

**The Baring  
Foundation**

**AROUND THE WORLD  
IN 80 CREATIVE  
AGEING PROJECTS**

*by David Cutler*



## **About the Baring Foundation**

The Baring Foundation is an independent foundation seeking to advance human rights and promote inclusion. The Foundation has three programmes: for international development in Africa; for social justice in the UK; and for the arts in the UK. From 2010-2019 the Foundation's arts programme has focused on creative activity by older people. There are a number of publications from this programme on our website.

For more about the Foundation see *A History of the Baring Foundation in 50 Grants*.

## **About the author**

David Cutler has been the Director of the Baring Foundation since 2003 and runs the Foundation's Arts programme.

## **Acknowledgements**

This publication has been edited by Harriet Lowe, the Baring Foundation's Communications and Research Officer. We are grateful for additional material from Anthony Chan, Dominic Campbell, Isabel Lucena, Dr Tara Byne, and the support of British Council East Asia staff, Ellie Gill Jones and Katelijn Verstraete. We would also like to thank all those who provided photos for this publication.

## **About the cover image**

The cover illustration was created by photographer Michal Iwanowski. Michal is one of the artists in residence in care homes in the cARTrefu programme supported by Arts Council Wales and the Baring Foundation and run by Age Cymru.

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# Around the world in 80 creative ageing projects

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*by David Cutler*

“He was recommended  
by Barings with whom he had  
an open credit.”

Jules Verne on Phileas Fogg in *Around the World in 80 Days* (1873).



Ruth's Table, USA.

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# Foreword

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*by Kate Arthurs,  
Director, Arts at the British Council*

Age has undergone a re-brand. It's not that the beauty industry has made peace with the dreaded 'fine line', nor the food industry ceased to hail the arrival of a new antioxidant solution. No. Globally, we are struggling to navigate our rapidly ageing populations. Population ageing – the increasing of the median age of a region due to rising life expectancy and/or declining fertility rates – is currently at its highest level in human history.

At the British Council we are well placed to witness the social changes taking place in the UK, and how they are mirrored overseas. Our ageing population is both a challenge and an opportunity for the UK. Across the UK, expectations of government, family and community with respect to older people are shifting. Older people are increasingly being seen as our collective responsibility, deserving of inclusion by communities, friends and families, and a source of both labour and wisdom. Age is one of few common human experiences, enabling people to age well is something we all have a stake in.

The values of equality, diversity and inclusion sit at the very heart of the British Council's cultural relations ambition, to build mutual trust and understanding between the UK and peoples around the world. And these values are one lens through which we look at ageing. We recognise that negative perceptions of difference can be damaging. With stigmas of ageism and ableism prevailing – not to mention issues of age and isolation correlating positively, we need to find a way to bring people together across the divides so often determined by difference. In our experience arts are a crucial tool when seeking to connect those who wouldn't otherwise meet. Connecting, learning and partnering with those who have more experience than us in this field is also critical if we are to find new ways of addressing shared challenges.

Many countries in East Asia have rapidly ageing populations. The developed economies of the region were among the first in the world to recognise its social and economic impact. According to the World Health Organization, for example, Taiwan entered the aged society in 1993<sup>1</sup> and in Japan 40 per cent of the population will be over the age of 65 by 2025.<sup>2</sup> It comes as no surprise then that much of our creative ageing work has East Asian roots, as many innovative models and progressive perspectives have come from this region. Here, we've

learned much from the Baring Foundation's approach: identifying a challenge and approaching it with a tireless appetite to understand and catalyse sustainable change. But the Baring Foundation hasn't solely inspired us, we've also had the immense pleasure of working with them in a range of important countries. In Taiwan, their support has enabled us to build and grow a programme of work focused on inclusion and creative ageing, spanning international delegations, workshops and conferences. In Japan, we've facilitated exchanges between the UK, Japanese artists and arts organisations. And, in South Korea we've jointly hosted the country's first Creative Aging conference, uniting the two nations' arts, civic and health sectors to bring insight and expertise to this fledgling field.

I am proud of the work we have delivered in this field, and proud of the depth and distinctiveness of experience we have been able to draw on from across Ireland, Scotland and Wales. One recent project saw us connect leaders from Japan's flourishing creative ageing movement with representatives from Welsh arts organisations as part of an Arts and Ageing UK Study Tour. As these

*“This new publication from the Baring Foundation showcases some of the work the British Council has had the privilege to be involved in, as well as many other exciting examples from different parts of the world.”*

initiatives highlight, creating opportunities to bring people together – across continents as well as generations – to help them see their commonalities can foster profound positive change. Delivering work which has a strong evidence base is important to us, and there is clear evidence for the arts' capacity to support both physical and mental health benefits.

This new publication from the Baring Foundation showcases some of the work the British Council has had the privilege to be involved in, as well as many other exciting examples from different parts of the world. As population ageing appears on the horizon of more and more countries, I hope that we can continue to learn from these experts and their approaches. Creative ageing is set to become a central part of all our futures, and for many of us it will go on to support an essential sense of purpose and fulfilment. Let's take this as a reminder not to see age as anything other than an opportunity for further exploration, for expression, for exchange.

**1** Yi-Yin Lin, PhD, Chin-Shan Huang, PhD; *The Gerontologist*, Volume 56, Issue 2. 'Aging in Taiwan: Building a Society for Active Aging and Aging in Place'. 2016.

**2** Wan He, Daniel Goodkind, and Paul Kowal; *United States Census Bureau. 'An Aging World: 2015, International Population Reports'* 2016.



Rebel Yell, Bealtaine Festival, 2017. Photo: Eamonn O'Mahony. Courtesy of the Bealtaine Festival.





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# Introduction: A new creative age

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## HOW THIS REPORT CAME ABOUT

This report brings together in one place some of the wealth of work that we have discovered outside the UK during our Arts and Older People programme.

The Baring Foundation's arts programme is designed to benefit older people in the UK who wish to express themselves through the arts. Old age is a fool's errand to define but we chose to fund work with people aged over 60 and the vast majority of activity we have funded has been with people aged 70 or over. We have a particular focus on people who have not previously done this or who have challenges to overcome such as living with dementia. The approach that we have generally favoured has been participatory arts where a professionally trained artist works with someone who has not had that training to facilitate and support their creativity. In most cases in creative ageing this has the added benefit of being intergenerational with the artist coming from a different generation and forming a relationship of trust and solidarity.

So if this is a UK arts programme, why have we been so interested in what has been happening outside the UK? Firstly, practice in the UK has been influenced by work abroad, such as the replication and evolution of Meet Me at MoMA (a visual arts programme developed for people living with dementia by the Museum of Modern Art in Manhattan) and Dance with Parkinson's which was created down the road in Brooklyn by the Mark Morris Dance Company. Secondly, we have a huge range of very developed work in the UK to offer in return and to refine through international exposure. Thirdly, the global population is ageing and this creates a shared interest in creative ageing beyond national boundaries, often especially among the fastest ageing societies such as Finland, Japan and South Korea.

## THE INTERNATIONAL CASE FOR THE ARTS IN LATER LIFE

We have funded our Arts and Older people programme as an expression of our belief in the fundamental human right of everyone to enjoy the arts and participate in the culture of their community as recognised in Article 27 of

the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This right should not change with age or physical or cognitive condition. But this conviction does not obscure for us the many benefits of involvement in the arts in older age. These were summarised in an early publication commissioned by us from the Mental Health Foundation.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding mental wellbeing:

*‘Increased confidence and self-esteem were perceived benefits.’*

As with physical wellbeing:

*‘Particular art forms may lend themselves more than others to significant physical health improvements.’*

At a community level:

*‘There is clear evidence that participatory arts programmes provide opportunities for meaningful social contact, friendship and support.’*

And finally at a societal level:

*‘Large scale, high profile festivals have the potential to positively transform attitudes to older people.’*

All facts which are obvious to us all. Almost ten years on the academic evidence base for these claims has increased greatly. Everything that we have seen leads us to believe that this would be as true in Cancun, Colorado or Chennai as in Colchester. Indeed the landmark study in this field comes from the USA. Published in *The Gerontologist* (Vol 46, no 6, pages 726–734), the study followed 300 subjects with a median age of 80. One group was involved in arts programmes and the control group was not. The study suggested that involvement in the arts led to better health, fewer visits from doctors, less medication, increased physical activity and social engagement. This led to the claim that such programmes could result in a reduction of \$6.3 billion dollars at that time to the US public purse.

<sup>1</sup> An Evidence Review of the Impact of Participatory Arts on Older People, Mental Health Foundation, 2011.

## OUR INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES

We have been fortunate in the three main partnerships which have supported our international exchanges.

Firstly, and most importantly, we had the great good fortune to have a concurrent interest in this field with the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust (WCMT). In 2010 they decided for the first time to support a five-year programme of travelling fellowships and to choose arts and older people as the topic. WCMT fully funded the trips. These allowed the lucky recipients an opportunity to travel for around six weeks to research practice abroad. This resulted in 47 fellowships worth around £300,000. On our side we were able to promote the results of their research and in some cases to support subsequent developmental activity in the UK. All the reports by fellows can be found on the WMCT website and a synthesis of some of their themes in *Growing the Creative Ageing Movement: International lessons for the UK* (2017) by Alice Thwaite.

