

**Little Boxes of Memories  
FINAL REPORT  
Entelechy Arts**

**Creative Dementia Arts Network  
MAY 2013**



# Executive Summary

## Introduction

1. Entelechy co-ordinated the work of developing, designing and performing a multi sensory Little Boxes of Memory project in partnership with the Museum of London (MOL) and in collaboration with Beech Ward, a stroke unit at Lewisham Hospital, Manley Court care centre and Glebe Court care home, together with Greenvale, Mandeville, Richard Cloudesley and Cherry Gardens SEN Schools, all located in Lewisham.
2. The project had substantial outreach directly involving an estimated 200 people of different ages and from diverse cultures, who participated as hospital patients, care home residents, clients of social services or as health, social care and museums professionals and care staff, together with artists and older volunteers, including
  - An Entelechy staff group of 4
  - 5 artists
  - 10 older volunteers and one younger volunteer
  - 17 patients
  - 6 Allied Health Professionals
  - 3 Occupational Therapists
  - 20 family members
  - 3 older people living alone
  - 4 care home residents.
  - 5 care home staff
  - Approximately 80 young people from 4 London SEN Schools
  - 4 teachers and 8 Teaching Assistants
  - 2 designers
  - 4 members of staff at MOL
3. Residents from care homes and older volunteers participated in 5 further sharing events run by Entelechy Arts extending the reach of the project. The LBM also connected to a much wider audience through the performance of older volunteers and some care home residents at 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tea Dances organised by Entelechy. This extended the reach of the project to well over 300 people.
4. The legacy of the LBM work with patients on Beech Ward has also been assured. A weaver who worked with the patients used some of their memories to construct a vibrant paper based tapestry which was printed onto Formica tables that will be used for craft and other unit activities. The MOL website will significantly extend the reach of the LBM project and dissemination of the results via national conferences and publications will bring LBM to the attention of academic and professional audiences.

5. Greenvale School in Lewisham was a seed bed for growing and testing ideas about the design of the little boxes with Entelechy, artists and older volunteers working with teachers and the designer. It was also one of the 4 SEN London schools where performances of LBM took place to groups of 4 to 6 students aged 12 -18 with profound and complex learning disabilities. An estimated 25% of these students were wheelchair users and almost 50% had aphasia or limited capacity for vocal expression.
6. The artistic team (Entelechy, artists and older volunteers responsible for gathering heritage stories were trained by the MOL and given access to specialist resources including archive material. The team worked older Londoners on Beech Ward Lewisham Hospital, in Manley Court and Glebe Court care homes and from those living home alone in the community using creative reminiscence – using art to engage older patients, residents and community dwelling older people in life review.
7. As they worked the artistic team uploaded data from hospital based project work and to some extent from work in the care home and community onto a password protected Ning (social media) site. This enabled a wider group of project members including designers to share results, encourage cross fertilise of ideas and draw on the information to shape and inform the design of the little boxes.

### **Methodology**

8. A qualitative approach was taken to the evaluation design; the methodology reflected a concern to understand the LBM project from the viewpoints and perspective of the participants and in particular to ascertain the impact of the project on older patients, residents and community dwelling older people and pupils with profound and complex needs. Methods used included semi structured, narrative and telephone interviews, online surveys, and telephone interviews, focus groups participant and structured observation, and accessing audio and visual material and documents from the Ning site.
9. The main researcher's role was close, eclectic and responsive and close. A structured observation scale was used to gather data collection about student responses to LBM in SEN schools. This evaluation was supported by an additional researcher.
10. Narrative interviews, structured interview data, focus group notes, notes from various observations were transcribed, and manually coded and categorised in order to organise and analyse the data, along with the Ning site data. Content analysis of photographic and other visual data, some of which was gathered as part of field notes, was carried out. A Framework approach enabled themes and sub themes associated with legacy and heritage to be identified. Observation, interview and survey data was analysed to ascertain the impact of the project on participant individuals and groups and results reported as descriptive statistics.

## Results

11. The artistic team (Entelechy, artists and older volunteers) who worked with patients on Beech Ward utilised a creative reminiscence approach to collecting life stories. Artists worked intensely with 4 older patients over 3 months using a selection of arts and crafts including knitting, weaving and film. Heritage memories included national events, cherished moments intertwined with darker tales of abuse. Working closely with the multi disciplinary team, the sessions were very positively evaluated especially by Therapy staff and reported as adding value to the rehabilitation programme. The well being of older patients improved and opportunities for social engagement and occupation benefited the wider patient community on the ward.
12. Entelechy have run a tea dance programme for residents in Manley Court care home bi weekly for 3 years and the LBM programme provided an opportunity for artists to continue individual deepen work with 4 residents in the home coming to terms with disability, personal loss and, in 3 cases family estrangement. Artistic expression was encouraged resulting in improved well being of all those involved; 2 residents gained the confidence to become regular performer at Entelechy's larger community arts event: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tea Dance.
13. At Glebe Court artists worked with J, a socially isolated resident with a passion for singing. Despite an emotionally and physically dislocated childhood and tribulations of her adult life ( including an unplanned admission to the care home) J relished opportunities for creative reminiscence with an artist who retrieved pictures of Scotland on her I Pad, prompting life review and some sense of integration.
14. Artists worked with 4 socially isolated community dwelling older people hearing migration tales and providing a bridge through creative reminiscence to review their working lives in London. This 'home alone' group consisted of 3 men who had been identified by Lewisham Occupational Therapists as having needs for stimulation and occupation. An artist visited them at home over five 2 hour sessions listening to their life stories and heritage memories – in 2 cases the artist responded to migration tales by showing photographs of countries of origin, and eliciting details of early childhood and young adulthood set in the context of everyday life, from food to school days and songs.
15. From the wealth of personal and collective life histories, themes of transition, migration, settlement, work (ethic), love, family and community emerge as central to the understanding the heritage of older Londoners. Of these 2 individual stories were selected as in many ways not only illustrating these themes but the individuals involved were also representative of older people in inner London in terms of age, gender ethnicity, health status and the diversity of their social and cultural backgrounds.

16. The narratives of Darnley whose journey took him from Barbados to London and Doris whose Brixton life was more parochial yet not without upheavals attested to their personal resilience in the face of crisis, grief and loss in stories that are underpinned by London sights and sounds, and socio-cultural change.
17. Hence the stories of Doris, who found love in Shakespeare Road in Brixton, and Darnley, who worked on London buses, inspired the design and production of two boxes of memory – a ladies shopping trolley and two old fashioned brown suitcases that are representative of the experiences of many older Londoners and yet privilege two unique lives. Contents were designed to elicit responses from students with special needs in particular limited communication. The selection of multi sensory objects, artefacts and ephemera include both ‘everyday’ items and high tech devices to engage and stimulate SEN school audiences.
18. The introduction and dramatic presentation of the heritage stories of Doris and Darnley was scripted and directed by Entelechy. Together with artists and older volunteers, they rehearsed and took this extra ordinary piece of theatre to students with special needs. Using a profusion of sensory items from light sources, fabric pieces, the sound of the sea and Elvis to a powder pouf, carbolic soap and much more, the performances elicited a range of responses from the students that were communicated in many ways especially through non verbal communication.
19. Through sounds and gestures students indicated likes and dislikes, expressed ideas and opinions and made choices in response to music, colour, texture, movement, scent and other stimuli. More profoundly disabled students indicated engagement through laughter, smiles and body movement whilst those physically more able appropriated objects – for example some students with autism took to scrubbing floors, wearing a necklace, combing volunteers hair whilst other experimented using a small projector to send a light show not into a paper lantern but up on a wall or shining a coloured light onto their hand.
20. Both artists and older volunteers reported personal growth and learning as a result of being involved in the LBM project. Artists adapted their practice to work in both a highly structured clinical ward setting or without boundaries in the homes of needy socially isolated older people whilst providing the impressive dramatic glue that engaged profoundly disabled students with little boxes. For them, the project highlighted the need for continuing professional development in the specialist field of arts and older people/people with dementia. The project also attests to the calibre of older volunteers who were challenged to support design sessions in SEN schools, artists on the stroke unit and in care homes as well as older patients and residents. For many the facilitation of the LBM performances was cited as a personal achievement.
21. In order to work effectively together and make the best use of their resources, Entelechy, a small arts organisation and the Museum of London had to negotiate differences in the aims, mission, size, culture and

decision making systems. The inherent tension between achieving organisational objectives within internal time scales and more system wide objectives associated with partnership plans was acknowledged. Planning meetings addressed many of issues and lessons were learnt for future collaborations.

22. This complex project is a testament to the commitment, skills and abilities of the LBM partner agencies and the results show that Entelechy Arts and its partners have devised a unique approach to capturing and representing heritage memories through late life creativity to engage audiences with disabilities.

### **Addendum**

Memory boxes of all sorts are frequently found in the world of the care of older people – often with contents that faithfully tell a quiet tale of important objects in the former life of the older person's, they sit on tables or next to bedroom doors, in care homes, with their contents frozen behind glass. The contrast between these passive containers and the interactive Little Boxes of Memory cannot be sharper for here are 'boxes' designed to delight, stimulate curiosity, promote interactivity and excite the interest of the audience engaging them in heritage and life stories in a dynamic way. This inclusive innovatory model that Entelechy Arts and its partners have evolved signals new directions for creative arts practice in the field of ageing, disability and intergenerational heritage work.

# 1 Introduction

1.1 Entelechy Arts, Lewisham commissioned Creative Dementia Arts Network to evaluate the Little Boxes of Memories (LBM) project that aimed to engage older people and younger people with profound and complex disabilities participate in heritage stories of older Londoners.

1.2 The LBM project was led and managed by Entelechy Arts, in partnership with Museum of London (MOL), Beech Ward, Lewisham Hospital, Manley Court care home, New Cross and Greenvale Special Educational Needs School, Downham. This multi agency collaboration brought together older people, younger people, artists, designers, museum teams, IT, teaching, health and social services professionals and care staff who participated in different ways in the process of collecting heritage stories, developing little boxes and interacting with them.

1.3 Entelechy staff, artists and older volunteers, trained in utilising heritage resources by MOL staff, engaged older Londoners in hospital, care homes and in the community, through creative arts enabling them to reminisce about their past lives. Greenvale pupils with profound and complex disabilities and their teachers also worked with Entelechy staff, artists and older volunteers to explore and test multi sensory stimuli that could be used in the little boxes. Drawing on individual and collective life histories of older Londoners and results from Greenvale School sessions, designers worked with Entelechy staff, artists and museum staff to create two little boxes of memories (LBM)- a shopping trolley and two suitcases - containing objects, artefacts and ephemera representing the heritage memories of two older Londoners. At the conclusion of the project, Entelechy staff and volunteers devised, directed and rehearsed interactive performances of Little Boxes of Memories with older volunteers and artists that engaged small groups of younger people aged 8- 18 with profound and complex disabilities in eight sharings for Special Needs Schools in London.

1.4 The aims of the Little Boxes of Memories project were:

- To listen to, share and celebrate the heritage of people aged 80-100 olds who have diverse cultural backgrounds now living in communities within Lewisham, south east London.
- To compare and contrast the childhood and early adulthood experiences of elders from diverse backgrounds across race, ability and class
- To give equal voice to the experiences of elders who have dementia and people who have learning disabilities
- To co-curate the programme with 80-100yr olds and young people who have profound and complex disabilities developing a cross-ability/ cross-generational delivery model
- To work with young people between the ages of 12 and 16 who have profound and complex disabilities to devise multi-sensory ways of

sharing and communicating heritage experiences using the Little Boxes concept.

