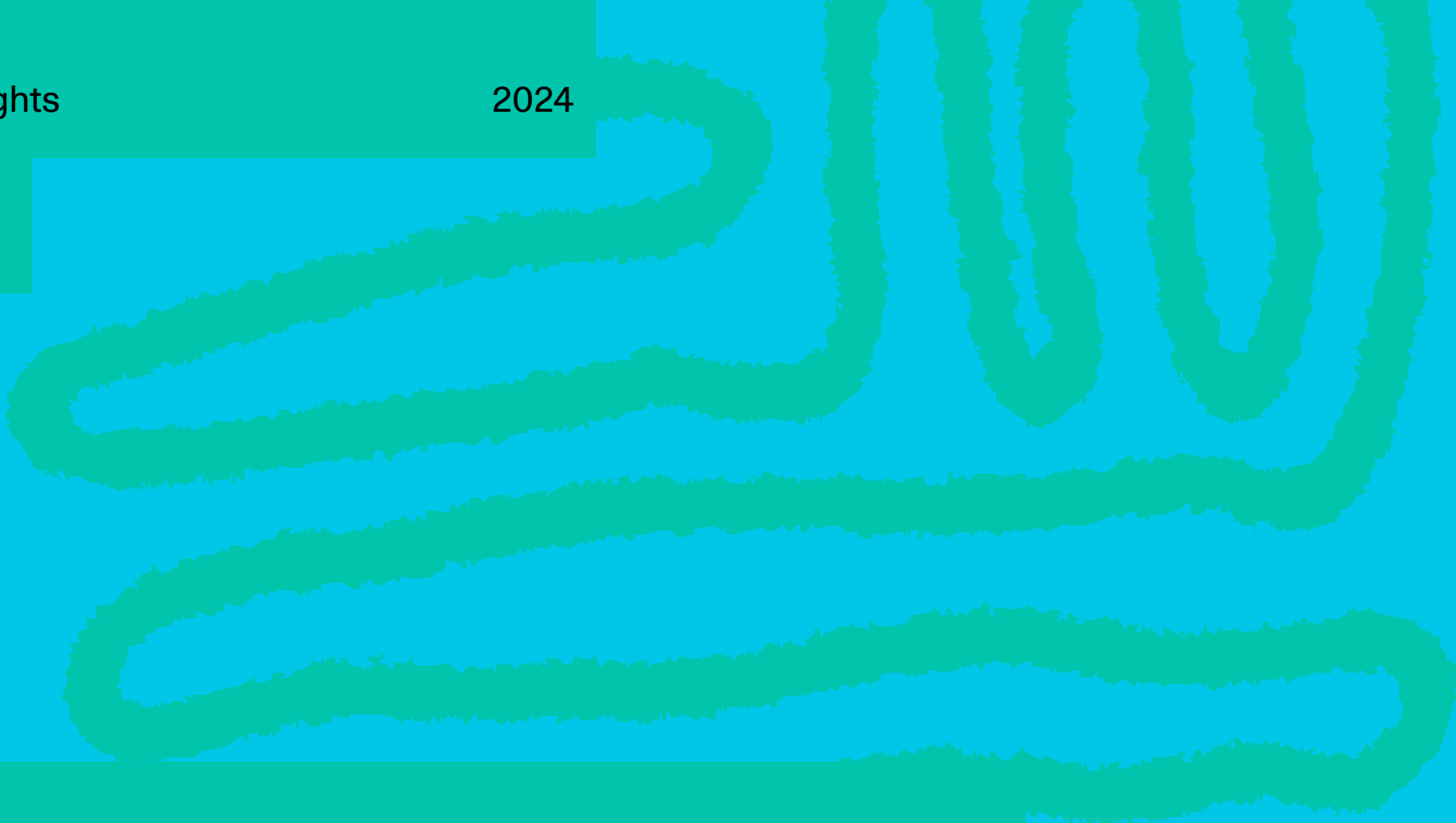
We use art and creativity to bring people together. New experiences and connections foster skills and wellbeing.

We increase access to the arts and develop inclusive approaches by working with local partners and teachers.

By working together, we respond to local priorities and celebrate the city.

Here we share our work and warmly invite you to connect. ●

Index



| | | | |
|----|-------------------------|----|-----------------------------|
| 01 | New Ground | 09 | By and For Young People |
| 02 | Creating the Curriculum | 10 | Developing Skills |
| 03 | Gallery as a Classroom | 11 | Plenty of Room for Families |
| 04 | Jamming Together | 12 | We are Wonderlings! |
| 05 | Journeying Together | 13 | Free for Families |
| 06 | Part of the City | 14 | Inclusive Spaces |
| 07 | A Word to Our City | 15 | Growing Partnerships |
| 08 | Work Experience Week | 16 | Coming Up in 2025 |

New Ground

With Raleigh Education Trust we’re developing new, inclusive ways to nurture learning and creativity.