The second partnership came as the result of an approach from colleagues in foundations in the Netherlands. This developed into a four country partnership involving ibkkubia in Germany, the Flemish Culture Ministry in Belgium, a number of Dutch foundations, the Dutch Arts Council and ourselves. Called *Long Live Arts* ('Lang Leve Kunst') we kicked off the project with a London seminar in 2014 and there followed multiple exchanges leading to a magnificent conference in The Hague in 2016, including a royal performance of creative ageing performances in the presence of the former Queen of the Netherlands. More can be found about the project in *Long Live the Arts Manifesto – Feel the Arts*.

I was so impressed by what I saw in the Netherlands that I went back and did more research in order to write a short report *Dutch Old Masters and Mistresses – Creative Ageing in the Netherlands* (2017). Similarly my colleague Harriet Lowe was kindly hosted by Kubia in Germany and wrote *Creative Ageing in Germany: A view from North Rhine–Westphalia* (2017). This project had a second wind in the form of a further partnership with the Dutch Arts Council for Participation, where we jointly funded exchanges between age-friendly culture cities in the UK and the Netherlands in 2017 and 2018.

Lastly, and supported by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's UK branch, in 2015 we partnered with the British Council to co-fund a Japanese exchange. The opportunity to observe and learn from Japan's approach to ageing was so compelling that I wrote an account of the trip: *Living National Treasure: Creative Ageing in Japan*. We went on to fund two further waves of exchange with the British Council, collaboratively enabling visits to Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and China. Although the investments were modest, the impact of these exchanges

is enduring, giving rise to new developments in multiple countries, and ongoing international partnerships with arts organisations in the UK such as Entelechy Arts, Manchester Camerata, Dulwich Picture Gallery and Sadler's Wells.

## **THE SCOPE OF THIS REPORT...**

Unfortunately the spread of projects reported in each country is uneven. This is not a reliable indication of the quantity of work taking place, just on our access to examples. A series of very brief examples are given for each country and where possible a little national context. These are interspersed with seven case studies which I believe are especially significant (the Seven Wonders of the Creative Ageing World!). No examples are drawn from the UK, but the Foundation has published a number of reports highlighting work here, some of which are mentioned at the end of this report under Resources.

## **...AND ITS LIMITATIONS**

This report is far from an intensive, systematic study. By and large, it is work which we have come across through the international exchanges which we have supported. We have expanded on this a little through our contacts and through desk research. A very real constraint therefore has been the author's lack of fluency outside the English language. Other than in the Netherlands, it is rare for work to be translated, so this is far more of an Anglophone report than I would have wished. It should in no way imply that there is not relevant work, especially in Southern and Eastern Europe, it is simply beyond my resources to access it. Therefore this is a very partial account, but still, I believe, filled with treasures.

## Europe



*Abair/Samaa, an intercultural choral performance featuring the Kilcock Men's Shed Choir and Farah Elie, commissioned by the Bealtaine Festival, 2019. Photo: Jeda de Brí. Courtesy of the Bealtaine Festival.*



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## Ireland

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### IF I WAS THE PHILEAS FOGG OF CREATIVE AGEING, I WOULD DEFINITELY BE STARTING MY JOURNEY IN DUBLIN.

An invitation by Dominic Campbell in 2009, the then Director of **Bealtaine (04)**, to the annual month long festival of creative ageing in Ireland so inspired me that I pitched the idea to do a sister festival to Creative Scotland and we joined forces in 2012 to commission just such a festival under the name of Luminate.

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### 01 Uillinn

**Uillinn, the West Cork Arts Centre** has run many arts and older people projects. A recent example has been Stories from the Well-field, an interactive performance with participants from St Joseph's Ward, Bantry hospital. They wrote poems about childhood friends to include in a new work set in a raucous village fair, using puppetry and original music.

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### 02 Waterford Healing Arts

**Waterford Healing Arts** based at the University Hospital Waterford was established in 1993 as an arts and health project working in varied locations including bringing arts to a patient's bedside in hospital. The charity works across art forms with particular strengths in music and visual arts and across ages, but with many service users in later life.

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### 03 St James's Hospital

**St James's Hospital in Dublin** is the home to the Mercer's Institute for Successful Ageing. One of its four strands is the Creative Life programme begun in 2017. The programme is available to older patients and their families and friends as well as the staff caring for them. Art forms include drama, music, poetry sculpture and visual arts. Activities include a choir and the Making Hay Reminiscence Theatre, as well as outreach activities including to the National Gallery of Ireland.

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## 04 Age and Opportunity and the Bealtaine Festival

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Established in 1995 and hosted in the Irish national older people's organisation Age and Opportunity, Bealtaine has had an influence far beyond Ireland, including inspiring sister festivals in Wales, Finland, Northern Ireland and England as well as Scotland.

Bealtaine means Spring in Gaelic and has continued to take place across Ireland throughout the whole of May from its inception. The festival operates two strands: a strategic centrally set programme and a local voluntary programme benefiting from 1,000s of activities across the country under the Bealtaine banner. The scale and reach of the festival is deeply impressive with at least 500 events involving around 100,000 people each May. Highlights from the 2019 festival included:

- A **Dawn Chorus** on the banks of the Barrow in Carlow town and a Dusk Chorus in Temple Bar led by the Aspiro Choir;
- The tenth anniversary of the **Blow the Dust Orchestra**, a scratch orchestra of older musicians who meet regularly to play in Ireland's National Concert Hall;
- **Dancing through the Door**, a piece of dance theatre and participatory performance with CoisCéim Broadreach dance company and based on the festival's theme of hospitality;
- **Abair/Saama**, a newly commissioned intercultural and intergenerational choral performance by Kilcock Men's Shed Choir and Libyan singer Farah Elle;
- **Ageing Provocateur**, a social media initiative to generate debate about ageing and creativity through short written provocations by various artists;
- **Liminal States**, two late evening live performances created in response to the festival's theme of hospitality and respectively taking place in a Waterford lighthouse coinciding with the full moon and a church in Waterford City;
- **Strength in Numbers**, a Bicycle Gang with its own unique style and gang codes led by a group of older people from Dublin descends on the city;
- **Bealtaine @ Temple Bar**, an intergenerational series of family events around Temple Bar culminating in a promenading pop-up opera by Nick Roth.



**Dancing through the Door – a work in progress sharing of a new commission by CoisCéim BROADREACH, for the Bealtaine Festival, 2019/2020. Photo: Rob O'Connor. Courtesy of the Bealtaine Festival.**

An extremely positive study of Bealtaine was published by the Irish Centre for Social Gerontology in 2009 which concluded that the Festival had had a 'profound and visible effect on arts practice at the national and local level'.

Beyond Bealtaine, Age and Opportunity has developed a number of other initiatives:

- A network of 'cultural companions', older people who can accompany and support each other in taking part in arts activities;
- A series of artist's residencies set in care settings around Ireland;
- Professional training for older artists;
- Azure is a collaboration with the Alzheimer's Society and several galleries to enhance the experience of people living with dementia around visual arts;
- Accredited training for activity coordinators in care homes on arts and cultural activities.

Given such success and endurance, it would be easy to forget that Bealtaine was born in a boom economy and has had to survive a period of great austerity in Ireland's public expenditure.

There is no doubt that Bealtaine has served as an engine in developing a diverse, mature and confident creative ageing sector in the Republic. Arts and Older People is specifically identified as an area for support by the Arts Council of Ireland.

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## The Netherlands

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An academic study in 2004 claimed that the Netherlands was the best country in the world at looking after its older citizens. It is certainly true that the Netherlands spends much more per head on social care than the UK (though this has been somewhat squeezed by a period of public austerity) and is known for a series of innovations in social care such as a specialist retirement village for people living with dementia called De Hogeweyk where one of the seven distinctive styles of housing is 'cultureel' for people with an interest in theatre and cinema.

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### 05 Age-Friendly Culture Cities

The Netherlands also feels familiar to someone from Britain in its approach to the arts with a strong tradition of participative arts and a highly active specialist Arts Council for the field called the FCP (Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie). The Baring Foundation has worked very productively with the FCP through the Long Live Arts Collaboration and we were delighted when they used work in Manchester as the inspiration for their new funding programme giving grants to **Age-Friendly Culture Cities**. The programme is running between 2017 and 2020 and works with municipalities and cultural organisations to ensure that creative ageing is a sustainable part of local arts and welfare policy. Three successive funding rounds give awards to between five and seven cities. An application needs to embed work within a broader plan of action by the city in order to be awarded 40,000 euros. Assessment visits lead on to an additional extra prize each year of 20,000 euros. The programme is building a network of good practice among the participating cities.

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### 06 Music Generations

**Music Generations** was founded in 2001 by Conny Groot when Rotterdam was European Capital of Culture. She built an organisation on the principles of intergenerational and intercultural exchange and solidarity. She brings together recent young migrants with older people who were born in the Netherlands. Their repertoire is varied but includes rap and hip hop. Since 2001 the group has worked with over 2,000 people and musicians are drawn from academies across the country.