- To design ways of sharing remembered heritage to wider audiences of Londoners that specifically includes young people who have profound and complex disabilities and very old people
- To train a cohort of active older volunteers, giving them skills to act as heritage facilitators/educators
- To devise a learning support pack focusing specifically for 12-16year olds who have profound and complex disabilities
- To tour the Little Boxes programme to SEN schools and Older People's Residential Care Homes across south London
- To design a dedicated website for the programme, linking project stakeholders and participants with wider audiences.
- To increase the learning about heritage of marginalised groups by working collaboratively with social care, education, health and cultural organisations

## **1.5 Outcomes**

1.5.1 In addition to determining through the evaluation the extent to which these aims were met, it was anticipated that both older people in hospital, care homes and in the community, and pupils with profound and complex learning disabilities would gain from their involvement in the LBM project.

1.5.2 Although the project did not set out in a purposeful way to change/improve cognitive, behaviour, mood, communication, function, physical health, or the social lives of these groups, it was acknowledged that individuals were likely to benefit from their involvement hence a small number of outcomes were devised.

1.5.3 It has to be noted however that given the nature, scope and design of LBM the project did not set out to test the process of creative art reminiscence any empirical way. The evaluation therefore seeks to answer whether any 'gains' reported by participants, observed by researchers, artists and others were due, in a statistically significant sense, to involvement in creative arts, the LBM sharings or other inputs and interventions and would not have happened anyway.

1.5.4 What this evaluation aims to do is build an impartial case which analyses and interprets what happened during the project, how participants felt about what they did, and on the basis of evidence presented suggests that there is a prima facie case for hypothesising that the findings were due to the engagement in art process, relationships and performances.

1.5.5 Hence there is evidence of the positive benefits of participatory arts for older people<sup>1</sup> and it was anticipated that older people engaged in creative reminiscence<sup>2</sup> with LBM artists and older volunteers involved in the project would experience social, health and well-being gains.

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<sup>1</sup> Cutler, D ( 2009) Ageing Artfully Older people and Professional Participatory Art in the UK Baring Research

<sup>2</sup> A term coined by Pam Schweitzer to describe arts used purposefully to elicit memories see Schweitzer. P (2009) Making Art from Life: Creative Development, Reminiscence and Life

- 1.5.2 Stroke patients on Beech Ward at Lewisham Hospital who have experienced significant crisis and sudden loss of function, are often depressed. It was anticipated that engaging in creative reminiscence would aid their recovery and in particular enable older patients to
- Re-construct a sense of personal identity and autonomy
  - Develop new skills and remember old skills
  - Experience personal agency
  - Express themselves and increase self esteem
- 1.5.3 Artists planned to follow up some of the hospital patients they had worked with when they were discharged back home or to care homes and to ascertain whether any benefits arising from creative reminiscence were continued.
- 1.5.4 Care homes overall offer residents a low level of activities. It was therefore anticipated that heritage story collection woven into music, dance, poetry and prose recitation sessions led by artists and older volunteers in Manley Court care home would have positive effects on residents resulting in
- Increase in self confidence
  - Increase in self expression
  - Development of artistic identities
  - Increase in mood
- 1.5.5 For older participants living at home alone it was anticipated that individual creative reminiscence sessions with an artist would
- Facilitate life history
  - Affirm self agency
  - Increase socialisation and social networks
- 1.6 Although older people and younger people were the intended beneficiaries of the project, it was anticipated that involvement in the process of developing little boxes of memories would enhance the skills of professionals, care staff and older volunteers and promote

changes in attitude and perception of people with physical and cognitive disabilities.

- 1.7 It was expected that the Little Boxes of Memories project would impact positively on ward staff in the Lewisham Stroke Unit in respect of
- Recognising and valuing the contribution of artists in the multi disciplinary team
  - Positively reframing potential for patient self expression
- 1.8 For care home staff the LBM work was anticipated to
- Increase job satisfaction
  - Improve coping skills
- 1.9 For older volunteers the project offered opportunities to
- Develop skills as heritage facilitators and educators
  - Enhance communication skills with older people and younger people with disabilities
  - Increase self confidence
- 1.10 Although most of the 5 artists working on the LBM project have prior experience and skills in work with older people, none have worked on a hospital ward with highly dependent patients or provided art for older people at home. It was therefore of interest to Entelechy to ascertain how artistic practice was challenged and influenced by working in these environments and the issues that they raised for continuing practice development.
- 1.11 LBM was a large and complex project that involved the 2 major partners working to increase the reach and quality of engagement in a heritage programme for hard to reach groups of older people and young people with disabilities in collaboration with other agencies on several different sites and settings. The impact on the quality of partnership working was also evaluated so that lessons could be learnt.

The project was organised in 7 stages

- 1 The first stage of the project involved detailed project planning between Entelechy and the Museum of London establishing a framework to support partnership working and to manage the complex logistics and project administration

- 2 The second stage included preparatory work led by the Museum of London provided access to heritage objects and collections for Entelechy, older volunteers and artists who were introduced to notions of heritage history.
- 3 The third stage took place in Greenvale School where Entelechy facilitated the co creation of the little boxes involving children and young people with profound and complex learning disabilities, teachers, artists, older volunteers, and designers.
- 4 The fourth stage ran concurrently with Stage 3. Artists supported by older volunteers, gathered heritage stories from older Londoners during a three month residency on Beech Ward, Lewisham Hospital's Stroke alongside sessions with individual residents and groups in a Lewisham care home and in the community. They uploaded their material to an on line site which allowed for virtual discussions, sharing of blogs etc.
- 5 The fifth stage involved the designers drawing on the heritage and life story material gathered to inform and shape the design of the little boxes. A decision was made to represent two stories: Doris's and Darnley's as the elements that made up these stories resonated with strands in many of the other life stories. This stage saw the production of Doris' box and Darnley's box.
- 6 The sixth stage brought together Entelechy staff with artists and volunteers and the designer to co create a performance of the two little boxes and to train the group in how to use the objects.
- 7 The seventh stage saw the performances of LBM at 4 London SEN schools. There were 2 sharings in each School and with two groups, one of which engaged first in Doris' box followed by Darnley's box or began with Darnley's box and were followed by Doris'.

## **1.6 Entelechy Arts**

- 1.6.1 Entelechy Arts is a well established participatory arts company based at the Albany, a community arts venue operating from its theatre base in Deptford, Lewisham. Entelechy<sup>3</sup> works with older people and adults and young people with profound and complex disabilities living in Lewisham,<sup>4</sup> a borough that is home to over 250,000 residents from a range of socio culturally and economically diverse communities, neighbourhoods and localities where over 130 languages are spoken.
- 1.6.2 Lewisham's population is relatively young with children and young people aged 0-19 years making up 25 per cent of the population. Within this population the proportion of children with autistic spectrum disorder known to schools is significantly higher than the national average. However one of the fastest growing groups in the local population is people aged over 50 and particularly those aged over 75. Rates of disability amongst this group are higher than the national average exacerbated by social deprivation.

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<sup>3</sup> The company is often referred to as Entelechy and this short form will be used for the sake of brevity

<sup>4</sup> Some people travel in from the neighbouring boroughs of Southwark, Lambeth and Greenwich and further afield.

1.6.3 At the heart of its practice Entelechy is fundamentally committed to partnership work with older people who are involved with the company as advisers, actors, audiences and volunteers. It is this partnership that is the bedrock and touchstone for all of its projects and programmes. Some of these relationships are over a decade long and they are fluid. People who may once have been volunteers or actors are now becoming much frailer and the company is supporting their transition to less active roles although providing support for as much engagement as possible.

1.6.4 Entelechy manages a wide portfolio of creative projects working with an associate group of skilled artists who use drama, music, writing, and dance to engage with participants in co-created work enabling vulnerable and often socially isolated adults and young people to become recognised and valued members of their communities.

1.6.5 Entelechy was the lead partner for the purposes of the Little Boxes of Memories project. David Slater the Director of Entelechy was overall LBM lead and Rebecca Swift, Entelechy's Creative Producer the Creative Consultant who supported the artists and older volunteers whilst Jess Worley was appointed as a part time project manager was appointed to provide day to day management of the project. A lead artist Z who has worked closely over 10 years with Entelechy Arts was designated Lead Artist for the purposes of the project.

## **1.7 Museum of London**

1.71 The Museum of London consists of the Museum of London and the Museum of London Docklands. Together they represent the collective work of the Museum of London that tells the story of the world's greatest city and its people. With more than two million objects in its collections and the largest archaeological archive in Europe, MOL attracts over 400,000 visitors per year and collaborates with community groups, organisations and individuals on a range of projects including exhibitions and displays, events, films and other activities that are concerned with London's heritage and life.

1.72 Led by the Kirsty Marsh, MOL Inclusion Programme Manager MOL input included, Noel Special Educational Needs Programme Manager, Paul Digital Learning Programme Manager, Solomon Oral Historian and Community Collaboration Assistant. The MOL made a substantial contribution to the LBM project in terms of staff resources and advice, expertise, administration and support in the following areas:

- Training volunteers in utilising heritage resources (e.g. personal objects, museums etc) to elicit stories from elderly and vulnerable people

- Advising on best practice when working with vulnerable elderly adults and young people with profound and complex needs in a heritage project
- Advising on best practice re digital learning in a heritage project
- Scheduling and chairing progress meetings
- Supplying content for sessions from collections (e.g. archive images)
- Loaning specialist digital learning equipment
- Curating final box content
- Writing design brief for boxes
- Supporting design and liaison process with designer
- Organising and publicising event for teachers to promote Little Boxes as a bookable classroom session
- Supplying contacts of SEN teachers and schools in London
- Creating all content for online learning site

## **1.8 Greenvale School**

1.8.1 Entelechy Arts has a long established relationship with Greenvale Special Needs School of more than a decade. The school caters for the educational needs of pupils aged 12-16 years of age with a range of physical difficulties, cognitive impairments and learning difficulties. Some students have medical conditions and many are for the most part linguistically delayed or have no speech. Teachers in the school and a small group of pupils worked intensively with Entelechy, the designer, artists and older volunteers to produce and test ideas for little boxes. Their 'consumer' focus provided a steer as to the types of materials, objects, artefacts and design ideas that would produce good responses and facilitate engagement in the performances of LBM.

## **1.9 Lewisham Hospital**

1.9.1 The hospital is Lewisham's main hospital and Beech Ward is a stroke unit that has purpose built, state-of-the-art facilities for physiotherapy, occupational therapy (including kitchen assessment), speech and language therapy, a patients' and carers' room and a multidisciplinary meetings room. The hospital has an active arts programme but the stroke unit has not been involved thus far. Following meetings with the Hospital Arts Committee, introductions were made and ward staff invited Entelechy, artists and volunteers the opportunity to work with patients on Beech Ward as part of the LBM project.

## **1.10 Manley Court care home**

1.10.1 Entelechy Arts have been working with Manley Court, a BUPA care Home near New Cross for almost 3 years. The Creative Producer, artists and older volunteers have run bi weekly Tea Dance sessions in the conservatory at the home. Family members have often joined the sessions that offer music, singing, dancing, and opportunities for residents, family members and older volunteers to recite poetry and

pieces of prose. There is a strong sense in which these sessions are viewed as crucibles where residents are encouraged to develop their artistic selves. A number of older people have used the in house tea dancing sessions as a spring board to performing in a larger arena at Entelechy's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tea Dances.

1.10.2 For the purposes of Little Boxes of Memories, four residents at Manley Care Home were selected to work more intensely with artists.

### **1.11 Home alone**

1.11.1 The third setting for the collection of older Londoners heritage and life story was older people living alone in the community. In order to make contact with appropriate individuals, Entelechy Staff worked with Lewisham Borough Council's Adult Social Care Occupational Therapy team. Following a meeting with the OTs, 4 clients for whom involvement in the project would be beneficial and who were particularly isolated including an active older woman who was isolated in the care home where she was living, two older men of Afro Caribbean origin living alone and one living with his spouse carer who was recovering from a stroke. Z, the lead artist was allocated four home based sessions with all the individuals in this group although W, also contributed to 2 of the sessions with T.

