

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leisure and Arts Services Committee – 17 May 2004

REPORT ON: Generator

REPORT BY: Director of Leisure and Arts

REPORT NO: 352-2004

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To submit to the Committee a request for grant funding to Generator.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Committee approves support of £7,000 for Generator.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The grant of £7,000 can be met from the Leisure and Arts Department's 2004/2005 Revenue Budget.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Generator's facilities at Generator Projects, Mid Wynd, allow access to sources which are not achieved at the expense of the environment.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The organisation's principal activities are the provision of visual arts services for artists and the public through a programme of exhibitions and education which encourage access for all.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

6.1 Generator was established by a group of graduates from Duncan of Jordanstone in 1996 in response to a lack of opportunities in Dundee for emerging artists to work, exhibit and meet together. They recognise the importance of encouraging talent to stay within Dundee and support the development of contemporary creativity and artistic understanding within the city, reinforcing Dundee's reputation as a leading player within the arts nationally and internationally.

6.2 Generator is an artist-led non profit organisation which aims to present innovative, developmental and experimental contemporary art by unestablished arts practitioners and curators and to provide a resource for the presentation of such works. Generator provides a forum for debate around experimental theories and practice raising the critical understanding of experimental forms of art and its production.

6.3 Generator's reputation has grown internationally through a series of innovative projects over the last eight years achieving acclaim through a programme that has stimulated critical debate within the city and beyond. In the period April 2003 to March 2004 Generator's programme included:

Core Shows

Generator Members' Show, 24 May – 1 June 2003

All inclusive open submission to Generator members which made an exhibition of high quality work from 86 contributors and providing 23 new members.

They Had Four Years, 6 - 22 June 2003

Kevin Reid, Stacey Mathews, Ellen Munro, Andrew Slater, Caroline Jamieson. Annually held exhibition which show graduates' work one year after leaving Duncan of Jordanstone, at the same time as the Degree Show. It provides a focus for the graduates' independent practice after leaving college.

Major Shows

Withinity 31 October – 27 November 2003

Louise Schmid, Peter Donaldson, Nicola Williams, Thomas Aitchison.

Work sourced through studio visits and curated by the Generator committee. None of the four artists had previously shown in Dundee. This project both broadened the knowledge of current activity in Scotland and built strong relationships between Generator and the artists.

International Exchange Show 26 March – 18 April 2004

Generator welcomed artists active in Verligheten, an artists group from Umea in Sweden and Catalyst Arts from Belfast, to exhibit together in our Mid Wynd premises. The exhibition had a flavour of the two contrasting cultures in which the two groups are working, alongside some more personal observances. The artists from Northern Ireland graced the opening night with two performances.

Members Proposal Shows

IAMFREE 15 – 24 August 2003

Curated by Ross MacLean

IAMFREE was the first exhibition curated by a young Dundee photographer with no formal art school training. Ross invited 20 (conventional and non-conventional) artists to respond to his photographs.

An Elegant Universe – The Frog and the Scorpion

Giles Round and Dietmar Lutz, Ben and Jacob

For the first time Generator presented two coinciding exhibitions. Built with the artists from proposal stage the two shows represented work from the two pairs of artists.

Events

Land O' Cakes 4 – 5 October 2003

Andrew Wake, Graeme Roger, Ian Pate, Louisa Preston

In partnership with Dundee City Council's Cultural Quarter Initiative.

Notion 16 - 19 October 2003

Ziggy Campbell, Tommy Penman and Rebecca Milling

Static sound exhibition was part of the Fringe activity for DCA festival 'Kill Your Timid Notion'

Amputation Club 29 November 2003

William Caulfield, Sabine Klaus, Alexander Damien

An extravagant performance which spanned the whole Generator space and involved these three artists who met at Duncan of Jordanstone. This prompted contact with the students and staff of the college and highlighted several professional practice issues which Generator have been working on over the last few months.

Location, Location, Location, 27 November 2003

Panel discussion event planned to travel from 'about you and your fears' at McManus Galleries to Generator Projects 'Withinity' addressed issues concerned in the production and presentation of contemporary art in Dundee.

Networking Artists Networks Scotland Pilot Event 13 March 2004

Organised with Generator committee and Artists-Newsletter (a-n), the Artists Information Company. An event which invited representatives from Magnifitat in Edinburgh and Cabin Exchange in Glasgow to give presentations discussing their experience of alternative strategies for exhibiting.

Residency Programme Summer 2003

Alastair Ormond, Michael Mallet, David Liddell, Anton Beaver

This rolling residency allowed four Dundee based Generator members to use our gallery space as a studio. Three of these artists presented work developed in their residency later in the year.

6.4 The outline programme for the period April 2004 to March 2005 includes:

Life After Art School Seminar 1 April 2004

Dan Howard-Birt, Jacqui Hallum and Caroline Hamilton present to fourth year art students about Generator and its relevance to them

May 2004

They Had Four Years 2004 – Core Show

Steve Murray, Luke Collins, Amy Todman, Andrew McLean, Carrie Garner

June 2004

International show curated by Generator committee, bringing together work from young artists; Lorenza Boisi, Matheu Montchamp, Caroline Boiseau, Thierry Dardanello, Jan Peterson, Barbara Rink – from France, Italy and the Netherlands.

July/August 2004

Members' residence selected from proposals, with the possibility of open studio and exhibition closing event.

Weekend events featuring members' work as well as others (video, performance, sound) sourced from inter/national call for submissions.

September 2004

Generator Curated Show

Event to tie in with university/art college start of term

October 2004

National Open Submission

November 2004

Generator Curated Solo Show

Event linked with solo show

December 2004

Masters Expo

Event and theme to be confirmed

January 2005

Members' Show

February 2005

Generator curated show

March 2005

Generator curated show continued

Artists and curators with potential involvement in 2004-2005 programme include: Jane Topping, Lorna McIntyre, Nuno Sacramento, Iain Pate, Ian Sturrock, Graeme Roger, Andrew Hunt, Finlay Taylor and Martin Clarke.

- 6.5 In realising this programme and in recognition of Generator's importance to contemporary arts practice in Scotland Generator have been awarded a grant of £15,000 by the Scottish Arts Council towards the programme and development of the service to artists. It is a condition of the Scottish Arts Council grant that the running costs of the organisation including rental and utilities be found locally. To that end the Leisure and Arts Department have in conjunction with the Economic Development Department agreed to the establishment of a new lease with Generator which allows them to maximize their income on artistic activities.
- 6.6 The proposed grant of £7,000 from the Leisure and Arts Department 2004/2005 Revenue Budget will allow Generator to develop their service to artists and the community in a very positive manner and provide a very strong focus for both the critical debate that surrounds contemporary arts practice and that important period of transition when emerging artists leave art college and wish to remain in Dundee.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning) have all been consulted on this report and are in agreement with its contents.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None

STEVE GRIMMOND
DIRECTOR OF LEISURE and ARTS
15 APRIL 2004