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## 07 Care & Culture

**Care & Culture** was started in 2012 by serial social entrepreneur Margreet Melman. Using a professional choir master and musicians, the company creates a bespoke musical programme in a care home or a day centre called the Care & Culture Choir. The programme is intergenerational and care is taken in supporting a class of primary school children over a term, leading up to a show involving family and friends. There is an added bonus that the children gain a term of music tuition.

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## 08 PRA Muziektheater

**PRA Muziektheater** is run by artistic director Monique Masselink. Two dance projects have been created and performed in over 75 care homes. One project, Look into My Eyes, brings together primary school children with care home residents and the other, Simple Desires, brings together dance students with residents. Each programme also uses professional dancers and musicians. Masselink stated that older people in care homes often need to be touched tenderly rather than clinically, something she describes as 'skin hunger', a need which dance can meet.

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## 09 Foundation for Arts in Care

The **Foundation for Arts in Care** (Stichting Kunst in de Zorg) was founded in 2008 by artist and cultural entrepreneur, Vera Boos. She was driven to create the charity on the basis of her family's experience of residential care. Since then over 40 projects have been delivered. Half of these have been using Zona's Kiosk. This resembles a travelling caravan, arriving in the care home with up to 16 artists skilled in different participatory art forms. Over a period of weeks a unique work of art or performance is created in each care home.

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## 10 Museum for 1 Day

**Museum for 1 Day (MV1D)** takes museum collections into care homes. It was established in 2015 by Angela Manders and Marlies Juffermans. The Museum works with two groups of people: frail older people who can no longer visit a museum and active older people who act as volunteers and who receive training about a specific collection as well as in presentation skills. Museums are places where objects can stimulate curiosity and the senses. In this case they also provide older people with the opportunity to recognise and reminisce.



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## 11 SMAAK Foundation

The **SMAAK Foundation** in Amersfoort was established in 2015 to champion creative ageing. One of the main projects for SMAAK has been setting up Pop-Up Museums. These are curated by older people with a new theme each year. In 2017 the theme was abstract art with a strand of work called 'art against loneliness' where ten artists sent weekly postcards to people in care homes after forming relationships with them. The Foundation has formed a relationship with Gallery Oldham in the UK.

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## 12 Van Gogh Museum

The **Van Gogh Museum** has been leading a collaboration for several years called Kunst maakt de mens – ouderen ontmoeten Van Gogh ('Arts maketh the man – older people meet van Gogh'). This draws inspiration from the life and work of van Gogh to run workshops in care homes led by professional artists. Over 1,000 people participated in six different areas of the country with a link to the artist's life. A two year-long research study into the project's impact has been published.

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## 13 Gekleurd Grijs

Festivals are also a way of bringing attention to creative ageing by working across art forms. The province of Drenthe now celebrates **Gekleurd Grijs (Coloured Grey)** across April. A series of events are held in galleries, museums, community centres and care homes, involving a variety of organisations. Two artists in residence were commissioned to work with older people. In one case this resulted in a dance piece created with residents in a care home.

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## 14 Gruitpoort

Arts centres can provide a splendid focus for creative ageing programmes and this is definitely the case for **Gruitpoort** in Doetinchem. The centre includes a theatre and a cinema. It has embraced the Long Live Arts programme as an opportunity to broaden its appeal to older people working with a number of local partners. This has resulted in a multi-pronged programme going to 30 locations, based around training over 100 volunteers and involving local school students. Projects have included singing in care homes and the 'telephone reading service' giving live readings straight to your armchair.

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## 15 Wintertuin: Platform for the Elderly and their Stories

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Vitalis, a major care home provider, and a literary production agency Wintertuin, which publishes books as well as running a number of literary festivals, have joined forces for a programme called Platform for the Elderly and their Stories. The programme is led by the Maiike Mul, Arts Coordinator, a dedicated post at Vitalis, and Noortje Kessels at Wintertuin.

The programme has a number of components. Called **The House of Stories**, creative writing classes take place over a year with residents. The programme's strapline is 'Prose instead of Prozac'. This is seen as a talent development initiative for writers in their 80s and over. They are given younger mentors who are experienced published writers. Great attention is paid to stimulating memories, using photographs, objects and even smells. The work takes place in a specially staged room to create a pre-war living room. The stories are published in a printed volume, as well as a version online. Podcasts are also made of the stories. Care is taken to present this well and the authors are professionally photographed in the same way as a commercially published writer would be. They are also given training in how to present their writings and stories to an audience.

Another component is the cleverly titled **Large Type Festival** (Groot Letter Festival). There is no obvious equivalent as yet in the UK. There have been two editions of the festival in care homes in Eindhoven and the 2019 edition was in Rotterdam. Famous writers spend the day at the care home performing for the same kind of glamorous literary festival you might find anywhere in the Netherlands. Music and other entertainments are also on offer. The festival is intergenerational, with a number of young children participating. The programme was amazingly diverse. As well as readings, there were sessions where participants could imagine different ways of being married for a day, with a local registrar to officiate, temporary literary tattoos, and in the cultural pharmacy literary advisers in white coats wearing stethoscopes would write you a prescription for your literary ailments.

Another initiative has been **Q and A with the Grey**. Here older people set up their stall at a literary festival and people can come and ask them any questions they like about getting older – a little like the Living Library initiative in the UK and elsewhere.

Finally, the **Writer in the House** programme places writers literally in residence in a care home for a month (rather than say weekly workshops, which are often referred to as residencies). Writers Willem Claassen and Maartje Wortel both stayed a few weeks in a nursing home. Maartje wrote in the newspaper, Trouw:

*“The longer I stay at home, the more I find out that the elderly are almost no different from my peers.”*

Groot Letter (Large Type Festival). Photo © Vincent van den Hoogen.



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## Germany

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Germany has much in common with other North European countries regarding the shape of demographic change. It has been experimenting with different approaches to social care such as cohabitation models of mutual support like Amaryllis in Bonn or intergenerational social support centres called Multigenerational Houses.

But what sets Germany apart when it comes to creative ageing is its emphasis on training and professionalisation of the arts offered to older people. This is in tune with a more general approach to work with older people, as in Finland. This is best exemplified by the organisation Kubia in North Rhine-Westphalia (18).

In general there is a huge amount of high-quality work on creative ageing in Germany which deserves to be better known internationally.

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### 16 Altentheater

**Altentheater** in Cologne can lay claim to being a world pioneer in creative ageing. Founded in 1979 by Ingrid Berzau and Dieter Scholz, it is part of the *Freies Werkstatt* theatre that started a few years before. Actors range in age from their mid-sixties to mid-nineties. Performances are co-created with them, reflecting current life as well as the actors' personal histories and journey through ageing. The ensemble has performed all over Germany and beyond, organising the first world festival of older people's theatre in 1999 with 250 participants attending from four continents.

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### 17 Art for Care

**Art for Care** was set up in Essen by visual artist Evelyn Duerschlag. She goes into care homes and works with residents to create intricate wall murals. These are often of local landmarks and are deliberately designed to look how residents would have known them in their youth. An example in Essen is a mural of a concert hall where The Beatles played in 1966. The murals will often include cameo appearances by the residents. In this process of joyful co-creation Evelyn will also work with care home staff as well as residents.

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## 18 Kubia

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A unique feature of the arts and older people scene in North Rhine-Westphalia and in Germany is the Centre of Competence for Creative Ageing and Inclusive Arts (kubia).

kubia is a training and information institution for *Kulturgeragogik* or 'cultural gerontology'. kubia, together with the University of Applied Sciences in Münster, has been instrumental in efforts to build *Kulturgeragogik* as a professional and an academic discipline. It emerged from the strong belief that pedagogy (theory of learning) is linguistically and in practice inextricably linked to children's learning and there needed to be ways of working better suited to the lives, experiences, capabilities and interests of older people.

kubia runs a wide range of short workshops and webinars for professionals, amounting to about 14 a year attracting a total of around 200 people. The topics covered are very varied – its 2017 schedule, for example, included using video in storytelling with older people, leading an older people's choir, moderating a storytelling café, and using humour with people with dementia. The workshops are intended to be very practical and give something people can take back to their work. They are run by practitioners and are designed to be opportunities to exchange experiences and ideas.

kubia and the University at Münster together offer a year-long professional qualification in *Kulturgeragogik*. Participants on this course come from social care, from the arts, and from local and regional authorities (often people in cultural sphere who want to widen their public programmes to include older people). The course is part-time, achievable alongside employment, and involves a practical project and a viva at the end of the course.

The university planned to offer a Masters course from 2018.

As well as training, kubia manages the funding provided by the Ministry, dispensing funds for innovative projects around the state. It also conducts research and tries to identify gaps in provision. For example, noting that older people's theatre groups are largely female and need performance material for large casts but that there was a lack of contemporary writing that met these criteria, it funded a competition for aspiring scriptwriters challenging them to fill the gap.



kubia also acts as an information hub and promoter of good practice, for example, running 'action days' where funded projects can meet, present their work and exchange ideas. Its long-running *Theatergold* (Theatre Gold) programme runs a biennial theatre festival *WILDwest* for older people's theatre in the region – with productions, workshops and seminars. Its website provides a calendar of relevant events for older people and for professionals and its well-produced magazine offers both inspiration and good practice.