## **2. Methodology**

2.1 The Little Boxes of Memories project involved research into extent to which the aims of the project were achieved and to ascertain the impact of the project on older people – in hospital, care homes or living in the community and by the organisations and institutions on the development and design of the little boxes.

2.2 Two experienced researchers conducted the evaluation. The overall manager who has an applied social sciences and gerontology background carried out the bulk of the researcher and the research associate who has a history of art and performance background was involved in some data collection and analysis.

2.3 Researchers were concerned to engage with project participants and understand their perspectives, viewpoints and experiences in, as far as possible, the field – be it a museum, community arts office, school, care home, or hospital. This called for responsiveness, flexibility and closeness in the researchers' participant-as observer-roles and their relationships with people involved in LBM.

2.4 A qualitative research design was therefore adopted that employed a variety of qualitative research methods to gather data including interviews, observation, focus groups. A large amount of data including photographs and video or pre existing data had been gathered by the

artistic team working on the stroke unit and this was also made available for analysis.

- 2.5 People who participated in the evaluation were selected purely on the basis of their involvement with the LBM project.<sup>5</sup> In practice this led to data being gathered from a 'pre determined' set of individuals and groups who had been recruited for the project by Entelechy staff and health and social care professionals but who were, to a large extent, representative of the population to be found on stroke units, care homes and living alone in the community in Lewisham. There was under representation of women in the community dwelling elders group.
- 2.6 Entelechy met with Beech Ward staff to identify patients who would enjoy working with artists and whose stay was likely to be several weeks long.
- 2.7 In Manley Court care home Entelechy, facilitators and care home staff selected LBM resident participants on the basis of their needs and interests. A group of about 20 residents were regular participants at a bi weekly tea dance and it was decided to continue to work with 2 of these F and C with whom an artist had already established an empathic relationship. The LBM project provided an opportunity to continue working with them focusing on heritage stories. Two other residents, I and V, who clearly enjoyed the tea dance, were selected for individual creative reminiscence sessions.
- 2.8 Occupational Therapists working for Lewisham Adult Social Services Department identified 3 community dwelling elders who were relatively isolated. All were older men living alone. Although living in a care home, J, was identified as isolated by Entelechy staff with whom she had made contact at a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tea Dance. She would seem to have had an unplanned admission to Cedar Court care home and was added to the 'home alone group'.
- 2.9 The range of qualitative methods employed to gather data were included

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<sup>5</sup> It was neither feasible nor appropriate to use a structured approach to sampling, there was no defined population to sample from and researchers were not hypothesis testing.

## **1. Surveys**

On line surveys of artists to determine the nature of the work carried out with patients on Beech Ward and their views on the effectiveness of their work in terms of patient outcomes at the end of Phase 1 of the project. Issues raised by artists about the nature of their practice became the basis for further discussion in a focus group held with the artists a month later.

An online survey of Beech Ward staff was carried out. They were asked to rate the impact of creative arts on various aspects of patients' health and well being retrospectively and comment on their experience of using artists on the ward.

A survey of older volunteers (and one younger volunteer) who were involved in performances of LBM at SEN schools was carried out by post and telephone.

## **2. Focus groups**

A focus group was held with older volunteers, most of whom acted as facilitators and curators in the process of life story gathering on Beech Ward. The agenda was to understand their motivations for volunteering for the project in the wider context of their volunteering role in this field. This was followed by semi structured interviews with 2 individual older curators to determine their motivations and preparedness for their roles in Greenvale School.

Two activities organisers at Manley care home were interviewed together in order hear their views on the impact of the LBM work on older residents and the contribution of artists and older volunteers.

Two unstructured focus groups were held at the close of the Beech ward sessions. One was a Salon Evaluation meeting with the ward OT team, Entelechy Staff, artists and researcher followed by another consisting of Entelechy Staff and two artists who had a final debriefing session with a researcher.

Entelechy project staff were interviewed as a group at the end of the fieldwork element of the LBM and encouraged to reflect on what went well and project shortcomings.

## **3. Interviews**

Narrative face to face interviews took place with: 3 residents living in a Lewisham care home, 1 resident in a Greenwich care home and with 3 older people living at home, one of whom had been a patient on Beech Ward. Relevant extracts from the narrative interview topic guides are provided in Figure 1.

**Fig 1 Topic guide for older participant interviews (main questions with prompts in brackets)**

1. What sorts of art work has (facilitator by first name) been doing with you? (Description)
2. What sorts of things have you been able to talk about with (facilitator) (description, thoughts, feelings, experiences)
3. Have you noticed any changes in yourself since (facilitator) came to do some art work with you (physical and mental health, confidence, feelings)
4. Is there anything you feel you can do now that you couldn't do before (facilitator) started to do the art work with you? (How does that make you feel?)
5. Do you think your attitude towards your health and/or happiness has changed (since facilitator) began coming to do art work with you?
6. What impact, if any, has (facilitator) had on your social life? (Getting around, any new friendships, activities, group memberships)

Residents in Manley Court care home were re interviewed a month later providing an opportunity to measure any changes that may have been brought about by artistic engagement over the period.

It was not feasible to establish any control for the extent to which improvements on the wellbeing and social inclusion measures could be attributed to older peoples' participation in Little Boxes of Memory, hence two questions to assess this were included in the interviews with care home residents and people living in the community.

- Do you feel more positive about things?
- Have your contacts with other people increased?

Z, the lead artist was interviewed in depth in order to develop and elaborate some of the emergent themes flowing from the narratives of the older people and from the artists group.

S the weaver was interviewed in his studio about his work on the stroke unit and the tapestry that was to be the LBM project legacy to Beech Ward. Photographs of work in progress were taken.

The MOL Inclusion manager was interviewed towards the beginning of the project in semi structured face to face interview and towards the end of the project by telephone.

The designer of the LBM was interviewed at the point at which her brief was being developed and after she had made the boxes. On the second occasions she was joined by her colleague with whom she was worked.

#### **4. Observation**

**Participant observation** was carried out by the researcher who joined in 2 tea dance session with an artist at MC care home and also in CC care homes. Older volunteers and the residents were also observed performing to a Conference audience and 2 Entelechy 21st Century Tea Dances –attended by 100+ people

**Structured observation of artistic sessions** was carried out focusing on three individual residents who were observed at two tea dances in MC care home using adapted versions of the Menorah Park Engagement Scales to note changes in individual social behaviour.

Structured observations were made by researchers of pupils with profound and complex learning disabilities at 8 performances of the LBM 2 at each of the 4 London SEN schools. During these sessions a researcher would observe two pupils in each group that were selected randomly. The schedules for the structured observations were derived from a combination of P scales and Early Years curriculum descriptors as the SEN pupils were aged over 5 years of age, although some had a developmental age of less than 5 years old ( Appendix 1)

#### **5. Content analysis**

**Content analysis** was carried out of photographs, videos, interviews and songs uploaded by artists and Entelechy onto the Ning social media website This data mainly from Beech ward, provided an arena for communication and discussion between LBM members.

Photographs were taken by artists of some of the older participants they were working with were examined along with those taken by a professional photographer who took photographs of LBM performances. Both sets could be viewed as extant i.e. they not were not taken for the purposes of the evaluation however but they were as they would be used to verify some of the themes and sub themes that would emerge. Some photographs at the care home and in individual's homes were taken by a researcher as part of her field notes and a video recording made of the tea dance.

#### **6. Field notes**

Notes taken by the researcher while in the field [setting] were made. The researcher also kept reflexive diaries to record and monitor thoughts and to minimize the subjectivity of the analysis.

#### **7. Content analysis of document:**

**Correspondence with Entelechy and artists including** short reports, telephone conversations, meeting minutes, e-mails were also collected for analysis.

## **8. Measuring the quality of partnership working**

The majority of tools that exist to measure the effectiveness of partnership working have been developed in the field of social policy. Few have been generated to explicitly measure collaboration in the arts. For the purposes of this evaluation a checklist developed in the USA was adapted so it was fit for purpose of this evaluation

**RESEARCH CONSENT** All older people participating in interviews and appearing in photographs gave written consent to their involvement, while researchers who observed various sessions involving younger and older people drew attention to their presence and role and checked consent, as per the agreed research protocols. All data gathered were kept confidential and stored in line with SCIE data protection guidelines.

## **4. Data Analysis**

4.1 Interview data relating to the narratives of older people living in care homes, and in the community was transcribed and coded and categories developed in order to identify and understand the concepts arising – and in particular what were the aspects of their lives that were common and different. A Framework approach was adopted in order to organise the concepts into themes and sub themes.

4.2 The Ning site data was treated in a similar way so that the elicited personal narratives of Lewisham hospital patients were added to those of care homes and community dwelling elders. Content analysis was carried out of photographs, videos, interviews and songs uploaded by artists and Entelechy onto the Ning social media website. This data mainly from Beech ward, provided an arena for communication and discussion between LBM members.

4.3 Photographs were taken by artists of some of the older participants they were working with were examined along with those taken by a professional photographer who took photographs of LBM performances. Both sets could be viewed as extant i.e. they were not taken for the purposes of the evaluation however but they were as they would be used to verify some of the themes and sub themes that would emerge. The content of photographs taken by the researcher at the care home and in individual's homes as part of her field notes and a short video recording made of the tea dance were also analysed.

4.4 The major themes of older Londoner's heritage history emerged from this wide ranging analysis that yielded information about how often each theme

occurred, a nominal variable, that is, a variable that has mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive categories and facilitates the reporting of the frequencies and relative percentages of themes.

- 4.5 This data was also analysed to note any improvements that older people felt had arisen as a result of working with artists in various settings. The views of families were also noted along with those of Entelechy staff.
- 4.6 Focus group notes relating to older volunteers were transcribed in order to determine their motivations for volunteering on LBM, the way they saw their roles and the outcomes of creative reminiscence for the patients they had worked with on Beech Ward, and themselves. These were added to analysis of notes taken at informal Salon meetings after creative reminiscence sessions on Beech ward and de briefing sessions.
- 4.7 The on line surveys of artists were analysed to obtain a picture of the patients they worked with, the art forms utilised and outcomes for Beech ward patients. Content analysis was used to explore their views about their roles and the work they were doing in respect of the LBM. An attribution analysis of the data also sought to determine the extent to which each group had observed improvements in the well being of the older participants including agency, self esteem, confidence, skills, socialisation
- 4.8 Issues raised by artists about the nature of their practice became the basis for further discussion in a focus group held with the artists a month later. Analysis also took place of an in depth individual interviews with the lead artist that ranged across both outcomes for residents in care homes and her own development in the field of participatory art and older people.
- 4.9. Analysis of an on line survey of Beech Ward staff focused on their views of the impact of creative arts on various aspects of patients' health and well being and their experience of using artists on the ward. This data was supplemented by feedback data gathered by Entelechy in meetings with ward staff.
- 4.10 The field notes of the researcher who participated in 2 tea dance sessions at Manley Court care homes and a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tea Dance were analysed. Data gathered from structured observation of three individual residents using adapted versions of the Menorah Park Engagement Scales were scored and analysed to note changes in individual engagement behaviour over the course of the session.
- 4.11 Triangulation of data facilitated greater reliability and validity of results. The views of Entelechy, artists, older volunteers, patients, care homes residents, and community dwelling older people, hospital and care homes staff facilitated triangulation of data in terms of their standpoints as LBM stakeholders, whilst triangulation of methods provided different means of capturing different views.