New Ground

Together we develop approaches to foster young people's sense of agency and belonging. Students take part in creative activities in schools and community spaces and with teachers we develop practice.

“Pupils’ holistic growth was deeply influenced. They’ve had time to go deeper into understanding themselves, their creativity and resilience.”

Director of Curriculum and Assessment, Raleigh Education Trust



Creating the Curriculum



With Bluecoat Aspley Academy and Nottingham Black Archive we've been developing a more inclusive art curriculum.

Creating the Curriculum



GCSE students took part in gallery visits and artist-led sessions in school to respond to the work of artist Donald Rodney. Their responses are informing new teaching resources to be launched spring 2025.

“We’ve focused on the artist’s motivations and ways of working in a much deeper way. Students were able to think about ideas and issues as the materials of an artist.”

Head of Arts, Bluecoat Aspley Academy



Gallery as a Classroom

Creative workshops at the gallery support connections to art and ideas.



Gallery as a Classroom

Our free resources and artist workshops are developed with and for teachers and students.

We’ve welcomed lots of students and staff from special schools and settings, developing and sharing practice to support inclusion.



“The team at the gallery are very supportive and responsive. The resources and spaces are always inspiring.”

Art Lead, Robin Hood Primary School



Images Nottingham Contemporary

“We all left feeling elated. The children got so much from today’s experience. Thank you for being so deaf aware and considerate of our children’s needs.”

Co-lead Teacher of the Deaf, Mellers Primary School



Jamming Together

Robin Hood Youth Orchestra brought the galleries to life through music.

Jamming Together

Young musicians and artist Julian Abraham ‘Togar’ created a new sound and video artwork for our summer exhibition. Together, they welcomed visitors to the galleries with a live performance.



Image Lamar Francois

“It was a special experience. Our young people were able to work in new ways. Improvising together brought a real sense of joy and connection.”

Ian Burton, Director, Nottingham Music Hub

Journeying Together

This year we delivered a new programme of creative walks to promote wellbeing.



Journeying Together

With the Women's Centre we've been getting creative together outdoors. Designed around the 5 ways to wellbeing, sessions encourage people to connect, be active, try new things, notice the world and support each other.

“I always feel relaxed and happy after the session.”

Participant, Women's Centre

“I like being able to show my true self.”