Art for Care project. Photo © Evelyn Duerschlag.



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## 19 Lehmbruck Museum

The **Lehmbruck Museum** in Duisburg was the first in Germany to offer tours for people living with dementia in 2006. This led them to run a research project into effective models of art appreciation which resulted in a training workshop offering a qualification to tour guides. This has been rolled out to museums across Germany. A second initiative of older volunteers or artlovers ('artgenossen') emerged from a project with primary school children called Hey Alter! This group is now a permanent asset to the museum developing their own projects such as a visitor's audio guide to the collection offering the perspectives of old and young people on the same objects.

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## 20 Atelier D (Studio D)

**Atelier D (Studio D)** is a regular art workshop for people with dementia. It was the brainchild of, and is run by, Corinna Bernshaus, a ceramic artist. She and fellow artist Uscha Urbainski both have their own studios in the *Kunstschule Werksetzen*, an 'art school' where they do their own work as well as run the sessions. People with dementia attend usually with a relative or carer – there is normally no specific theme but they can use the materials there to do what they feel inspired to do. *Atelier D* is a separate room, offering a quiet retreat, but participants can mingle with whatever activities are going on in the main room as well.

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## Belgium

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### 21 Peeping Tom

**Peeping Tom** is a Belgian contemporary dance company with an international reputation. Set up in 2000 much of its work has been around the theme of ageing and the family. It describes its style as hyper-realistic with concrete locations mixing with fantasy. *Vader*, the first part of a trilogy of works, is set in a care home and spawned a co-production, *Third Act*, with a documentary film company working with older actors looking at care settings.

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### 22 Fonton

**Fonton** in Bruges is a centre for expertise on living with dementia. Its local campaign has been credited with making Bruges the most dementia-friendly city in the world. It has many aspects with an emphasis on the commercial sector becoming dementia friendly and displaying the knotted handkerchief symbol in shop windows. Public and private firms have undertaken dementia-friendly training. This has included the wealth of heritage and culture centres in Bruges, as well as a dementia choir and dance initiatives.

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### 23 Sering

**Sering** is a socially engaged theatre based in Antwerp and created by actress Mia Grijp. Much of its work is participatory and international. A major project for the theatre, the World Carousel, began with a piece of work *Eerste Liefde - First Love - Primer Amor*, bringing together older people in Antwerp, the Bronx in the USA and Villa El Salvador in Peru. The piece was co-created with the older people and professional actors. The audience is taken back to the first loves of the older people on stage.

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### 24 Art For Dementia

The **Art For Dementia** project was founded and is run by artist and architect Barbara Luel. The inspiration for the project was her experience of her grandmother living with dementia, especially around communication difficulties. After this she became aware of arts workshops run in care homes by Bert Vervaeet and began to run classes herself in her home town of Leuven.

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## Sweden

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### 25 Etnografiska Museet (Ethnographical Museum)

The **Etnografiska Museet (Ethnographical Museum)** in Stockholm like many galleries and museums worldwide has been influenced by the Meet Me at MoMA programme for people living with dementia. They have created *Moten med minnen* ('Meetings with Memories'), which has been funded by the Swedish Postcode Lottery and a number of dementia charities. Tours are for roughly 15 people living with dementia and their carers and last around 90 minutes. They take place on Mondays when the Museum is otherwise closed. The trained guides try to find 'hooks' to the objects to stimulate the memories of participants.

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### 26 Skånes Dansteater

**Skånes Dansteater** in Malmö is one of a number of dance companies as well as individual dancers and choreographers that have benefitted from the approach developed by the Mark Morris Dance Company to deliver Dance for Parkinson's.

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## Finland

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Finland has the fastest ageing population in Europe as well as being renowned throughout the world for its progressive social policies. Creative ageing is no exception. Although, as in many countries, budgets are being cut, welfare and cultural spending remain relatively high. An important factor in Finland has been the merging of health and social care budgets for some time and the opportunities which this provides. For instance in Helsinki there has been a joint post for almost a decade serving arts and health. There is also an emphasis on higher education and professional qualifications in all jobs including in social care.

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### 27 Armas

A new national creative ageing festival stepped out in 2018. **Armas** took place across Finland to mark one hundred years of independence. It was the hard won creation of Raisa Karttunen who drew inspiration from the Luminate festival in Scotland. The festival took place over two weeks with a huge variety of around 250 events. There was a beer tasting session combined with the music of The Beatles, guided tours of the National Art Gallery by current and retired staff, a photography project at the iconic Finlandia Hall curated by people living in a care home, and a performance by an older people's choir organised by the Miina Sillanpää Foundation which provides services for older people.

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### 28 Aali

Armas roughly translates as an affectionate name for an old man, and he has a sister in **Aali** (similarly 'darling') which is the name for the national network for arts based elderly care, a network of 13 towns and cities across the country with a national coordinator.

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## 29 Musiikkitalo

**Musiikkitalo** or the Helsinki Music House is a new state-of-the-art concert house and home to two of Finland's 30 orchestras. It takes part in the city of Helsinki's Cultural Companions scheme with free tickets for someone to take a companion to an event, which is often used by older people. So are the regular free rehearsals. The Music House often streams its concerts and these are sometimes streamed directly to care homes. On top of all this, members of the orchestra frequently volunteer to play live in care homes in small ensembles.

Opening event at the Armas Creative Ageing Festival, Finland, October 2017.



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## 30 Comprehensive Service Centres

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These city-owned, local community centres in Helsinki provide services for both older people and for unemployed people. They combine residential units with nursing care, including for people with dementia, with a range of facilities for the local community. In some centres at least these are to a very high standard, modern and attractive.

**Kinapori Centre** is led by a manager with an arts degree and was re-launched by the Minister for Culture in 2012. It has very well-equipped workshops for textiles, ceramics and metal working, as well as a gym and swimming pool and a large theatre and auditorium which is used, among other things for tea dances twice a week. The restaurant and library are used by the local community as well as residents.

**Roihuvuori Centre** also has a welcoming library at its entrance and communal restaurant. All Finnish public buildings must have a bomb shelter and theirs has been put to creative use with a multi-sensory room, art exhibitions on the walls and storytelling sessions. An artist who is also a nurse has created an installation of beautifully woven colourful fabrics falling as ropes from high windows, alluding to a Finnish folk tale similar to Rapunzel called 'I am still waiting'. Day care users can enjoy a range of arts events, for instance a classical guitar concert interwoven with relaxed conversation with the audience about the pieces.



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## Denmark

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### 31 CoreAct

**CoreAct** was formed in 2006 by theatre-makers Anika Barkan and Helene Kvint. They take their work to many different types of spaces, including theatres, but they have run a number of arts events in care homes and nursing homes. Their project Rolling Rooms uses interactive drama and scenery to stimulate memories and the senses. Working in 14 care homes they have collected the individual life stories of over 300 residents which have then been combined with an individual soundscape created by a sound artist.

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### 32 Old Town Museum (Den Gamle By)

The **Old Town Museum (Den Gamle By)** in Aarhus has created a 'remembrance apartment' decorated in the style of 1950s Danish interior décor (doubtless more stylish than British). The apartment is sometimes open to the public as part of the museum but often it is used for courses and visits by people living with dementia. Somewhat similar to **Kitanagoya-shi Historical Museum** (68) in Japan, this approach is being experimented with in Sweden and Norway too.

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## Portugal

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### 33 Trupe Sénior

**Trupe Sénior** aims to promote and increase the participation of older people in public and performing spaces. It is an award-winning initiative created in 2016 by Portugal's most respected and established circus school ('Chapitô') and receives funding from Lisbon's City Council. All the technique developed by the participants in circus, dance, music and theatre is used to support their self-expression (as individuals as well as a troupe) and claim their right to full citizenship. The troupe performs regularly in events all over the country.

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### 34 Companhia Maior

**Companhia Maior** is a company composed of older/retired people with a professional background in the arts and media (former actors, dancers, radio professionals, etc) who wouldn't otherwise be able to use their skills and have a fulfilling life. The company was formed 10 years ago, inspired by (Portuguese choreographer) Clara Andermatt's experience of working with the Company of Elders at Sadler's Wells. The company is resident at the Belem Cultural Centre (CCB) and receives funding from the City Council and a few other sources. The average age of its participants is currently 75. It is a multidisciplinary performing arts project whose work results in a contemporary hybrid of theatre, dance and music. An annual production (original work or the adaptation of a classic) is developed in collaboration with the most distinguished directors and choreographers from younger generations. The company performs at the CCB and other venues in Lisbon and across Portugal, with occasional international performances.