- 4.12 Data gathered through structured observations of 2 students with profound and complex disabilities in 8 of the 16 performances of the LBM at SEN schools was analysed and scored in order to show the responses of the students. Analysis of data gathered through on line survey of the views of older volunteers who facilitated the performances was carried out together with the data gathered by face to face and telephone interviews of artists and Entelechy staff involved in the performances. The content of informal interviews with 6 Teaching Assistants was also analysed. Brought together this data provided a reliable view of the impact of the LBM performances on students with profound and complex disabilities.
- 4.13 Notes taken by the researcher while in the field were made. The researcher also kept reflexive diaries to record and monitor thoughts and to minimize the subjectivity of the analysis.
- 4.14 The contents of interview data from 2 interviews with the MOL Inclusion Manager and interviews and correspondence with Entelechy and artists including short reports, telephone conversations, meeting minutes, e-mails were analysed to throw light on the nature of partnership working

#### **4. Findings and discussion**

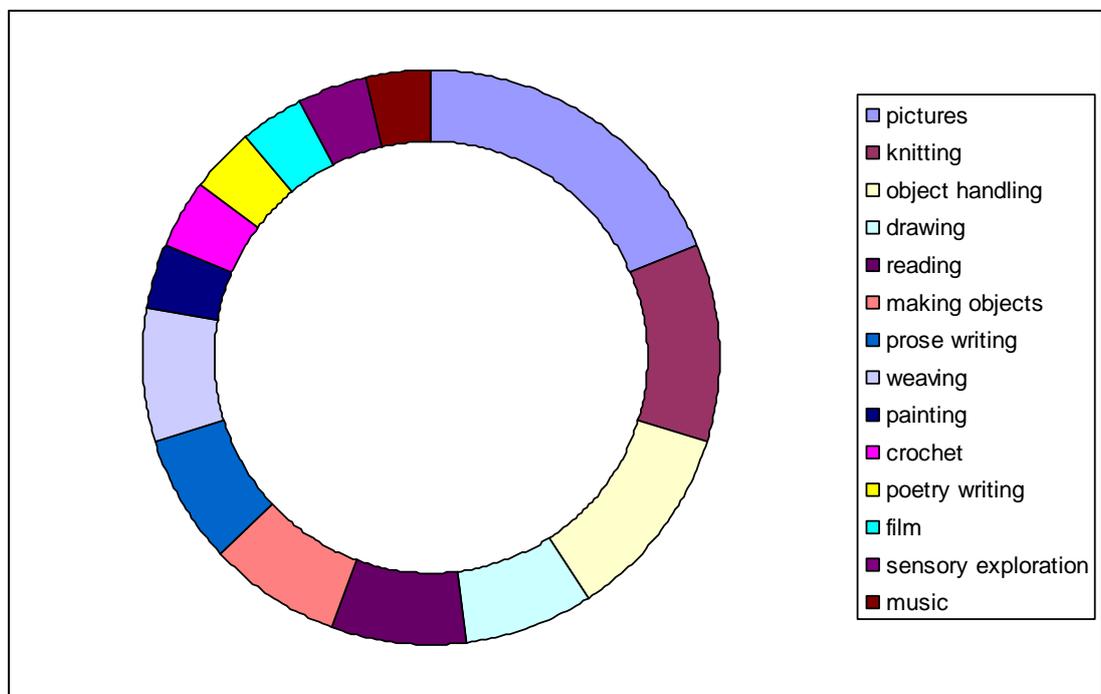
- 4.1 In organising and presenting the findings the section begins with older participants (patients, residents and service users) and their heritage stories as related to artists and older volunteers in 3 settings. It then reports on the responses of younger people with profound and multiple disabilities who participated in the interactive performances of LBM. These sections are followed by the results of evaluation of the experience of the older volunteers who played an important part in supporting the project's artists and reflection on the artist's role in the LBM development process and the experience of the designer of the little boxes. The final section of the findings examines the nature of partnership working between Entelechy Arts and the Museum of London.

#### **5. Beech Ward: older patients' memories of London**

- 5.1 The aim of the LBM project work on Beech Ward Lewisham hospital's specialist stroke unit was to gather life stories including heritage memories from older people who had experienced a stroke through their engagement in creative arts.
- 5.2 The facilitation team responsible comprised of: Entelechy Arts staff including the LBM project co-ordinator and Creative Director who perceived of their roles as 'creative consultants', 4 artists and 4 older volunteers. The artists included a weaver, a poet, a musician and digital multi media maker.

- 5.3 Over a 3 month period, artists and older volunteers worked with 17 people on Beech Ward: the oldest patient was 95 and the youngest in his mid 30s hence the median age of the patients was 62. However, 11 (64%) of the group were aged over 70. Besides physical disabilities, patients included people with cognitive disabilities. The staff view was that up to a quarter had Vascular Dementia. The ward experienced substantial patient churn but it was generally representative of the ethnic mix of the local population. Over half the patients were wheelchair users
- 5.4 Heritage sessions on the ward comprised of 2 hours 'contact time' between the artist and the patient .Artists tended to work with 2-3 patients in a 2 hour sessions although other patients on the ward were not excluded from observing and joining in. An hour pre and post session meeting with peer artists and Entelechy creative consultants was also built in as briefing and debriefing sessions were felt to be important in supporting the team.
- 5.5 Feedback salons were incorporated into the work plan in order that the LBM designers and Museum of London project staff were kept abreast of the progress of life story gathering and stories emerging that could be represented in LBM.
- 5.6 During the creative reminiscence sessions, artists engaged patients using several creative arts as shown in Table 1.

Fig 2. Creative reminiscence tools used by artist facilitators on Beech Ward



- 5.7 Although pictures - visual stimuli was used with 55% of the patients together craft and process orientated activities would appear to have been most frequently offered art form, which given the kinds of

disabilities resulting from stroke, would appear puzzling. Artist accounts suggest the texture and rhythm of craft seemed to have helped life review and the weaver is a highly skilled and experienced practitioner who had the confidence to adapt tools and materials and tailor them to the patient with specific disabilities particularly hemiplegia.

5.8 Object handling was used with 40% of the patients. The MOL sessions raised interest in this activity and artists remarked on what they observed as successful engagement with period objects, often brought in by artists. Although the art forms have been distinguished from one another they were often offered together as multi sensory presentations were viewed as more successful.

5.9 The hospital environment and the Stroke Unit ward in particular was referred to ( by the staff) as a 'psychologically tough environment' for artists and older volunteers because

- Artist facilitators and volunteers did not come onto the ward to do a specific task - an Entelechy staff member spoke of her 'voyeurism in watching very ill patients' and wondering where and how to begin engagement in the absence of a prescribed role.
- The specialist high tech medical unit is geared to clinical treatment and rehabilitation and as such was 'unknown territory' to the artistic team.
- The level of physical and emotional trauma experienced by patients was distressing to a number of the team
- The physical environment appeared to de humanise patients rather than promote healing.

The sense of loss, grief and crisis were palpable the minute you walk onto the ward. Patient's identities are stripped away as everyone wears the uniform of orange jumpsuits, and there they lie in serried ranks of beds sandwiched between strangers in a sterile noisy ward trying to cope with all that's happened to them.'

Facilitator on Beech Ward

5.10 On the other hand the artist facilitators were perceived by their audience as approaching them without an agenda or set of fixed outcomes, which differentiated them from medical model and clinical staff roles and relationships allowing them to engage an audience which was less reserved, sceptical and inhibited as a result.

5.11 Nevertheless Entelechy staff and facilitators felt they had to approach their work more slowly and discussed being 'creative listening posts' rather than launching into life review and story collection. The notion of

creative reminiscence<sup>6</sup> fits this situation as the team began creatively listen to patients and offer engagement through art forms.

- 5.12 The team also worked hard to develop effective channels of communication with the staff in order to establish trust and foster mutual respect. Over time many Beech Ward staff including doctors, nurses, and physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and Speech and Language Therapists became involved with members of the artistic team and began to see them as part of the multi disciplinary team.
- 5.13 From the therapists, facilitators learnt about the impact of stroke on physical function and posture and how to maximise a patient's movement.

One physio showed me that if she adjusted a patient's posture in a particular way, it would enable her to move her arm more freely and therefore use a pencil to draw in her book if it were also placed at an angle. I learnt about limb placement!

An artist facilitator on Beech Ward

- 5.14 Having such insights enabled artists to think creatively and inventively about how to support patients and optimise their residual abilities. The weaver developed a crochet hook that could be used by a stroke patient who had had a one sided hemiplegia enabling her to knit. Another facilitator was careful to place objects where a patient with peripheral vision could locate them.
- 5.15 Whilst working with patients artists encouraged them to reminisce about their past lives in London. Stories were recorded along with any other material produced in the sessions including recipes, poetry and songs. Photographs were taken of an estimated half of the sessions. Much of this data was uploaded onto a Ning social media site (password protected) established by Entelechy to encourage the cross fertilisation of information and ideas for the development of themes and design of the little boxes.
- 5.16 What emerges from Beech Ward is a picture of patients, who despite the crisis of stroke are story tellers who are keen to offer narratives about their life experiences and the meanings that these have for them. What also emerges is the instrumental role of art and craft as a 'bridge for memories' and as a medium for the sharing of life stories and heritage experiences. As one artist pointed out 'art mediates the encounter, fosters a relationship and a climate of sharing'.

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<sup>6</sup> Coined by Pam Schweitzer

- 5.17 Facilitators observed how patients rediscovered themselves through art, reconnecting with 'old selves' and life 'how it used to be'.

As she knitted the essential flow of her life seemed to return, she knew where she was, she came out of the shadows of the stroke into the security of that she associated with knitting. Sitting on a sofa in her front room, watching TV back home, all was well. For a moment the very act of knitting enabled D to reassume her occluded identity.

Artist observation

- 5.18 Unusual objects seemed to be effective in changing the cognitive thought processes of patients and soliciting responses. Some sessions triggered unusual and deeply emotive exchanges between patients and facilitators and others between patients and their peers – a doll prompting a mothering response, a video concerning gorillas prompting discussion of animals and nature.

- 5.19 For many patients engaging with facilitators and art based activities enabled them to reconstruct their 'spoiled' identity Artists used formal means (e.g. basket weaving) of working through issues (as well as directly reflecting content), as well as object handling to help (re) construct of selfhood. Other results include

- D produced a poem she had written over the past week about the 1950s –almost certainly stimulated by the handbag brought in and shared with her.
- Almost all patients were able to recall and discuss a topic when stimulated by a subject e.g. a favourite film
- Those with skills recalled them with pride, shared their knowledge of carpentry, recalled intricate knotting and weaving to the delight and surprise of the artist and their families
- When holding an object or cradling a doll or a puppet it was noticeable that patients became more animated and talked about their family

- 5.20 Over the course of the sessions, patients began to demonstrate new skills and remember old skills. As facilitators developed relationships with patients and were given information about their life history, they were able to tailor sessions to include pre-existing skills belonging to the participants. This approach allowed patients to be active, made them feel useful, allowed for nuanced self-expression, and enabled a kinaesthetic connection to be re-established to their own bodily memory.

- 5.21 From the staff viewpoint that the nature of the interactions and the role relationships between artists and patients were materially different than between patients and clinical staff associated with the medical model. As artists changed the conventions of interaction in the ward, they

empowered patients to engage in activities and tasks that when presented as rehabilitation, they were often reluctant to do.

5.22 These outcomes were manifested in wood-work, knitting, crocheting and weaving, all of which allowed for reassuring constructive activities free of stress. Artists observed

- Confidence returning as patients shared crafting skills with other people on the ward and motivated them
- In print-making session sliced fruit was used as printing blocks enabling all patients to 'make art'.
- Working with VJ equipment and camera brought in by a multi media artist, one patient, who was a photographer, was empowered. No longer just a passive patient he reasserted himself as a skilled individual
- Practical work such a weaving, crochet and knitting prompted patients to use both hands resulting in improvement in ability to do so.
- There was an increase in the use of motor skills activated through fun games and construction activities

5.23 Creative activities provided opportunities to recover some personal agency and besides locating themselves in the past, as a child in Peckham, a young adult in Brixton Market, in the music of the era etc, there was a sense in which creative reminiscence also enabled patients to talk about the future.

5.24 One facilitator repeatedly documents the way in which objects left behind instigate new interactions and conversations between sessions, which illustrate the capabilities of object use and making in terms not just of legacy and heritage ( what has gone before) but also what will be.