Participant, Women's Centre

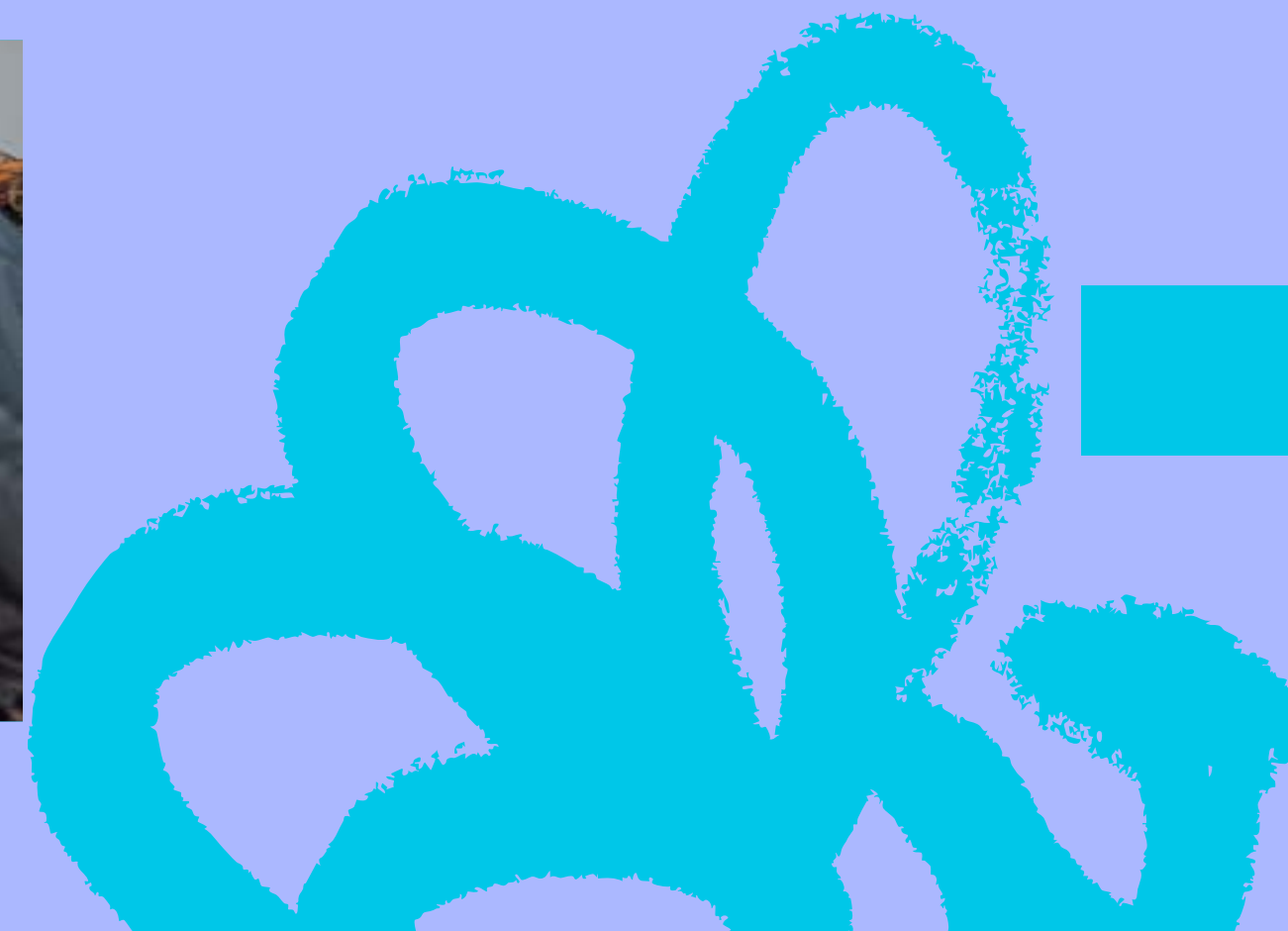
We were part of the city's Reclaim the Night March. Women created designs for bags, t-shirts and banners to make women's experiences visible.

We celebrated International Women's Day with Communities Inc.



Part of the City

Working together to make
Nottingham a more inclusive
and creative place.



Part of the City

With our partners, Refugee Roots, we hosted events for Refugee Week celebrations in the city.

People joined us for a Dance Around the World workshop. Our big global music party brought celebrations to a close.

We were delighted to host Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum's Dance Mosaic.

With Palestine Solidarity Campaign, we celebrated Palestinian culture with food, dancing and live music.

We are proud to be part of the [Art of Belonging pledge](#) and steering group.

“We loved collaborating with Nottingham Contemporary. The closing party was such a beautiful and brilliant event with a great vibe.”

Anna Ball, Nottingham Refugee Week





A Word to Our City

Young people connected to the city through creativity in museums and galleries.

A Word to Our City



With Nottingham Education Sanctuary Team (NEST) we've been developing creative ways to nurture students, to build connections to the city and encourage writing and language learning.

We celebrated student's work and hosted a special event to share practice with local artists. Look out for new resources for the arts sector coming soon!

“Drawing made me feel calm and happy. My real life (the poem) is on the paper.”

Student, NEST

“The approaches the writer developed worked so well with our students. We've built these into our enrichment programme as regular weekly sessions.”

Teacher, NEST



Work Experience Week

A unique partnership to support pathways into the arts.



Work Experience Week

Students visit venues across the city meeting artists, programmers, curators and technicians. They gain insights into a career in the arts and connect to the city's cultural offer.

17 students from 14 local schools took part – including settings for disabled young people, new arrivals and those with social and emotional needs.

“Many of our students never get these experiences outside school. Our student was supported brilliantly. It plays a big part in building social skills and confidence.”

Teacher, Ash Lea School

“I was impressed by the people we got to meet and felt inspired.”

Participant, Work Experience Week





By and For Young People

Events, workshops and socials build community and support wellbeing.



By and For Young People

1525 are a Young People's collective. They meet at the gallery each week to socialise and develop creative work and programmes.

Our popular Slow Craft Socials bring people together to enjoy being and making together.

Workshops and events exploring the connections between Capoeira and Hip-Hop brought people together through movement. Rights to Our City connected young people through walking.

“Genuinely means so much for me. It's been a safe haven.”

1525 member

“I feel heard, included and part of something. I'm so much more confident.”

1525 member

“It's a space to educate myself and talk about it with other people.”

1525 member



Developing Skills

Workshops and placements develop young people's skills and experiences.