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## Austria

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### 35 Demenz Kunst Gesellschaft (DAS Dementia Arts Society)

**Demenz Kunst Gesellschaft (DAS Dementia Arts Society)** is an arts based research project based at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna. It combines experts from the fields of the arts, design, health care and urbanism and works nationally and internationally. It includes projects to change the perception of the general population regarding people living with dementia and artistic sensory workshops for those with lived experience.

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## Poland

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### 36 Regional Social Policy Centre in Poznan

The **Regional Social Policy Centre in Poznan** ran a campaign against the social exclusion of older people in 2012. Called 'Life is Passion', it had a strong emphasis on the arts and included TV commercials of older people in Poznan expressing their artistic passions and a series of billboards across the city with similar images.

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### 37 Seniors Take Action

**Seniors Take Action** is an project led by the Association of Creative Initiatives, a national umbrella organisation, and several collaborators. It was primarily a grants programme with a number of aims including encouraging intergenerational artistic activity, promoting volunteering by older people, and challenging stereotypes of ageing.

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## The Anglophone world

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Young@Heart Chorus, USA. Photo © Lucienne van der Mijle.

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## USA

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The USA has been influential internationally in the development of creative ageing. Dr Gene Cohen conducted a landmark study into the health benefits of participatory arts in older people, in 2001 publishing *The Creative Age: Awakening Human Potential in the Second Half of Life*. Along with Susan Perlstein from Elders Share the Arts (39), he established the National Center for Creative Aging at George Washington University in Washington DC. Some programmes described below, such as Meet Me at MoMA and Timeslips, have been widely replicated elsewhere, including in the UK.

Met Life Insurance for a period was an important source of targeted funding, including for awards for good practice. When this stopped to some extent Aroha Philanthropies took up the baton through one of its three funding streams called Vitality Arts. The Obama Administration also held a National Summit on Creativity and Aging in Washington DC in 2016 organised by the National Endowment for the Arts.

However in an era of very low public investment in the arts and great pressures on philanthropy, the arts organisations developing these projects have often struggled for funding.

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### 38 Timeslips

**Timeslips** was created by academic and arts practitioner Anne Basting in 1998. Starting in Milwaukee, it has spread worldwide. Its purpose is 'to bring meaning to later life through creative engagement'. Its central approach is simple and effective. Normally in a care setting a trained facilitator offers a photograph or image to a group of older people as a spark to ignite their creativity. Sensory questions are asked such as 'what do you think that food would taste like?'. These are then gathered into a written narrative, that is expressive, often humorous but also revealing about the lives and characters of the participants. An important aspect of Timeslips is that it does not press people to remember facts or experiences when they may have trouble with their memories. Instead it relies on their unimpaired creative capacity in the moment.

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## 39 Elders Share the Arts (ESTA)

Unusually I want to include an organisation which sadly closed in 2018. **Elders Share the Arts (ESTA)** began in 1979 when Susan Perlstein started a single living history workshop. This grew to cover care homes in the Bronx and went on to care homes across New York City. ESTA believed that 'Living History', how older people are bearers of culture and history, should be central to its approach. For many years it ran an elders story telling group called Pearls of Wisdom. Founded on theatre and storytelling it expanded into other art forms and training.

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## 40 Stagebridge

**Stagebridge**, founded a year before ESTA by Dr Stuart Kendall in Oakland California, is thankfully still in robust health. Its aim is to transform the lives of older adults through the performing arts, describing itself as a theatre company 'for and by' older people. Stagebridge reaches 25,000 people annually through around 600 workshops and entertainment. It runs professionally taught acting classes for people over 50 years of age. Its Seniors Reaching Out initiative works in a wide variety of community venues.

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## 41 IONA Services

Established in 1975, **IONA Services** is based in Washington DC where it runs a range of services for older people, their families and carers. These include care homes and day services. It has built a deservedly high reputation in its use of the arts for older people. Some of these activities are located in their Wellness and Arts Centre. Each year an older person is artist in residence at IONA including staging an exhibition as well as workshops and talks.

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## 42 Quiltmakers of Gee's Bend

Begun shortly after the abolition of slavery the **Quiltmakers of Gee's Bend** are considered an important part of American art and heritage. Drawing on African textile patterns, quilters were taught techniques as part of their culture in the Rehoboth and Boykin areas of the Alabama River. The upward facing quilt top is a highly personal artistic expression, made while working alone. Today the quilters are almost entirely older local women of colour and quilts are available for purchase and in museums collections.



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## 43 Ruth's Table

**Ruth's Table** in San Francisco was founded in 2009. Its aim is to give creative opportunities to older people and people with disabilities. Most of its participants are on a low income and 85 per cent are immigrants. There is a range of classes on offer mainly around the visual arts, crafts and movement. Ruth's Table also runs regular exhibitions and collaborates with a range of partners including local schools and universities.

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## 44 Lifetime Arts

At a strategic level, **Lifetime Arts**, based in New York, has been created to connect people, funding and strategies to increase the quality and quantity of creative ageing programmes across the country. It already offers a wide range of online resources and in-person courses which will be supplemented in 2020 by a new online course.

Ruth's Table, USA.



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## 45 Dance for PD

**Dance for PD** (Parkinson's Disease) was developed by David Leventhal at the Mark Morris Dance Company in Brooklyn. Starting in 2001 and providing classes in eight locations in New York City, Dance with PD is growing into an international movement, including in the UK, where the Baring Foundation has supported a network based at the organisation People Dancing.

Dance with PD states, 'our fundamental working principle is that professionally-trained dancers are movement experts whose knowledge about balance, sequencing, rhythm and aesthetic awareness is useful to persons with PD. In class, teaching artists integrate movement from modern, ballet, tap, folk and social dancing, and choreographic repertory to engage participants' minds and bodies and create an enjoyable, social environment for artistic exploration'.

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## 46 Young@Heart Chorus

The **Young@Heart Chorus** began life in 1982 in a Western Massachusetts elderly housing project as a way of passing time. The chorus ranges from 73 to 93 years of age. They have been on over 30 international tours. They shot to fame in a fantastic documentary by George Walker first aired on the UK's Channel Four which has since become a documentary festival staple. Much of the attraction of the Chorus is their unstoppable enthusiasm for rock classics sung in a way to defy any stereotypes of older people.

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## 47 Music and Memory

Although based in New York City and only founded in 2006, **Music and Memory** has expanded to deliver training to thousands of care facilities, mainly in the USA but also beyond. The training focuses on how to create playlists – for use on mp3 players etc. – of music for people living with dementia. In this it bears some resemblance to Playlist for Life in Scotland. The programme has become widely known through the film *Alive Inside*.

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## 48 Concerts in Motion

**Concerts in Motion** operates across the five boroughs of New York. It exists to bring high-quality music to people who can't come to the concert hall due to physical facility or cognitive impairment. Concerts last an hour. Over 100 musicians bring professionally played music to around 2,000 mainly older people per year. The charity has some similarities to Live Music Now in the UK.

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## 49 Arts for the Aging (AFTA)

**Arts for the Aging (AFTA)** in Bethesda, Maryland began with a request for artist Lolo Sarnoff to work with people living with Alzheimer's in 1986. Two years later she set up the organisation at the age of 72. It has grown to provide creative ageing projects throughout Greater Washington supplied by a group of teaching artists. Projects take place in care homes as well as community and cultural centres. They range across art forms and are frequently intergenerational. AFTA has developed a number of online resources for later life creativity.

**Arts for the Aging, USA.**



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## 50 Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and Meet Me

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MoMA in central Manhattan, New York, is one of the largest and most important modern art museums in the world. It received a major grant from Met Life Insurance in 2006 to expand its work with people living with dementia and their carers.

The core programme was to offer discussion and creativity workshops to participants either at MoMA or on an outreach basis to care homes and day centres or other community venues. A key further step was to then codify this work into an extensive free website, using downloadable training packs and inspirational training videos. Thematic art modules draw on the Museum's collection. The approach received a positive evaluation from New York University.

Alongside this, MoMA used the grant to conduct a very extensive dissemination exercise, with the result that between 2007 and 2014, 10,500 people saw presentations through conferences and workshops across the USA and beyond leading to very widespread replication.

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## Canada

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### 51 Society for the Arts in Dementia Care (SADC)

The **Society for the Arts in Dementia Care (SADC)** is based in British Columbia. It was founded in 2005 and provides an umbrella body for practitioners and academics. It also provides workshops and training on Creative Expression, Communication and Dementia – a tool for assessing and supporting the creative abilities of people living with dementia.

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### 52 Smile Theatre

The **Smile Theatre** based in Toronto, Ontario has been in operation since 1972. It is the only professional theatre in Canada specialising in taking theatre to where older people are, including nursing facilities, hospitals and care homes. Performances always include music and a session at the end for performers to meet the audience and sign programmes. Smile runs interactive workshops too.

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### 53 Terrace Players

The Baycrest Centre in Toronto provides a range of services for older people in Greater Toronto including care homes, day centres and specialised services. Baycrest is the home for the **Terrace Players**. They are residents or users of these care services and use theatre to articulate their experience of care. Participants can be in their 90s or centenarians. The group originated with the concept of forum theatre and giving residents voice but has developed beyond these constraints. Plays are performed for fellow residents and to the wider community.