- Patients began to make choices for example taking objects from their handbag and adding them into the facilitator's
- One patient asked relatives to bring in materials and pictures to discuss in sessions
- 3 of the participants continued craft making and writing outside of session time using their own initiative.

5.25 A number of the creative sessions especially the film sessions enabled patients to connect with others and with wider society beyond the ward.

- The gorilla video projection session created an atmosphere in which people in the ward could share their thoughts, ideas and fantasies with each other
- Heritage materials and objects generated widespread engagement, provoked discussions amongst patients in the group, as well as creating a sense of community in the ward
- Over time, other patients on the ward who had been withdrawn or had dementia, came over and got involved in more of the sessions

- Six family members and friends of patients were also involved in the project. They took an interest in the life story work, added to the information, provided other information and more generally attempted to maintain some continuity for their relative between the artist-run sessions
- 5.26 NHS staff benefitted from the artists work with patients in several different ways. 100% of survey respondents together with those providing direct feedback (N = 10) valued the contribution of artists to patient care. Results show
- 100% agreed that artists brought a different and valuable dimension to multidisciplinary rehabilitation
  - 100% strongly agreed that artists improved individual psychological and emotional well being.
  - 100% agreed that creative arts had increasing attention, concentration and activity span of patients
  - 100% agreed that patients with dementia who observed and then joined in sessions becoming increasingly attentive over the course of the creative residency
  - 100% would use artists on the ward again
- 5.27 Staff also noted further benefits of artist facilitators and volunteers on the ward who
- Elicited helpful personal and familial information that patients had not revealed to clinical staff
  - Broke the mould of clinically specific treatment goals by adding ‘fun, joy and laughter’
  - Humanised the treatment process which ‘sometimes fails to accord respect and uphold dignity on the ward.’
  - Encouraged the repetitive practice of a single task that outside of the context of an arts session is often boring both to the patient and the therapist<sup>7</sup>
  - Encouraged mobilisation of both hands in some stroke patients used to relying solely on one
  - Shocked staff in a ‘wonderful way’ when they heard music on the ward
  - Slowed things down – the pace of things changed when they were on the ward
  - Motivated inactive or withdrawn patients often with dementia who were usually on the periphery of direct work enabling them to get involved
  - Provided a focal point, distracted patients that tended to wander
- 5.28 In addition to visual stimuli, facilitators reported strong responses of patients to their synthesising objects to stimulate multiple senses. A

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<sup>7</sup> Not only boring but more expensive as it has to be supervised by a skilled professional

powerful example is that of sugar flowers made for one patient by an artist, which evoked both memories of confectionary from childhood and employed the highly codified language of floral signification resulting in a body memory that was retrieved notwithstanding the damage wrought by the stroke. In relation to the olfactory boxes, for example, a patient experienced a strong kinaesthetic memory of manufacturing OXO tins which allowed a reliving of that memory of pressing and folding metal.

- 5.29 The positive outcomes for patients engaging in creative reminiscence in terms of self reconstruction and recovery are validated by observations of a patient who was discharged to a care home. The artist reported on a follow up visit made to a patient at a home some days after the final ward session. R was found to have retreated almost entirely to her previous introverted, outwardly depressed and incommunicative self shortly after her involvement in the project was suspended. While this suggests that creative arts may have a 'just for the moment' rather than a long term benefit, the former patient was quickly rejuvenated when the platform to talk and engage in weaving with the artist was offered suggesting that ward based art work promoted self-expression and positive agency even if only ephemeral.
- 5.30 This example also reinforces studies that indict care homes for low levels of activity of older people and where communication, action and confidence are all inhibited by environments that the LBM facilitators were at pains to document as 'under stimulating'. Indeed an effective contrast can be made between the repeatedly recorded moments of outreach and communication *within* the group of patients during ward art sessions, and energy and enthusiasm generated even in those around the loci of activity even amongst those not directly engaged.
- 5.31 Unfortunately in the care home above the attempt of one resident to communicate with the visiting artists was inhibited by the other residents who told her repeatedly to 'sit down'.
- 5.32 By the end of the project on Beech Ward a significant amount of heritage material had been accumulated through the creative reminiscence activities that facilitated the 'replaying of patient life histories' providing a rich source of data that helped to shape the design of the little boxes.
- 5.33 The transformation of a specialist medical ward into a community of heritage arts practice during a time limited project is indicative of the healing power of creativity and its contribution to discourses about the relationship between art, health and care as well as its potential role in cultural change. Extended arts residency would go a longer way to substantiating the limited claims that can be made for improved outcomes as well as longitudinal improvement.

**6. Beyond the care home: heritage experiences of residents in Manley Court and Glebe Court**

- 6.1 Manley Court care centre in Lewisham is home to 85 residents. Built in the 1960s its current residents include a substantial group of people with high support needs including dementia and MS. Glebe Court care home is run by the Salvation Army in Lewisham and accommodates 47 residents including a high proportion of residents have dementia.
- 6.2 Two facilitators including the Lead Artist, worked individually with 4 residents at Manley Court including 3 male and one female resident. One woman and two of the men were White British and one man Caribbean. Their ages ranged from mid 60s to 80s. Entelechy has been working with two of the younger old men who have complex disabilities arising from stroke and Multiple Sclerosis for over 2 years. The LBM project provided an opportunity to continue and extend this work.
- 6.3 All 4 residents also participated in Entelechy's weekly tea dance sessions led by artists who co-ordinated a bi weekly tea dance programme involving a large group of the home's residents.. The sessions also provided an opportunity for individual residents, older volunteers and family members to 'do turns' - singing or reciting poetry and prose, some self authored and some chosen by an individual with the older audience in mind.
- 6.4 The sessions took place in the home's conservatory – not an ideal space as a dozen residents were consistently unable to enter the room (but enjoyed the session from the adjoining room). The music and atmosphere was fun and upbeat with wheelchair dancing taking place. The event was inclusive of all residents including 3 people with dementia with whom artists made contact throughout the sessions. These residents participated in subtle ways – inclining their heads and leaning forward to better hear and see the activities.
- 6.5 Two male residents F and C were interviewed individually face to face on 2 occasions, a month apart at the home. They were keen to talk about how LBM artists had provided them with the opportunity to express themselves through art. Their life histories included some if not all of the following
- Chronic life limiting conditions and/or disease
  - Troubled life history including in one case imprisonment
  - Disrupted family relationships (little or no contact with family members)
  - Isolation within the home due to communication difficulties and/or personality issues
  - Low mood
- 6.6 The interview with F was challenging given his claims to have worked with Frank Sinatra and apparent involvement with many music

performers of the era and his intense desire to express himself and be recognised for his abilities rather than to be labelled disabled ( F's phrase) outside his disabled body – and F talked a lot about his MS .

6.7 Nevertheless F's story confirmed that for these residents the tea dance sessions were a 'reason to get up in the morning and a reason,' according to F 'to live'. Staff said that he was constantly asking about the next tea dance, the next 21<sup>st</sup> Century tea Dance and that these events were what he lived for.

6.8 For both F and C involvement in LBM

- Improved self esteem
- Provided opportunities to share heritage experiences
- Provided opportunities to develop artistic talents – singing, talking to an audience or writing and reciting poetry
- Enhanced confidence
- Increased physical activity
- Increased opportunities for socialisation

6.9 Observations of F, C, and I were made before the tea dance. Their stance suggested boredom (later confirmed by F) frustration with their disabilities. Members of staff confirmed the alertness in all residents in the hours that followed the sessions in terms of increased conversation between residents, humour, relaxed posture and increased appetite.

6.10 The tea dances were welcomed by the Activities Organisers whose social activities programme was well established in the home. However given the high demand for their services, the LBM programme provided a much needed bi weekly highlight anxiously anticipated by many of the residents.

6.11 Staff also reported that the sessions also had a positive effect on them in terms of

- A sense of joint working with an additional resource
- Serving as a tangible reminder that people with dementia remained responsive to stimulation on many different levels despite cognitive disability.
- Offered examples of practice that staff could emulate in the time between the sessions

' It's so great when they come in, everyone looks forward to the dancing and singing, makes a difference you know, ( who to?)' to me, – look at his face (points to resident in wheelchair) he's so happy.' Member of staff, in post for 4 years.

6.12 I, one male resident with aphasia and observed strumming a ukulele during the sessions the outcomes of being involved in the LBM project were 'life changing'. Due to his communication difficulties, little of his

life history was known. Working with staff (and using a Google map and other on line pictures and materials to prompt I) the lead artist was able to find out that he was born and grew up in North East England where he worked. This helped staff to see him 'as a person, with a history'.

- 6.13 Staff said that V a female resident interviewed was isolated due to her profound deafness (although noticeably during both interviews she was not wearing her hearing aid - which she said did not work.) V was also a wheelchair user. Despite this she was very pleased to discuss her life story and confirmed the benefits of working with facilitators on drawings which she showed with some pride. Talking about her upbringing in Peckham, marred by poverty but 'happy' she had vivid memories of the Coronation She said she enjoyed the poems of the 'helpers' - older volunteers who regularly came and were welcomed by residents and staff at the tea dances.
- 6.14 Perhaps the most poignant heritage tale was that recounted by C, a male resident originally from Trinidad. His narrative began with nostalgic memories of Caribbean home cooking, childhood cricketing and boxing in his youth when he attained a peak of fitness and dreamt of a sports career 'like lots of Jamaican boys'. These contrasted sharply with an adult life in England that had included crime, prison, marital and family breakdown followed by a stroke. From feeling like he had 'los everything, just every ting', the work being done with Z, an artist offered some redemption – he talked in terms of becoming himself again, of finding an inner spirit and recovering the dreams he had as he had migrated to England. He had begun to write poems and although his hemiplegia impaired his ability to recite, his deep throaty voice resonated in the conservatory tea dance sessions. Despite his disability, his gravitas was apparent and he attributed shifting his depression through writing contemplative poetry. Over several weeks he developed the confidence to perform at a larger Entelechy event: 21<sup>st</sup> century tea dance.
- 6.15 The LBM project had also reached out to J living in Cedar Court, another Lewisham care home. For J, the artist had located a series of photographs of an isolated Scottish croft in the Highlands in a state of relative disrepair. It was sufficiently similar to the house where J had lived for much of her life. This image and many others prompted J to talk poignantly about her life, about being received into care, not seeing her mother, her deep sense of loss, and the hardship of life in the croft raising her children. Through, what from her account seemed to be circumstances that she was unable to control, she was now living in a care home where she was by far more cognitively able than many of her peers.
- 6.16 An initial interview showed her well being showed this to be relatively low but a follow up interview suggested this rose after one to one contact with the artist over a month when J was more animated,

cheerful, and positive and would often want to continue drawing. After she joined creative arts sessions at Deptford Mission, Entelechy had made contact with her and began work that was continued through the LBM. J's potential for artistic expression had been recognised and nurtured during the heritage sessions and with support she was encouraged to sing and share her life story at 21<sup>st</sup> century tea dances. It was clear from the home's activities organiser and other staff, that the heritage sessions provided much needed cognitive stimulation and promoted self expression.

## **7. Home alone: migration tales from the community**

- 7.1 The lead artist worked with 4 older people living in the community over 5 sessions using her I Pad as a reminiscence resource. Interviews with 3 older people (one was not seen) highlighted the impact of the project on their lives.
- 7.2 A facilitator who visited D, a man from Barbados with moderate to severe hearing impairment. She noted his anxiety about his health problems whilst the researcher heard about the foot infection, a head wound and financial worries. When he talked about the contact he had had with the facilitator it was clear he valued her visits and the opportunity to relate his migration story of coming from Barbados to England in the 1950s. He had a great love for music especially steel drums and remembered the Caribbean sunshine bemoaning its absence when he came to England. His deep pride in his work for London Transport on the buses as a ticket collector, contrasted with his personal life, which at times was very troubled.
- 7.3 His anxiety became free floating as he attempted to remember his out patient's appointments and the challenge of travelling to St Thomas's hospital whilst recalling his late life marriage to a woman with drink problems and the money taken from him by his children.
- 7.4 He showed real delight in recollecting memories of his sessions with the artist and was clearly unhappy about their ending – constantly wanting to know if 'she was comin back'.