Developing Skills

1525 members took part in workshops to develop skills in curating, event planning, public speaking and portfolio building. They created a publication and an event series that was broadcast live on art education.

34 Nottingham Trent University students took part in 3-month placements to produce a publication, an exhibition and events.

“Working on a collaborative project really made me push my work outside of my regular practice.”

NTU placement student



Plenty of Room for Families

Our Big Room events respond to the rising costs of living and support access to the arts.



Plenty of Room for Families

During the winter months we connect to local families through schools, foodbanks and community partners to offer a warm welcome and family films.

Nottingham City Transport generously provide free bus travel and there’s a clothes bank with Sharewear. Families pick up free drinks, snacks and essentials like nappies and sanitary products.

Many of the families who take part are first time visitors. Almost half are from the local areas we most want to reach.*

“I enjoyed the beautiful place and film and everything honestly. Thanks a lot.”

Family participant

*44% live in areas ranked 1 and 2 – Indices Multiple Deprivation

“We can take part because it’s free, and the children love cinema. I definitely appreciate the NCT bus ticket.”

Family participant



We are Wonderlings!

An immersive learning programme for Early Years.



We are Wonderlings!

Our immersive play sessions for babies and toddlers support developmental stages and are hugely popular with local families.

1,500 babies, toddlers and their grown-ups took part – 25% more than last year!

A big thank you to everyone who donated to our Big Give campaign - your donation was doubled and together raised £5,000.



“The baby sessions are so valuable and give families something to look forward to.”

Family participant

“The variety of play and the creativity that goes into making it is just incredible! It’s great that these are free.”

Family participant

Free for Families

Each school holiday we welcome lots of families to play, make and experiment together.



Free for Families

Activities encourage families to experiment, share ideas, have fun and make memories together.

“It’s always a wonder when the door opens and we see inside.”

Family participant

“Sessions are so helpful not only in inspiring my son but for my own mental health. It’s wonderful to be creative in a positive, nurturing environment.”

Family participant

We welcomed 7,000 family participants.

“We have been really, really happy here. Comforting and very entertaining for the kids.”

Family participant





Inclusive Spaces

Through partnerships we've developed our inclusive practice.

Inclusive Spaces

Together with Rainbow Parent Carers Forum we create inclusive, sensory workshops. Families enjoy working with artists and having our spaces and galleries to themselves.

We provided Short Breaks activity for disabled children and their families.

With My Sight Notts and NTU we developed unique audio descriptive exhibition guides. A big thank you to My Sight Notts who also provide training to the team.

“Opens up doors for SEN kids. There’s lots to do for our child and it’s different to the usual activities.”

Family participant

“Our parents appreciated the relaxing and safe atmosphere that allowed children to explore freely. Your team was very supportive and caring to our young people.”

Service Co-ordinator, Rainbow PCF



Growing Partnerships

We host partners, share resources and form deep relationships. Together we explore how our work can grow.



Growing Partnerships

Imara, Cool Company, Notts Trans Hub, Robin Hood Youth Orchestra, Queer Craft Club, and LGBTQ+ Families have all had a home with us.

With Communities Inc. we host events to bring community partners together to address issues impacting our city and beyond.

Ubuntu community research group brought our galleries to life with workshops and interactive gallery tours.

Gallery tours by community partners bring fresh perspectives and personal connections to our exhibitions. A huge thank you to Skate Nottingham, Emmanuel House, My Sight Notts, Communities Inc. and Ubuntu.

Coming Up in 2025

Between January and March our successful Big Room returns - a welcoming warm hub for families.

In February we're part of the Kids in Museums conference, contributing to discussions around young people's experiences of isolation.

This Spring we'll launch new resources for an inclusive arts curriculum.

In June we'll celebrate Refugee Week with partners across the city.

July sees the return of our Work Experience Week.

Throughout the school holidays we will welcome lots of families to our busy programme of free activities.

We Are Wonderlings returns throughout the year.

We'll also celebrate our 2-year partnership with Raleigh Education Trust with students, teachers and families.

2024 Statistics

13,000

People took part in learning activities with us in 2024.

2,000

Students and teachers took part in 100 workshops at the gallery and in schools.

1,500

Babies, toddlers and their grown-ups took part in immersive play sessions.

600

Family participants were part of our winter Big Room film programme.

34

NTU students took part in 3-month placements.

4 & 42

4 in-depth school partnerships and 42 individual schools and colleges.

17

Students took part in our work experience week from 14 local settings.

2,000

People took part in our community events and programmes.

15

City-wide projects and events.

19

Creative walks across the city.

38

Community partners who we host and develop shared projects with.