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## Australia

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### 54 Queensland Ballet (QB)

**Queensland Ballet (QB)** was founded in 1960 and is one of only three professional ballet companies in the country. QB has developed two classes dedicated to older people, the more general Ballet for Seniors which is being researched by the Queensland University of Technology and Ballet for Parkinson's, where QB is the first Australian ballet company to offer specialised classes.

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### 55 Belconnen Art Centre

The **Belconnen Art Centre** in Canberra plays host to a series of dance classes, developed as part of a cross-institution program including the National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery, State Health authority and the Museum of Australia. The series, Dementia in the Arts, caters to those experiencing chronic conditions, including dementia and Parkinson's Disease, and is delivered by a team of highly experienced dance artists.

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### 56 Mature Artists Dance Experience (MADE)

**Mature Artists Dance Experience (MADE)** is a dance agency based in Tasmania. It creates dances to express the experience and stories of mature artists. It works with dancers aged 50 and over. It has benefited from the involvement of international choreographer Graeme Murphy, including in the development of a new work *Frock*, performed at the Saitama World Gold Festival in 2018. MADE offers open classes for older people as well as developing Tasmania's first Dance with Parkinson's initiative, Movers and Shakers.



## 57 Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia

The **Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia** in Sydney runs the Artful programme for people living with dementia and their care partners. It has been accompanied by a three-year research study (2016-2018) with the Brain and Mind Centre at the University of Sydney and Dementia Australia looking at the effects of art on the neuro-plasticity of the brain. The Artful programme runs over six weeks with two hourly workshops including discussion and hands-on artmaking. Between the weekly sessions, an Artful at Home pack encourages further creative activity. The programme culminates with an Artful Community Day and exhibition at the gallery to celebrate what has been accomplished.

**Artful: Art and Dementia program participants, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, 2018.**  
Photo by Jacquie Manning.





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## 58 Humour Foundation

The **Humour Foundation** in Australia runs clowning encounters with a number of types of hospital patients but has created a specific category of Elder Clowns to go into care homes and nursing homes and specialises in working with people living with dementia. There is a Vaudevillian element to the clowns, recalling a by-gone age of the 1940s and 50s. The Humour Foundation is keen to emphasise the value of respect by the clown towards the residents whose homes they are entering.

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## 59 Milk Crate Theatre

**Milk Crate Theatre**, based in Sydney, run drop-in workshops for ageing and late-career artists. The sessions, offered throughout the year, see Milk Crate partner with professional arts facilitators and community service providers to offer a free and safe space where people can meet and learn new skills through creative processes.

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## 60 Creative Aging Festival

The New South Wales-based **Mid North Coast Creative Aging Festival** is an innovative annual event which supports the valuable role that seniors play in communities, highlighting the importance of engaging in the arts to foster good health and wellbeing as people age. The Festival has been inspired by the creative ageing festivals in Ireland, Wales, and Scotland.

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## 61 Australian Centre for Arts and Health

Led by Director Margaret Meagher, one of the first people to drive awareness of creative ageing in Australia, the **Australian Centre for Arts and Health** is a highly effective national convening body. Its mission is to promote and develop the application of creativity and the arts for health and quality of life outcomes for all people in Australia, regardless of age, race, gender or religious or political persuasion.

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## New Zealand

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### 62 Kiwi Coffin Club

It may not have started out as an arts organisation, but the **Kiwi Coffin Club**, is certainly creative. Members build and decorate their own coffins and also create them for local hospitals. Now a national network, the Kiwi Coffin Club started in 2007 in Rotorua. It is the brain child of former palliative care nurse Katie Williams. She says it not only reduces the costs of funerals but has proved to be a way for older people to come together, tackling loneliness and confronting death.

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### 63 Hip Hoperation Crew

The **Hip Hoperation Crew** are a dance group managed by Billie Jordan. They shot to fame in a documentary of the same name and have continued to tour across New Zealand and internationally.

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### 64 Make Moments

**Make Moments** is a project run by the charity Connect the Dots, based in Auckland. Founded in 2014 by arts educators Andrea Gaskin and Selina Anderson, Make Moments has narrowed its initial focus to serving people living with dementia. It offers arts tours as well as regular art making workshops.

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### 65 Northern Dance Network

The **Northern Dance Network** believes in 'all kinds of dance for all kinds of people'. It serves the wider Auckland area. It runs ASPIRE dance workshops for older people as well as the Senior DANCE Company which runs on a project by project basis.



Kiwi Coffin Club, New Zealand.

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## South Africa

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### 66 Outreach Foundation

The **Outreach Foundation** serves its community through a number programmes including around employability as well as a socially engaged arts programmes including theatre. They are based in one of South Africa's most diverse and densely populated areas, the Hillbrow suburb of Johannesburg. For a number of years they have worked with the Tswelopele Frail Care Centre and more recently have visited the Johannesburg Society of the Blind. In these initiatives they have created theatre works involving school children around themes of belonging and home, cultural belief systems and generational curses. The work has involved confronting the older generation's experiences of the apartheid era.

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# Asia

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Gold Theatre of Saitama, Japan. Photo © Maiko Miyagawa.



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## Japan

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Visiting Japan can feel like visiting the future in a number of ways, but for the purpose of this report its current age structure may be quite similar to ours in 20 to 30 years' time. One in four of the population are aged over 65 compared to one in six in the UK. Around 4.6 million of a population of 120 million people live with dementia (the highest in the world) compared to 850,000 people in the UK. Japan has been anticipating this demographic future since the 1960s (unlike England which has lacked a national strategy on ageing for the last ten years). Even so the system is under severe financial strain. There is a great emphasis on people staying active and at home with less use of care homes than in the UK.

No one interested in creative ageing should leave Japan without having paid homage to the extraordinary **Gold Theatre of Saitama (71)**, perhaps the single greatest achievement in this field in the world.

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### 67 Arts Alive

**Arts Alive** is led by Yoko Hayashi, a visual artist and academic, and works across art forms with disadvantaged people in a participatory way which is common in the UK but less so in Japan. Her first project took place in a care home located in a traditional Japanese house. It was decided to decorate the Shoji paper screens dividing rooms with stories told by residents including of their childhoods and local festivals. There has also been a travelling arts exhibition touring care homes for around six months at a time. Another project takes care home residents with mobility problems and their carers to visit art galleries.

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### 68 Kitanagoya-shi Historical Museum

The **Kitanagoya-shi Historical Museum** is sometimes called the Shōwa era Lifestyle Museum (The Shōwa Era is the name given to the reign of Emperor Hirohito from 1926 to 1989.) It is a museum 'where it is difficult to remain silent' as everyday objects prompt excited memories. The Reminiscence School takes place once a week for eight weeks and demand has resulted in long waiting lists. Participants became friends and have gone on to become volunteers at the museum after the course finished, introducing children to items from their own youth. The museum has created reminiscence kits on various themes that are lent out.



Oi Bokke Shi, Japan.

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## 69 Oi Bokke Shi (Ageing Dementia Death)

Also of great interest is **Oi Bokke Shi (Ageing Dementia Death)** an initiative founded by the pioneering artist Naoki Sugawara. His practice is informed by being both an actor and a paid carer and seeing the links between the two: 'Being an actor has made me a better care worker and being a care worker has made me a better actor'. I was very moved by his piece *Night Never Grows Darker* which was part of the Saitama Gold Festival in 2018. In it the audience follows the actors in a 'theatre of wandering' around the streets where a young man encounters a much older friend who appears to be trying to find his wife who has disappeared and is living with dementia.



## 70 Art Resources Development Association (ARDA)

Since 1999 (the International Year of Older Persons) a major strand of activity for **Art Resources Development Association (ARDA)** in Tokyo founded by Emiko Namikawa has been work in care homes. Since then ARDA has organised over 100 workshops, mainly using the visual arts, though other art forms have been used. Each class begins with an opportunity for carers to experience the work before moving on to residents.

Richard II at the Gold Theatre of Saitama. Photo © Maiko Miyagawa.



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## 71 The Gold Theatre of Saitama

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The Mount Fuji of arts and older people work in Japan is the Gold Theatre of Saitama. The Saitama Arts Theatre is a major modern complex with four auditoriums as well as 12 rehearsal halls and studios. On appointment, its founding artistic director, Yukio Ninagawa, was by then already one of the most esteemed theatre directors in the world. In 2006 something extraordinary happened for older people's art. Then aged 70, Ninagawa announced that he wanted to 'create a new form of theatre'. He wrote, 'By harnessing the energy of people with a lot of life experience, I thought we could create experimental works that push the boundaries of what a performance could be. The performers themselves are afflicted by numerous problems that face our ageing society, from physical decline to mental issues, so putting on a show involves hard work, but at the same time, the performers have their own remarkable acting style that differs from that of professional actors and produces many poignant moments'.

Ninagawa personally auditioned over 1,200 applicants, all 55 or over who had not worked as actors. From these he selected 48 members aged 55–80 (no new members have since been appointed to the company). He then spent a year training them. They worked for four hours a day, five days a week. The actors are paid a modest wage. No actors have retired from the company.