'Ya know she sang t'me? I sang t' her Now where she gone? May (be) she come again? Ya see her? Ya know she comin' back? She told me come see her.' D hunts for a while in suitcases and produces a leaflet about the Albany...'she's here'.

- 7.5 In the weeks that followed the sessions D visited the Albany on 3 occasions and asked for Entelechy Arts, bringing letters that he wanted to understand. He stayed and socialised in the café. This connection suggests that the art sessions provided a bridge to another source of support in the community.
- 7.6 T hails from Malaya and has been in the UK for several decades. He became very low following the death of his wife with dementia for whom he had cared for some years. He talked about his marriage of 30 years and the support he had received. Now alone, this active man clearly missed social stimulation. Facilitators provided him with the creativity that he desired and linked him to other Entelechy activities including a 21<sup>st</sup> Century tea dance.
- 7.7 Creative reminiscence facilitated a wealth of memories, stories, and recipes from his country of origin that raised his spirits. The lead artist who visited him 'recycled' his stories to SEN children when she visited schools. T was particularly keen to talk about 'the Empire' and proved erudite on the topic, particularly about the Second World War. T said that the value of artists' visits was true companionship and friendship – 'hard to find as you are older'.
- 7.8 One former patient from the Stroke unit was followed up in the community. He was recovering at home visiting a day centre twice a week although it would appear that the kinds of active creative engagement he had enjoyed on the ward was not available. He and his family were full of praise for the quality of contact that he had had with facilitators on Beech Ward.
- 7.9 His standpoint was that creative arts that were viewed in terms of 'occupation/participation' in British culture were understood in terms of 'work/employment' in his culture of origin ( Jamaica) Hence his carpentry and woodwork that were his trade. He had enjoyed his sessions with the weaver on the ward immensely and contrasted it to the quality of day care. He was offered information about Entelechy's activities including 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tea Dance as a way of maintaining his contact.
- 7.10 The Home Alone strand of LBM shows unmet needs in the community that Entelechy may be able to respond to through out reach. The responses of those who were engaged in the project - older people with disabilities who are lonely and socially isolated in the community suggests that not only are regular session of art activities beneficial but that that the visits to social services clients and those discharged from hospital can be linked into another source of support as a preventative measure.

## **8. Sharing heritage with younger people with disabilities**

- 8.1 The aims of the LBM project were to include and involve students with profound and complex disabilities in developing and designing the little boxes and to share and communicate these in SEN schools. The evaluation also measured the impact of the boxes by observing selected students during performances and to gather data to corroborate findings from Entelechy staff, creative facilitators, older volunteers, teachers and teaching assistants.
- 8.2 Intended outcomes remained flexible from the outset, but coalesced around multi-sensory stimulation, engaging activities between peers, promoting positive emotions, increasing activity/attention, and feeding back into the classroom experience.
- 8.3 A LBM performance was designed to engage small groups of between 4 – 6 students with profound and complex learning disabilities for 20-25 minutes. To make best use of time, the performance of Doris's box (Box 1) took place at the same time as Darnley's( Box 2) and then switched over so that some students experienced Box 1 followed by Box 2 and some the reverse. A discussion of which combination worked best takes place later in the section.
- 8.4 Entelechy staff scripted, directed and led the performances in conjunction with 3 older volunteer facilitators, 1 younger volunteer facilitator and four artists (including two poets and the lead artist for the project.).This was then the LBM troupe. The facilitator roles were to help to maintain the creative integrity of the project as part of the delivery team, by contributing ideas/experience and working alongside and supporting volunteers in the devising of ideas and the sharing of the boxes. The lead facilitator in particular felt she had a 'holding role in keeping an eye on the time and helping to judge when it was a good moment to move onto a different selection of objects, bringing down the noise and trying to introduce a bit of space where it felt necessary.
- 8.5 The researcher participated in one of the rehearsal sessions at the Albany when the little boxes were revealed for the first time. Led by Entelechy's Creative Director, the session was geared to enabling the LBM troupe and the LBM designer to immerse themselves, experientially, in the heritage memories of Doris and Darnley. Objects were slowly 'unpacked from Doris' shopping trolley and Darnley's suitcases - some of them as solo objects, some of them as set pieces – flying fish, whilst the designer gave instructions about using digital technology e.g. a small hand held projector that screened a film of 1950s London buses circling Trafalgar Square. The Creative Director set the context for each story within which the troupe were encouraged to improvise with how to introduce the objects.
- 8.6 In all 16 sessions of LBM took place in 4 London SEN schools. Two observers observed eight (50%) of these performances (4 sessions each) involving 34 students. Responses were rated using the P Scales.

Results were examined across these performances as a means of corroboration and then refined using data gathered from Entelechy staff, facilitators, and volunteers via on line questionnaires or phone calls. In 6 of the sessions, Teaching Assistants, who were present to support students, supplied feedback on the basis of

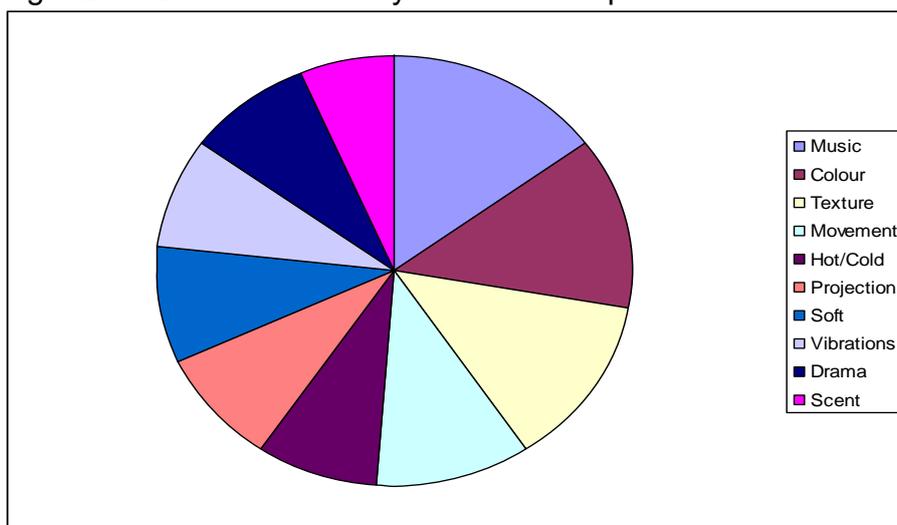
- How did you think that session went?
- What worked well?
- Anything that you would change?
- Has the session provided ideas that you could develop?

8.7 Two students were observed in detail during each of the 8 sessions and behaviours noted using the P-scale. Without any prior knowledge of the students researchers chose two students who differed in terms of gender or levels of disability.

8.8 Fig 2 shows the types of objects by levels of engagement within the sessions. The descriptor that recurs in the P-scale observations with the highest frequency is the gestural indication of preference for objects that are handled in some way although many students exhibited enormous pleasure from very specific stimuli such as scent.

8.9 Connecting with students through objects, demonstrating trust and allowing them to make choices –transitory experiences of power and control lead to noticeable increases in alertness, speed and a propensity for decision making. Indeed, the descriptor that recurs in the P-scale observations with the highest frequency is the gestural indication of preference for objects/stimuli. Repeatedly the TAs reported that many of the students exhibited increased energy and interaction with TAs and each other.

Fig 3 Little Boxes of Memory: students' response to different stimuli

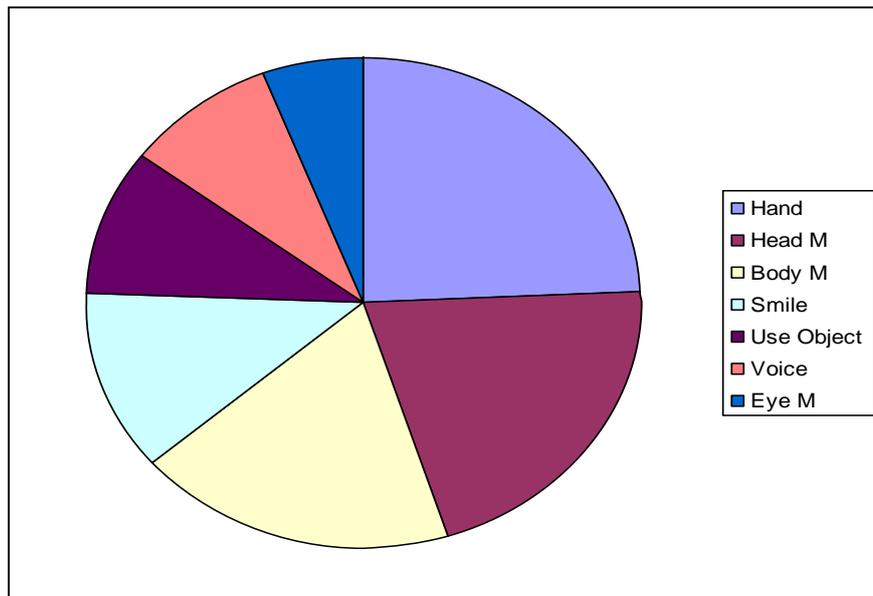


8.10 In one instance a pupil under observation even aided the performers by turning the lights on/off to facilitate the Trafalgar Square projection. The

openness and trust brought by the verbal descriptions of actions further allowed the students to engage with the performers as people as well as the vectors of the objects they performed.

- 8.11 Responsivity to music was high in the sample group, with almost all the close-monitored, P-scale evaluated set showing strong responses to the use of both live instrumentals and recorded melodies. Students generally seemed to respond to strong musical beat, clapping and bass sounds.
- 8.12 Positive results were observed when one of the artists, Z, began employing an improvised use of harmony to 'sing' the student's name to them by way of introducing herself and cueing the performance. The observed effects were calming and engaging. The adoption of sibilants also often proved effective in motivating and aiding concentration when combined with the elements of the performance such as heat, cold or travel.
- 8.13 Virtually no students had no response to contact with the troupe members. Most acknowledged in some way the presence of facilitators when they were in the line of vision and in close proximity to students, causing fluctuations and breezes that suggest sensitivity -surprising both the TAs and performers.
- 8.14 Several students responded to the sensory stimulation of a vibrating bright yellow soft mitt whilst others to a hot and cold pack that were introduced to signal the temperature changes experienced by Darnley on his arrival in the UK and the weather in Brixton when Doris was courting..
- 8.15 Over half of the students appeared to respond to the pieces of fabric with bold prints that emerged from Darnley's box or the tea towels from Doris'; given the tactile nature of these encounters it may have been a combination of colour and texture – a combined stimuli and the interaction with a facilitator that produced the response.
- 8.16 Some of the most positive responses to then perfume scent and facial stroking with a powder pouf were observed to be wheelchair users
- 8.17 Fig 3 shows the kinds of responses noted by observers and their frequency. Most of the responses observed were those associated with the early years P scales reflecting developmental delays due to profound and complex disabilities, although some students with learning disabilities or autism showed responses above these levels.