7,000

Family participants welcomed to 100 family sessions.

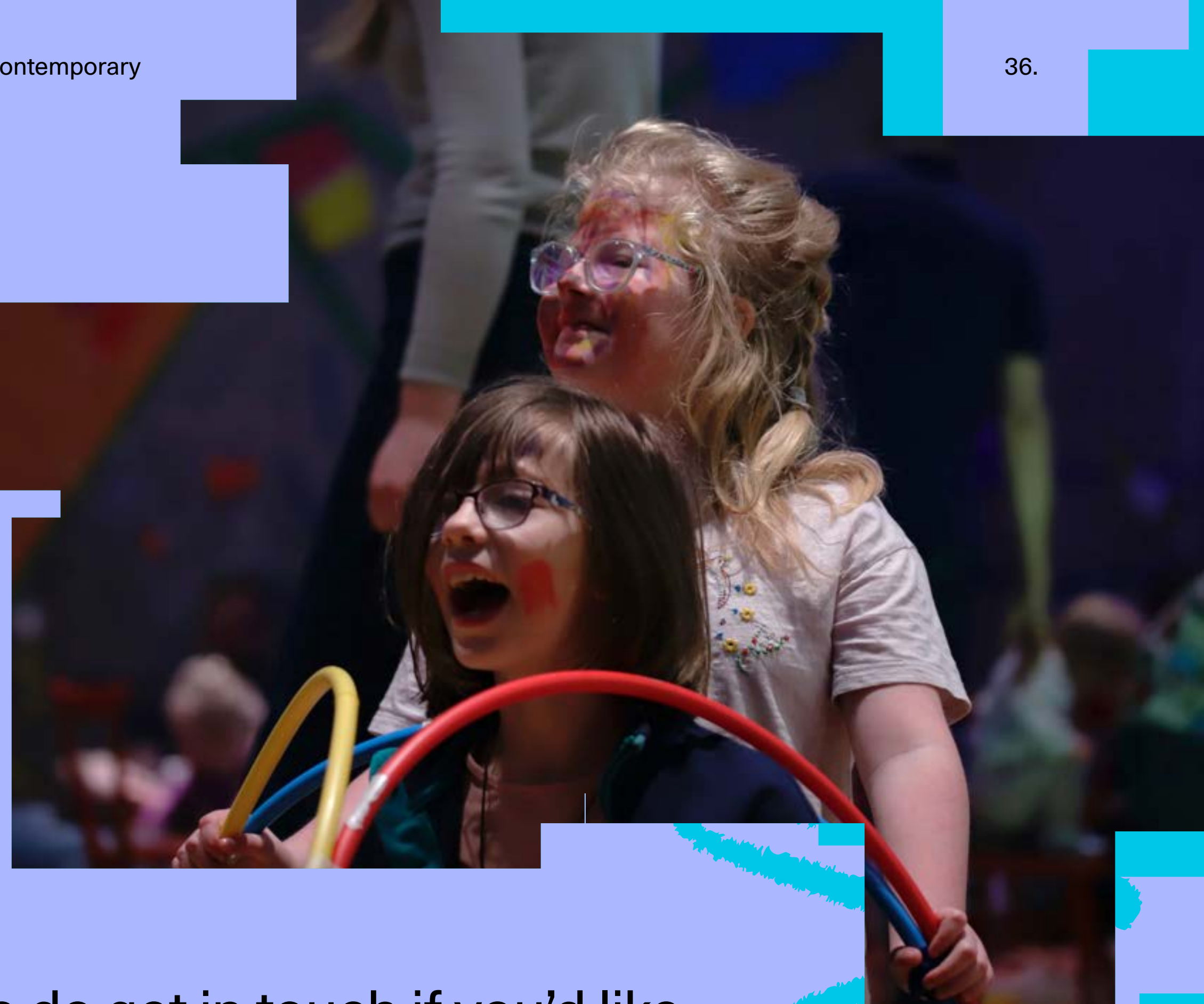
Thank you

A big thank you to all our amazing collaborators and to everyone who has been part of our learning programmes in 2024.

Thank you to our principal funder Arts Council England and our partners and funders Ampersand Foundation, Nottingham City Council, Nottingham Trent University and the University of Nottingham.

And to the charitable trusts and foundations who have generously supported our work – British Council, Freelands Foundation, The Big Give, The Garcia Family Foundation and The Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust.

Thank you to Gateley PLC for their generous support of our warm hub for families in 2024 and Nottingham City Transport.



Please do get in touch if you'd like to know more or to connect.

T: 0115 948 9750

E: learn@nottinghamcontemporary.org