This led to the Gold Theatre's first official production the following year. Since then it has staged over a dozen works. These have included Western classics, such as Shakespeare and Chekhov, modern Japanese drama and pieces specially commissioned from Japanese writers.

Being a member of the Gold Theatre has often been a genuinely life-changing experience for its members. When visiting in 2015 I heard one actor, then aged 76 (actually the average age of the company in that year), recount how she had left her husband to move to another part of the country to join. Another aged 88 described how acting had motivated him to recover from serious paralysis. He also said, 'in a recent performance, *Ravens, We Shall Load Bullets*, for some reason I found it hard to say my lines. Looking back over my life, I remembered witnessing the burnt-out landscape after the Great Tokyo Air Raid when I was 18.

This destruction reminded me of a scene in the play, and once I remembered that, my lines came out smoothly. I realised that this was what Mr Ninagawa had meant about making use of our own experiences.' Then to prove his continued powers he recited from memory 'the medicine seller's speech', a traditional actor's exercise!

Sadly Yukio Ninagawa died in 2016, still at the height of his creative powers and one of the greatest figures in international theatre. It was important that his legacy survived him and the enlarged Gold Arts Club has around 1,000 members. In 2018 I saw half their number on stage in a stunning and very comic piece called *The Imaginary Invalid*, based on Molière's *The Hypochondriac* and directed by Seiji Nozoe. This was part of another accolade for Saitama Theatre, its first international festival of older people's creativity called World Gold Theatre 2018.

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## Taiwan

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### 72 National Museum of Fine Arts in Taichung

Taiwan has a thriving network of age-friendly museums (the Baring Foundation funds its UK equivalent hosted by the British Museum). An example of the work of its members can be found in the **National Museum of Fine Arts in Taichung**, with its large sculpture park one of the largest art museums in Asia. The Museum runs services for isolated older people, intergenerational group activities and dementia-friendly tours.

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### 73 Social Affairs Bureau

Kaohsiung is one of Taiwan's three major cities with a population similar to Birmingham's. Its **Social Affairs Bureau** is therefore large-scale running 232 community centres, 227 early learning centres and 59 senior citizens centres. It sees creative ageing as an important aspect of its work with older people and has developed a system of 'heritage ambassadors'. There are 200 in Kaohsiung and they can explore a wide range of arts including storytelling, Chinese opera and music making, traditional calligraphy, ink painting and the visual arts more generally.

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### 74 Catholic Foundation of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia (CFAD)

The **Catholic Foundation of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia (CFAD)** is a social welfare foundation and care provider for the elderly and those with dementia. To meet the demands of an ageing society, CFAD provides resources and programs – including in nursing homes – alongside more creative approaches to support. Documentary films, short films and animations are just some of the mediums CFAD has used to educate the public about dementia.



Ms. Yinmei Chang joined Go Grandriders taking on the challenge of riding motorcycle around the island of Taiwan. Photo courtesy of Hondao Senior Citizens' Welfare Foundation.

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## 75 Hondao Senior Citizens' Foundation

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This is one of the most inspiring creative ageing and older people's empowerment initiatives in the world in my view.

It has three streams of work around 'filial piety', 'community care' and one called 'dreams never grow old'. It has over 400 staff, 2,000 volunteers and can be found across the island. Everything they do seems to combine flair with a sense of fun. The Go Grandriders Project is a 13-day motorcycle road trip which has been made into a much admired documentary film.

There are a wide range of 'Bulao' or 'Never Old' projects as part of the 'Dreams' strand:

- A **Never Old Band** where objects are recycled into musical instruments, as well as using conventional musical instruments. This has grown to 1,200 members in 47 bands;
- The **Senior on Broadway** competition climaxes with the performance of ten groups in Taipei's equivalent of the O2 Arena, broadcast to audiences of millions;
- The **Bulao Love project** asked fashion photographers to take wedding photographs where there have never been any, which are then exhibited and put into a magazine.

Initiatives don't always involve the arts. There's a Bulao Baseball League and a Bulao Soldier project involving spending a day with the Ministry of Defence reliving conscription.

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## South Korea

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If you are in your nineties in Korea you will have seen amazing changes – from Japanese occupation in World War Two to invasion from the North and the Korean war (killing 3 million people and separating families), military dictatorship and rapid industrialisation and democracy. This has led to a stereotype of older Koreans being pretty tough and uncompromising (though apparently with a disarming penchant for dancing in the aisle on tour buses). There can be some tensions between generations and older Koreans are seen as being so consumed with work and bringing up families that they had little time to indulge in the arts. But the country also has a growing creative sector again and some projects and programmes of enormously high quality.

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### 76 Korean Arts and Culture Education Service

The **Korean Arts and Culture Education Service** was established in 2006 to place ‘teaching artists’ in schools and now runs in 17 local centres across the country. More recently it has branched out to placing teaching artists in organisations serving older people. This resulted in a spirited Korea’s Got Talent type show of older people called the Cheungchun Festival.

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### 77 Store N

Artist Mee-Wha Lee set up **Store N** in the Anyang 8 dong district of Seoul. This initiative has focussed on working with older residents. The very inspiring work included an older watchmaker turning his hand to exquisite creations for children, women embroidering pieces entitled ‘the last clothes I will wear’ for their coffins, full of personal meaning, and a challenging film where sex workers return to the site of an American military base.



## 78 IMAGO

**IMAGO** is a community arts project in Busan, Korea's beautiful second city, which grew from a fishing village to a metropolis when millions of people fled from Seoul in the Korean war, which, dangerously close to the border, was repeatedly taken and lost by the Communist North. So many of the older people using the beautiful IMAGO centre with its gorgeous views of the sea, started life as refugees from the North. Poet and storyteller Jounghi Hwang draws out their life stories through the arts. This has resulted in a puppet play, a beautifully designed children's story book, intergenerational drama, and not least a splendidly eccentric version of Monopoly played with a giant dice. Participants can also choose to study Confucian philosophy, go on trips to the countryside or make kites. (I think that heaven must be like IMAGO.)

IMAGO, South Korea. Photo © IMAGO.



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# Singapore

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## 79 Silver Arts Festival

The **Silver Arts Festival**, established in 2012 by the Arts Council of Singapore, runs annually across multiple sites in September. Although it spans all art forms, the festival focuses on the role of musical performance and film in particular. The festival also aims to foster inter-generational connection within families, so mainly happens at weekends when people in work are more likely to be free. The festival also features a symposium on the use of the arts in social care for older people. There are numerous volunteering opportunities within the initiative.

Beyond the festival, creative ageing continues to be enriched by an increasing number of community arts practitioners in Singapore. With one in four residents expected to be aged above 65 by 2030, ageing has become a major policy issue in Singapore, giving rise to collaborations between the health and social care sector to develop ageing-related programmes.

**Silver Arts 2018 – Arts On the Move “Good Oldies!” by The Meltones. Photo © National Arts Council, Singapore.**



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## Hong Kong

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### 80 Colours of Dementia

**Colours of Dementia** was a six-month trial art facilitation programme for dementia care in a community setting. Between December 2013 and June 2014, a series of eighteen specially designed creative workshops were conducted for 14 elders, aged 59 to 94, who were suffering from mild to advanced dementia. Relatives and caregivers accompanying the elders to the workshops were invited as participants. The title, Colours of Dementia, refers to the images produced by these elders. Colours of Dementia was led by Prof. Sophia Law, Associate Professor of the Department of Visual Studies at Lingnan University and was supported by the Hong Kong Alzheimer's Disease Association (HKADA) and Art for All.

Macushla Dance Workshop, Bealtaine Festival, 2017. Photo courtesy of Bealtaine Festival.



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## Conclusion

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### AN OLDER AND MORE CREATIVE WORLD

Perhaps the greatest advance in human history to date is our rapidly increasing longevity as a species. According to the most recent report on global ageing by the UN in 2017:

- The global population aged over 60 had increased to 962 million in 2017 from 382 million in 1980.
- It is expected this will more than double again to 2.1 billion in 2050.
- The number of people aged over 80 should increase from 137 million in 2017 to 425 million in 2050.
- By 2030 older people are expected to outnumber children under 10 years of age.
- Two thirds of the world's older people live in the 'developing' regions (such as Africa and parts of Asia and Latin America) where their numbers are growing faster than in developing regions (such as Europe, North America and Australasia).

“*The world is growing older – hurrah!*”

Therefore the world is waking up to the consequences of ageing societies. *Extra Time* (2018), Camilla Cavendish's rather breathless canter around scientific and social innovations around the world, shows a plethora of developments to address the two decades of good health that may follow the traditional retirement age for many people in the West. Her conclusion that a sense of personal purpose is central to wellbeing in later life may not be especially original but it does underline that this is too often absent in societies that only value paid work, Carl Honoré comes to a similar conclusion in *Bolder: Making the most of our longer lives* (2018). Honoré displays slightly more interest in the role of the arts in later life and even evinces some – slender – research suggesting our brains experience a creative spurt in our sixties.