Fig 4 Students aged 12- 18 with profound and complex needs: types of response to LBM



- 8.18 The most frequent form of response within the observed group was hand/arm movement (either to press down or hit the table if a wheelchair user or to touch a given object or to hold onto an object. These actions are not using the objects which demonstrated by a far low proportion of students observed. Head movements and body movements in response to the stimuli were noted in over half of the students. Smiles were also discernable in a quarter of responses. Utterances, mainly sounds, and some odd words were discernable although 2 students spoke in simple sentences. Eye movement was nuanced and may well have been more frequent than it was possible to see from the observers' position.
- 8.19 Every action was inherently multi-sensory, from the warmth of light to the texture of speaker vibrations making the performance accessible to all. By fostering an environment where every kind of object engagement was permissible, even those not usually allowed in their routine experience – from throwing objects to oral exploration, students were able to explore in the most meaningful and fascinating ways possible.
- 8.20 This had the added outcome of highlighting practices that could be carried on by TA's – this included helping TAs learn how to use the vibrations of sounds that have a positive impact on the mood of students with hearing impairments, to even showing how seemingly violent throwing behaviours could be accommodated and actually constituted exploratory behaviour on the part of the pupil.
- 8.21 The performance enabled aspects of Doris' femininity to be explored by female and male students. Two black adolescent male students with autism who had struck detached macho poses at the beginning of the session suddenly began to show an interest in Doris' 1960s vanity case containing grooming and beauty items and products. One pupil took a comb and spent a few minutes gently combing an older volunteer's hair

almost mesmerised by the combing action and the way her hair fell through its teeth. He also explored the soft pouf and handled the mirror.

- 8.22 As with the fundamental flexibility of approach employed throughout, the use of objects and surfaces in new combinations offered scope for both greater immersion and humour, a representative instance of which involved using the scrubbing brushes on the backs of students' chairs to emphasise unfamiliar dimensions in their peripheral awareness. The elation which these targeted students exhibited stood in contrast to their lack of engagement with the object when in plain view, suggesting that the involvement of their wheelchair in a new and productive way allowed them to rethink a prosthesis that normally slips into the background of a person's awareness.
- 8.23 In one highly effective instant, a student in a wheelchair had separated themselves from the group by focusing intensely and near-exclusively on the back of their hand was promptly re engaged by being offered one of the gloves from Box 1. This kind of acute attention by performers was invaluable in engaging the majority of students
- 8.24 The facilitators supported the telling of the heritage stories of Doris or Darnley first in their youth and then as adults in London. The story of Darnley from the roll of the sea in his suitcases to employment on London's buses moved at an exhilarating tempo with the adult Darnley strongly performed by a performance poet who transformed the space and the student group to a London bus and its passengers issuing tickets and shouting 'All Aboard' as she marched around the room with the session building up to a crescendo of excitement as the facilitators fell in line on and danced a Congo in and around the students.
- 8.25 Doris' story was much more of a sequence of scenarios about her courtship and marriage, love of music of her era (50s and 60s) her makeup, and work in the factory and household chores. In many sense it was more practical yet poetic – like Doris herself in her response to the stroke that left her disabled. Working with the weaver enabled her to reflect on the highlights and the problems in her life – and her LBM shows her stoic, practical yet romantic view of life.
- 8.26 The facilitators acknowledged the differences in response within the student group to its second experience of the LBM but views varied as to what order of boxes offered a better means of sustained engagement with the students. Following 1 with 2 meant students were engaged with the relative calmness of Doris's story before going on Darnley's bus and this helped retain interest and cohere the different narratives as a performance, but the sequence 2-1 made less demands of sustained energy and attention, allowing for a winding down to a calmer end sequence of objects.

8.27 In discussion, the artists and volunteers most often repeated remark when talking about any session was their variability – each session was for them a new experience which they entered into (to a degree) blind. Each performance was thus significantly altered within the parameters of available objects and time to tailor the experience to the people and conditions on the ground.

8.28 In many ways this risk taking was amplified by the performers not actively seeking any medical information or labels for individual disabilities unless a TA was prompted to offer safety advice. This allowed for interactions free from preconceived biases and narrow approaches which whilst reducing the potential to tailor the performance to the needs and histories of the students did mean that performers worked in the spaces and addressed and communicated with the students as people first, avoiding stereotypes and labels.

8.29 Entelechy's Creative Director provided a flavour of levels of engagement in her LBM reflections:

- Heather's feedback about one boy who wants to make his own pop up street scene, and so she spoke to the teacher and they will make a variation on the theme;
- Children loved projecting the light on the lantern as Heather moved it (then went on to project it onto themselves, the ceiling etc); loved spotting the two little figures "2 people!!" Young girls face just opened as the lamp approached her.
- Children opening the light box themselves, and intrigued by the fact that the torches were already on....A & S (both profoundly disabled) seemed to connect with the movement of light through the crystals and the TA's had a go with them themselves. C loved shining the white torch on the white goose feather pom pom and spent ages coveting this discovery.
- Children dressing up as Doris and processing with the trolley. T a boy with a Mohican haircut wearing ladies gloves, another boy with Doris's big pearls around his neck and looking very pleased with himself, whilst dressing his best friend (T, a wheelchair user) up as Doris with hat, scarf etc.
- Children wanting to own the cinema screen (as a result it's also breaking, so we will need to buy a few more of the flower boxes and Velcro) and the fuzzy garden for longer. The fuzzy garden calmed one very boisterous boy down completely.
- S loved the lights and the soft pouf next to her skin. The soft poufs also calmed down Theo when his tummy hurt.
- The TA told me how A was tracking the light of the holly hocks projected onto her with time to the music with her eyes even though she is visually impaired.
- Children were rarely done to, we were! D (Entelechy Director) had a shave, H and R, older volunteers had their hair brushed; one big boy fell in love with the make up bag and wouldn't let go.
- All children especially those with autism connected and coveted the intricacy of the lights onto the crystals.

- All the children including the very reluctant ones become engaged when they could clean and scrub the floor with us...a lasting image is rather a lot of children with older volunteers down on their knees with soap brushes and cloths seriously enjoying the physical activity
- 8.30 The performances of the LBM enabled students with profound and complex disabilities to engage with artists and older volunteers as show through their responses through a wide range of non verbal facial and bodily gestures and actions.

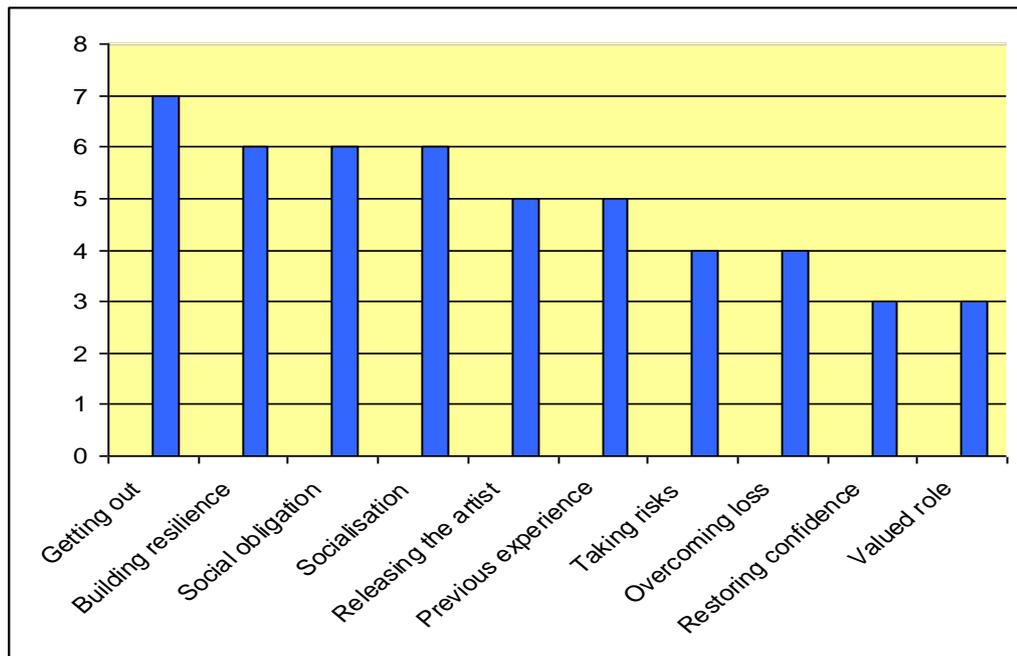
## **9. From older volunteer to heritage facilitator**

- 9.1 For the purposes of the project, Entelechy recruited 12 of its volunteers over 65 as active participants in the process of designing, developing and performing LBM. Most had experience of supporting and facilitating participatory arts programmes having previously been involved in a memory boxes arts programme led by Cases de Fases at the South Bank in 2011.
- 9.2 The older volunteers were all female aged between 74 and 86. Three women were White British, one White European and three Black British from Caribbean communities in South London. One new volunteer joined the group shortly before the LBM began. A young adult who has mild disabilities was also involved in the project. Black British, this volunteer was a useful counterpoint to the age and gender of the majority of the volunteers.
- 9.3 The role of volunteering for LBM was demanding calling for time commitments over 9 months, new learning in terms of skills and knowledge about the goals of artistic practice and eliciting heritage memories, and confidence and flexibility to adapt to volunteer support in very different environments – hospital ward and SEN schools.
- 9.4 The volunteer group were therefore given training to support the work of the project artists and creatively document stories of London life in the 1920s, 30s and 40s. Museum of London staff led workshops that introduced their legacy collections and provided instruction about oral history techniques to Entelechy, artists and older volunteers to guide their London memories work with older people on Beech Ward, in the care home and in the community.
- 9.5 Three of the volunteers also helped to co curate the design of the little boxes at Greenvale School working with secondary age students with profound and complex disabilities. These volunteers participated in

several hours of meetings and rehearsals led by Entelechy prior to the performances in 4 SEN schools.

- 9.6 Entelechy staff allocated 5 older volunteers to work with artists. Both groups were briefed before the art sessions on Beech Ward where they worked closely supporting patients.
- 9.7 Three volunteers actively participated in the tea dances in the care home. They danced and sang with residents. Importantly they wrote and performed their own poetry acting as role models for residents. They encouraged some residents who were similarly on a journey to becoming an artist and commanding an audience. Some volunteers also recited poems that they had specially selected for the session and talked to family members who came in for some sessions. Well known by the residents with whom they were observed having easy and relaxed relationships and trusted by staff, the older volunteers were widely regarded according to the home manager 'as part of the team'.
- 9.8 A focus group with seven volunteers held 3 months after the project began towards the end of the first phase of the project on Beech Ward. The groups explored the volunteers' motives and their reflections on the impact of the project.
- 9.9 Focus group volunteers revealed that their motives for choosing to volunteer with the LBM were a mixture of personal goals and values and interest in the arts.

Fig 5: Volunteers motives for volunteering with the LBM



9.10 The most important motive for LBM older volunteers was ‘getting out of the house’. Volunteers spoke about wanting meaningful contact with the outside world, ‘beyond shopping’ and that volunteering helped them build personal resilience, ‘coming here (Entelechy Arts) stopped has stopped me feeling sorry for myself’ and ‘you always have a laugh’.

It’s better to wear out than rust out. My mother was busy, I like to keep busy and you are always busy with Entelechy. I’ve done things I never thought I would do, been pushed to do all kinds of things I wouldn’t do sitting at home. Amazing really and I love it, love it.... Older Volunteer 2013.

9.11 A number observed that seeing people with health problems made them realise that ‘there are people much worse off than you are’. This reason for volunteering was related to another - social obligation or ‘giving something back, you have to give some ting back’<sup>8</sup> said one volunteer originally from Jamaica. Volunteers had clearly built up strong friendships amongst themselves and most talked about importance of the relationships they had with the Entelechy Director and staff who were ‘like family’.

9.12 For some, the impetus for volunteering stemmed from personal tragedies and losses. Volunteers recounted the death spouses and children in their lives, of heart attacks and chronic long term disabilities and of the cathartic and therapeutic value of their roles. They felt that these experiences enabled them to better empathise with the vulnerable and

<sup>8</sup> Where quotes are from people from BME groups, they are written in a Patois form in the way that they are articulated and not altered.

disabled people they were asked to support. Five of the volunteers talked specifically about the opportunity to volunteer in the arts and the way in which they had been encouraged to realise their artistic potential.

9.13 Building on previous participation in Entelechy events and productions, the LBM project provided further opportunities to develop themselves as learning facilitators, poets and actors. All spoke of their admiration for the artists they worked with on the wards and provided powerful testimonies to the power of art to improve patient confidence, concentration and well being.

