



## 33 awardees of the £660,000 Live Work Fund announced

- Outstanding artists receive £20k each and mentoring to develop their practices in 2021
- New consortium of independent funders come together to back bold artistic ideas and enable outstanding artists to develop their practice in these challenging times
- Survey of over 1200 applicants shows that over half have been less active creatively since the pandemic hit

Today, 17 February, Jerwood Arts, the Wolfson Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The Linbury Trust, announce the 33 awardees of their new funding programme, the Live Work Fund, offering both financial and career support. Through an artist focussed decision making process, 33 of some of the most visionary early-career music creators, performance makers and producers have been chosen to receive £20,000 each to develop their practice, allowing them to adapt and thrive through the challenges presented by Covid-19.

The awardees include a range of live performance artists and creatives ranging from dancers to DJs, aerialists, composers and singers representing a broad selection of individuals and collaborative groups blurring boundaries across music and the performing arts including theatre, circus, live art and dance. The awards were made based on track record and potential, with applicants setting out their vision for the future and how they will contribute to the recovery of their artistic communities. The awardees plan to use their grants to underpin the development of their practice in different ways, from re-imagining the creation and performance of work kiboshed by the pandemic, to building new artist networks, to researching and learning new interests and skills.

Awardees include creative producer **Nassy Konan**, producer of BAC's Beatbox Academy hit *Frankenstein*, who seeks to develop a project based on growing gentrification in South East London; actor, musician and songwriter **John Pfumojena**, Obie Award winning composer for the multi-award winning production *The Jungle*, who plans to develop his project 'Meet My Ancestors' which puts Mbira and Marimba music of Zimbabwe at its core; and female-led performance company **Figs in Wigs**, who will be creating a new interdisciplinary performance project about cycles, science, the death of theatre and the end of the world. The fund has also opened-up different ways for artists to

innovate, experimenting with the new limitations and opportunities, such as singer and songwriter **Eliza Shaddad** wishing to work with East City Films to develop her live streaming using VR headsets.

In an alternative to traditional project funding and much of the Covid-19 hardship funding available, the independent consortium of funders has given individuals £20,000 core grants, simply to support them to navigate this crisis and find new ways forward for live performance. Following a year of severe limitations on gathering artists and audiences together, the funding will be crucial to ensuring the awardees can fulfil their potential and contribute to the wider reimagining of the arts.

Demand for the fund highlights wider concerns about the lack of financial support to freelance artists during the pandemic. To fund all 1283 applicants would have required £25,660,000, demonstrating the gap in support and a marked increase compared to previous funds run by Jerwood Arts.

A survey of over 1200 applicants reinforces this: 50% reported their main source of income as emergency funding from national arts councils, private funders and unions, while only 45% cited the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS).

The survey highlights the stark impact of Covid-19 on all areas of early-career freelance artists' and producers' professional lives: over half (53%) said they have been less active creatively since Covid-19 hit, and are experiencing slower career progression because of reduced opportunities (52%). Most thought they were unlikely to abandon their artistic practice, but the survey suggests that their ability to be creative due to financial and sector constraints has been seriously hindered. Over a third (34%) reported less time to practice due to having to seek income elsewhere, 23% said they were less able to pursue their career due to impact of Covid-19 on their mental health, and 17% due to its impact on their friends, family and community.

The survey also suggests where artists are experiencing the greatest change to their practice. There is a marked shift towards digital, with over half (55%) taking a more 'blended' digital / in real life approach to both making and sharing their work, while peer support networks (58%) have become the most critical non-financial source of support, and over a third (34%) say they have greater involvement and awareness of sector-wide issues.

Jerwood Arts developed the Live Work Fund, with substantial contributions from the Wolfson Foundation (particularly to support those working with music), the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The Linbury Trust. The £660k Live Work Fund awarded £20,000 to 33 outstanding artists and producers and will also provide mentoring support. Through a specially designed decision-making process, Jerwood Arts worked with 13 of its Artist Advisors to create a peer-led, artist-centred approach that focused on identifying the most promising artists who had both imaginative ideas for the future of their own practice, and a demonstrable commitment to contributing to their wider artistic community.