## **THIRD AND FOURTH AGE – OR THE ‘YOUNG OLD’ AND THE ‘OLD OLD’**

There are many conflicting definitions of ‘old age’. Increasingly it is felt that is clumsy to use a single term which may span thirty to forty years for some people. There will also be people for whom life at 65 or 70 feels quite like life at 45 or 50. Some commentators have begun to write about the ‘old old’ sometimes described as over 85. As is well established, poverty tends to have a highly deleterious impact on ageing, making ill health more likely at an earlier age and reducing longevity substantially.

An alternative approach is to eschew chronology and concentrate on health status or capacity. Therefore people in their third age may have been long retired from paid employment but are highly active physically and mentally in their seventies or eighties or even older. While someone in their ‘fourth’ age might be experiencing serious physical or cognitive challenges in their sixties.

This is an unfinished debate to encourage arts organisations and funders to be especially vigorous in supporting people in their fourth age to be creative. These are people more likely to be experiencing loneliness of dementia (discussed below) or other challenges. In these circumstances both their access to the arts is reduced, for instance through living in a care home, but also the potential benefits may be even greater.

## **DEMENTIA AND LONELINESS – CHALLENGES CREATIVE AGING CAN HELP TAKE ON**

These global trends in demographics are likely to be accompanied, at least in the medium term, with a rise in prevalence in forms of dementia, along with the impact this has not only on the lives of those with the disease but also on their carers, friends and family. The cause and effects of dementia in the UK have rarely been so beautifully charted as by Nicci Gerrard in *What Dementia Teaches Us about Love* (2018). Her account places great weight on the power of the arts to give fulfilment to people living with dementia. Much of the work that the Baring Foundation has funded in the UK has demonstrated this and it will need to be a part of the considerations of arts organisations across the world in the future.

There is also evidence that the scourge of social isolation is becoming more prevalent in other societies among older people, for instance in Japan. This will of course be highly influenced by the traditions and structures of different societies, especially around the family and communal activity, but it is at least possible that rising individualism globally will make this more common.

Again creative ageing, especially when intergenerational, can have highly positive effects in developing new relationships and confidence as we described in our 2012 publication with the Campaign to End Loneliness: *Tackling loneliness in older life – the role of the arts*.

## UNIVERSAL AND SPECIFIC

What has struck me most when I have had the privilege of visiting creative ageing work abroad, is that it is both specific and universal.

**Specific** because societies and cultures are specific. Although the tradition of 'filial piety' in North East Asia in, say Taiwan and Japan, is gradually changing, it does still contribute to those countries feeling different to this outsider. (Though of course our own attitudes towards ageing in Western Europe have evolved over time. There is no better account of this than *The Long History of Old Age*, 2005, edited by Pat Thane). Also it is easy to forget that creative ageing may be most widely expressed through traditional art forms that are culturally embedded, such as the mass phenomenon of older people dancing in public in China.

And **universal** both because to survive at all is to face old age and increasingly the world is ageing. It may take a long time but the demographic change that Japan has been experiencing for decades is likely to be the fate of all countries.

## AN OLDER WORLD CAN BE A MORE CREATIVE WORLD

An older world is something to celebrate. Older people have had greater time to contribute to their communities and longer to experience the world. The creative opportunities open to them are boundless given supportive societies that appreciate the contribution they have made already and can continue to make.

Creative ageing should become a more central part of all our futures. For many people it will supply some of that essential sense of personal purpose and fulfilment that Cavendish says is central to successful ageing. Ageing countries around the world must increasingly address how arts and culture are part of everyday experience and relevant to everyone in society including those in later life.

The legendary cellist Pablo Cassals was asked at the age of 91 by a pupil why he continued to practice and he replied: 'Because I am making progress.'



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## Recommendations

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- UNESCO in its work on Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should acknowledge the importance of creativity in the lives of older people.
- National Ministries of Culture and Arts Councils should ensure that their strategies and provision cover the entire life course, including people in their ‘fourth age’.
- National Ministries of Health and Welfare should ensure that their strategies and provision explicitly recognise the value of culture and creativity, including in later life.
- Independent funders of the arts such as foundations should consider the important role they can play both in offering resources to creative ageing activities, but also in bridging the separate worlds of older people’s organisations and arts and cultural organisations.
- IFACCA – the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies – should promote the importance of creative ageing among its membership.
- Opportunities for international exchange should be maximised such as the inclusion of creative ageing in conferences on ageing and on dementia.

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## Themed travel itineraries

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### VISUAL ARTS

- Atelier D, Germany (20)
- Art for Care, Germany (17)
- Demenz Kunst Gesellschaft, Austria (35)
- Colours of Dementia, Hong Kong (80)
- Quiltmakers of Gee's Bend, USA (42)

### DANCE AND MOVEMENT

- PRA Muziektheater, The Netherlands (8)
- Skånes Dansteater– Sweden (26)
- Dance for PD, USA (45)
- Queensland Ballet, Australia (54)
- Belconnen Arts Centre, Australia (55)
- Mature Artists Dance Experience, Australia (56)
- Hip Hoperation, New Zealand (63)
- Oi Bokke Shi, Japan (69)

### MUSIC AND SINGING

- Music Generations, The Netherlands (6)
- Musiikkitalo, Finland (29)
- Music and Memory, USA (47)
- Concerts in Motion, USA (48)
- Young@Heart Chorus, USA (46)

## **THEATRE/PERFORMANCE**

- Altentheater, Germany (16)
- Sering, Belgium (23)
- Peeping Tom, Belgium (21)
- Trupe Sénior, Portugal (33)
- Stagebridge, USA (40)
- Smile Theatre, Canada (52)
- The Humour Foundation, Australia (58)
- Milk Crate Theater, Australia (59)
- Gold Theatre of Saitama, Japan (71)
- Outreach Foundation, South Africa (66)

## **FESTIVALS**

- Age and Opportunity/Bealtaine, Ireland (4)
- Gekleurd Grijs, The Netherlands (13)
- The Silver Arts Festival, Singapore (79)
- Creative Aging Festival, Australia (60)

## **CREATIVE WRITING AND LITERATURE**

- Wintertuin, The Netherlands (15)
- Timeslips, USA (38)
- Arts for the Aging - USA (49)

## **CROSS-ART FORM WORKING**

- Uillinn, Ireland (1)
- Waterford Healing Arts, Ireland (2)
- Companhia Maior, Portugal (34)
- Elders Share the Arts, USA (39)
- Ruth's Table, USA (43)
- Arts Alive, Japan (67)
- Hondao Senior Citizens' Forum, Taiwan (75)

- Social Affairs Bureau, Kaohsiung, Taiwan (73)
- Catholic Foundation of Alzheimer's Disease, Taiwan (74)
- IMAGO, South Korea (78)
- Store N, South Korea (77)

## CARE HOMES

- Care & Culture, The Netherlands (7)
- Art for Care, Germany (17)
- Comprehensive Care Centres, Finland (30)
- IONA Services, USA (41)
- Terrace Players, Canada (53)
- Art Resources Development Association (ARDA), Japan (70)

## MUSEUMS

- MV1D, The Netherlands (10)
- SMAAK Foundation, The Netherlands (11)
- Van Gogh Museum, The Netherlands (12)
- Lehmbruck Museum, Germany (19)
- Etnografiska Museum, Sweden (25)
- Den Gamle By, Denmark (32)
- MoMA, USA (50)
- Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia (57)
- Kitanagoya-shi Historical Museum, Japan (68)
- National Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan (72)

# Selected resources

## ON CREATIVE AGEING

All resources can be found on our website [www.baringfoundation.org.uk](http://www.baringfoundation.org.uk)



**Treasury of arts activities for older people**  
Liz Postlethwaite  
2019



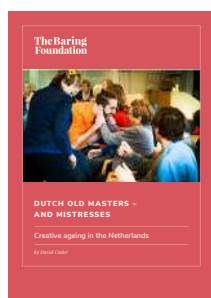
**Late opening: arts and older people in Scotland**  
Andrew Eaton-Lewis  
2017



**Towards the end: The Baring Foundation's Arts and Older People Programme 2010-2017**  
David Cutler



**Growing the creative ageing movement: international lessons for the UK**  
Alice Thwaite  
2017



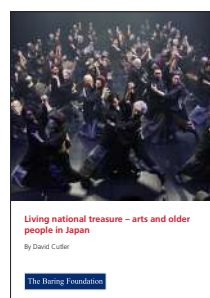
**Dutch old masters – and mistresses: creative ageing in the Netherlands**  
David Cutler  
2017



**Creative ageing in Germany: the view from North Rhine-Westphalia**  
Harriet Lowe  
2017



**A new form of theatre: older people's involvement in theatre and drama**  
Kate Organ  
2016



**Living national treasure: arts and older people in Japan**  
David Cutler  
2015

“Mr Fogg quietly shut the door.  
Phileas Fogg had won his wager, and made  
his journey around the world in eighty days.  
To do this he had employed every means of  
conveyance — steamers, railways, carriages,  
yachts, trading vessels, sledges, elephants.”

**Jules Verne, *Around the World in 80 Days* (1873).**

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October 2019

ISBN: 978-1-906172-43-5