It's marvellous to see how the patients respond to the artists. They come alive. It's not a nice place the ward, staff are good but you can tell that everyone is getting bored in bed and feeling miserable. It's amazing to see the change that a bit of knitting or just really.... really listening can have. The families can see it too. They are keen to get things going.

9.14 Two volunteers reflected on their observations of the art sessions on hospital wards. They observed patients looked forward to the sessions that had provided an opportunity for people with strokes to

- Get to know themselves again – pointing out that stroke inevitably includes a sense of loss and that an important goal is to remember *you are still you*
- Have some choice – even if it's choosing a colour, talking about what you like and don't like...having an opinion on things
- See that they can do things - even small things like moving fingers, making drawings,
- Fun and laughter – smiling and being sociable – as one volunteer said 'it's easy to stay in your shell and keep low'

9.15 Following the LBM presentations, volunteers admitted misgivings about 'what to do' but observations suggest that their creativity, flexibility and commitment and taking part in an Ambient Jam session prior to the schools performances and the training sessions had been invaluable but equally 'nothing could have prepared us for the level of improvisation and on the spot decision making required.'

9.16 Volunteers talked about their own tactility or kinaesthetic learning following the LBM performances. H who has a visual impairment was

moved to reflect on the breadth of visual experience which she and others labelled 'blind' were capable of but which institutions and communities rarely acknowledged.

9.18 One of the most complicated aspects of the performance involved very rapid 'scanning faces in response to an object or a sound or a smell and following this up with something else or switching attention to another young person if not. Volunteers spoke of having to go with the flow, to watch what worked and to move on when something did not get a response from a young person. One volunteer spoke of being humbled and of learning improvisation in a big way

9.19 Three older volunteers re interviewed at the end of the project were ecstatic about the responses that they had experienced and satisfied with their own 'capacity to cope.' Describing the LBM sessions as 'the hardest work I have done for a long time', all agreed that performances had been mentally and physically challenging in terms of levels of concentration and teamwork.

## **10. Creative reminiscence: artists and designers reflect on their work**

10.1 Entelechy Arts engaged a group of experienced artists with whom the company has long standing relationships to work in the 3 LBM project sites. Four artists including the lead Artist, worked on Beech Ward including a weaver, an artist specialising in multi media work, and one who is a musician who also has digital technology and craft skills and a poet. The calibre of these artists is a key factor in the ability to engage very vulnerable older people in arts and this success played a crucial role in developing and delivering the LBM. Two artists worked in Manley Court care home. The Lead Artist worked solo in Glebe Court care home and in the community visiting socially isolated older people providing a consistent overview of the artistic content of the project.

10.2 The four artist facilitators who worked on Beech Ward reported gains in terms of their own practice. Although they found the unit overall a dehumanising environment, it conversely gave them the impetus to push boundaries and take risks. They did feel that in this project debriefing was essential given the experience of trauma, loss and grief that they were dealing with

10.3 Although the creative sessions on the ward were not designed in the very specific sense of the word to be therapeutic reported patient outcomes suggest that they improved in part as a result of the creative reminiscence. Facilitators nevertheless said that they would be interested in a more empirical approach to measuring patients' outcomes.

- 10.4 The performances LBM were judged to be physically and emotionally demanding, but facilitators said the most taxing element involved interpersonal, temporal and spatial awareness between the members of the troupe. The work in what was a restricted space was constantly negotiated through body language during the performances. It was one of the principle areas for reflection at the end of performers and in survey responses.
- 10.5 In response to reflective surveys all the artists refer to the space the LBM performances afforded them to reflect upon their own practice at large as well as allowing them to focus on the minutiae and discover how small gestures and actions can have a profound impact. Despite talk of 'unsuccessful objects' that were removed from the boxes, these are far outweighed by the stories of their successes and the positive responses they received from TAs. Positive effects mentioned by artists were
- Increased bodily awareness and awareness of breathing.
  - Heightened multi-sensory awareness
  - Enhanced awareness of working as part of a team
  - Highlighted the importance of timing and communication
  - Better understanding of nuanced gesture
- 10.6 Facilitators said that they were rarely able to reflect on their work and the LBM had offered some opportunities to do this, especially on the ward in terms of the desire to work to co-curate or co-author - indicative of self-aware and self-reflexive practice cognisant of its own methodology. At the same time most of the artists were not aware of the wider context of participatory arts and older people, of the discourses in the field and all agreed that they would benefit from continued professional development in the field.
- 10.6 One area that artists were aware of was how they dealt with what they acknowledged were memories of older people that were sad and distressing – whether it was ethical to help retrieve such memories, reliving lived experiences then not help to work through these.
- 10.7 The designers were also aware that the heritage tales were unlikely to be wholly rosy. The war and life in the 1950s had been undeniably challenging – and a number of the migration stories confirmed this. The lead designer described LBM as a leap of faith for both Entelechy and MOL since the design had to be performative yet take account of health and safety issues and durability given the likelihood (confirmed) that the objects would be subjected to tough handling. Nevertheless the boxes should not tell 'all the story' as most heritage tales were also tales of the unexpected that could be indicated by (for example) a knitted cricket ball with a shaker or bell in the middle or a treacle tin with a fresh rose inside. What had emerged combined digital technology with carefully chosen objects that provided space

for imagination and creative connections between facilitators and audiences.

## **11. Entelechy and MOL staff partnership working**

11.1 The evaluation considered the extent to which partnership between a Museum and an Arts Organisation has increased the reach and quality of engagement in a heritage programme for hard to reach groups of older people and young people.

11.2 The evaluation suggests that there is evidence that the partnership has helped both to achieve this goal. At times this has been challenging.

11.3 Although Entelechy Arts and the Museum of London have worked collaboratively over a year on the process of developing LBM they are very different organisations in terms of aims, mission, size, staffing, structure, and the nature of their work.

11.4 Whilst they are both involved in engaging the public at large and community groups, their cultures differ. This aspect of organisations often affects the power differentials and language partners' use and their expectations of each other.

11.5 The partnership needed to negotiate differences in organisational culture and perceptions of the project between Museum of London and Entelechy. As always organisations frequently experience an inherent tension between achieving their own objectives as set out in organisational, departmental or business plans and more system wide objectives associated with partnership plans. MOL run several different projects over the course of a year whilst Entelechy's resources were almost wholly absorbed by LBM. Differences in priorities influenced the capacity and amount of time that was allocated by each organisation to the project.

11.6 What ultimately helped project delivery was the flexibility and trust between the two organisations and their mutual interest in ageing and disability and regular meetings and communication.

## **12. Conclusions and recommendations**

12.1 The LBM project was organised and led by Entelechy Arts and the Museum of London in collaboration with Beech Ward, Lewisham hospital's stroke unit, Manley Court care home and Greenvale School both in Lewisham It was a complex project involving the co-ordination

of work with a wide range of agencies on different sites and settings to deliver each part of the programme and its outcomes.

- 12.2 The project had substantial outreach involving approximately 200 people of all ages and from diverse social and cultural groups. Residents from care homes and older volunteers participated in 5 further sharing events run by Entelechy Arts extending the reach of the project. The project involved an estimated 80 young people from 4 London SEN Schools including Greenvale School in Lewisham that was a seed bed for growing ideas and the design and testing of the little boxes. It was also one of the schools where performances of LBM took place engaging small groups of between 4-6 of students with profound and complex learning disabilities.
- 12.3 It is a testament to the quality of the partnership between the organisations, the calibre of the artists and the older volunteers and the inventiveness of the box designers that the project successfully achieved its aims and objects and that good outcomes for older people and younger people were achieved. It has to be noted however that given the nature, scope and design of LBM the evaluation does not answer the question as to whether any 'gains' reported by participants, or observed by researchers, artists and others were due in a statistically significant sense, to involvement in creative arts, the LBM performances or other inputs and interventions and would not have happened anyway.
- 12.4 What the evaluation has done is to build a well researched and impartial case which reports what happened during the project where numerous situations were observed, data about participants was gathered and on the basis of evidence presented, to suggest there is a prima facie case for hypothesising that the findings were due to the engagement in art process, relationships and performances.
- 12.5 The project drew on the resources and expertise of MOL whose staff trained Entelechy, artists and older volunteers in the collection of oral histories in oral history techniques and a wealth of material was gathered from older people in different care and community settings.
- 12.6 The process of creative reminiscence improved older patients self esteem and confidence. They developed new skills and remembered old skills whilst art provided a bridge to their childhood and younger adult lives and loves as well as coming to terms with the present and hope for the future. In the care homes, residents pursued their artistic goals supported by older volunteers. Opportunities to perform at tea dances both in the home and on a larger stage at events run by Entelechy improved well being and enhanced self worth. Community dwelling older people reported improved well being and through the artists, links were made to Entelechy that demonstrate the potential of art-as-outreach to combat social isolation.

- 12.7 Designers used the emergent themes of transition, migration, loss, settlement, work (ethic), love, family and community to structure, source and devise the multi sensory heritage objects, artefacts and ephemera that told two distinct life stories: that of Doris falling in love and Darnley's migration from the Caribbean to England.
- 12.8 Entelechy scripted and directed the interactive performance of the LBM that was facilitated by artists and older volunteers. Thirty two interactive performances of the LBM with heritage objects and artefacts took place to small groups of students with profound and complex learning disabilities took place. All students were observed to have responded in some way to Doris and Darnley's stories through gestures, utterances, facial, eye and body movements responses that ranged from nuanced to explicit.

### **Recommendations**

- 12.9 The LBM performances should be experienced by older people in hospitals, care homes and community settings enabling the stories of older Londoners to come full circle
- 12.10 Further collaboration opportunities for MOL and Entelechy would appear to be in developing the roles of older volunteers as facilitators for heritage projects and in using LBM to further develop the use of art objects in special educational needs settings.
- 12.11 The model of art-as-outreach taken out to isolated older people in diverse communities shows promise as a preventive measure and Entelechy should pursue its potential with local health and social care services.
- 12.12 The London heritage resources of MOL are significant; a smaller source that is accessible by local artists, closer to the Albany would be an invaluable asset for future work.
- 12.13 Artist Continuing Professional Development is an area that Entelechy may well wish to explore with academic/institutional bodies in terms of developing creative reminiscence as a field of practice that is increasingly relevant in an ageing society and of value to heritage projects like LBM.

## Appendix 1

### Structured Observation P Scales

Pupil

Date/ Time/Place

#### Descriptors

1. Shows likes/dislikes (Speaking Eng P4)
2. Initiate conversation using questions (Speaking Eng P6)
3. Relate simple ideas, events, stories (Speaking Eng P7)
4. Contributes to pupil discussion/role play (Speaking Eng P7)
5. Can link ideas/add new information (Speaking Eng P7)
6. Can respond appropriately to requests (Listening Eng P 4)
7. Can respond to questions ((Listening Eng P 5)
8. Can respond to others in the group (Listening Eng P 6)
9. Makes choices (voice)
10. Makes choices, gestures
11. Expresses preferences proactively (voice)
- 12 Expresses preferences proactively (gesture)

Time	Descriptor nos.	Notes

## Structured Observation P Scales and Early Years

Pupil

Date/ Time/ Place

### Descriptors

1. Indicates likes/dislikes verbally or through gestures (P3ii)
2. Shows others an object or person (Comm. 16-20 months)
3. Returns to activity of own choice when observing a peer ((Comm. 16-20 months)
4. Joins in familiar poems or songs (22-36 months creative development)
5. Moves hands or other parts of body to music (16-26 months creative development)
6. Accepts and engages in coactive exploration (P2i)
7. Initiates contact with object
8. Demonstrates pleasure and/or joy through laughter or smiles
9. Responds through voice or gesture to stimulus
10. Shows interest in object textures, temperatures, and/or shapes
11. Follows objects with eyes/turns head
12. Responds positively to music

Time	Descriptor nos.	Notes