Lilli Geissendorfer, Director, Jerwood Arts, says on behalf of the four funders:

'The Live Work Fund clearly demonstrates both the huge financial need experienced by freelance artists across the UK whose careers have been put in limbo by Covid-19, and the significance of flexible funding for individuals. By being bold and entrusting substantial amounts of funding, we are delighted that the Live Work Fund is able to offer 33 visionary artists the time and space to develop their practices with fewer financial concerns. Covid-19 has highlighted how valuable collaboration

between different funders can be to create new ways to support the arts ecology. We look forward to seeing the awardees play their part in the future of the arts.’

The selected artists are:

- Louise Ahl, artist, choreographer and performer [www.louiseahl.com/](http://www.louiseahl.com/)
- Connor Allen, actor, director and writer [www.connorallen.co.uk/](http://www.connorallen.co.uk/)
- Anaïs, Live performer, writer and composer
- Munotida Chinyanga, director and sound designer [www.munotida.com/](http://www.munotida.com/)
- Nwando Ebizie, composer, designer and live experience facilitator [www.nwandoebizie.com/](http://www.nwandoebizie.com/)
- Rosie Elnile, performance designer, [www.salon.io/rosie-elnile/rosie-elnile](http://www.salon.io/rosie-elnile/rosie-elnile)
- Figs in Wigs, theatre company including a performer, deviser, choreographer and writer [www.figsinwigs.com/](http://www.figsinwigs.com/)
- Jamal Gerald, performance artist with poetry and literature practice [www.jamalgerald.com/](http://www.jamalgerald.com/)
- Jo Hauge, artist, writer and performer [www.johauge.com/](http://www.johauge.com/)
- Nabihah Iqbal, musician and producer [www.nabihahiqbal.com/](http://www.nabihahiqbal.com/)
- Jennifer Jackson, theatre maker, movement director and choreographer [www.jenniferjackson.net/](http://www.jenniferjackson.net/)
- Karina Jones, aerialist [www.karinajones.co.uk/](http://www.karinajones.co.uk/)
- Cassie Kinoshi, composer, arranger and saxophonist, [www.cassiekinoshi.com](http://www.cassiekinoshi.com)
- Geoff Kirkwood, DJ performer and music maker, [www.manpowermememe.bandcamp.com/](http://www.manpowermememe.bandcamp.com/)
- Nassy Konan, creative producer
- Cassie Leon, arts and cabaret producer
- Andrea Ling, director, writer, visual and sound artist and facilitator [www.andrealing.com/director-about/](http://www.andrealing.com/director-about/)
- Dickson Mbi, choreographer of hip-hop dance [www.dicksonmbi.com/](http://www.dicksonmbi.com/)
- Craig McCorquodale, live artist [www.craigmccorquodale.org/](http://www.craigmccorquodale.org/)
- Otis Mensah, musician and performance poet [www.otismensah.com/](http://www.otismensah.com/)
- Zinzi Minott, dancer, artist and contemporary video art maker [www.zinziminott.com](http://www.zinziminott.com)
- Yewande YoYo Odunubi, dancer, facilitator, live performance producer and programmer
- John Pfumojena, actor, musician, composer and songwriter
- Eliza Shaddad, guitarist, singer and songwriter [www.elizashaddad.com/](http://www.elizashaddad.com/)
- Rhys Slade Jones, performance maker
- Jen Smethurst, Trans, Queer, Neurodiverse Independent Practices of Care Consultant and arts worker
- Carmel Smickersgill, composer and performer, [www.carmelsmickersgill.co.uk/](http://www.carmelsmickersgill.co.uk/)
- [Solem Quartet](http://www.solemquartet.co.uk/), classical quartet, [www.solemquartet.co.uk/](http://www.solemquartet.co.uk/)
- Mo'min Swaitat, actor, writer and director
- Martha Wheatley, musician and producer, [www.marthahillmusic.com](http://www.marthahillmusic.com)
- Rachael Young, performance artist and writer [www.rachaelyoung.net/](http://www.rachaelyoung.net/)
- Tangram, contemporary classical Chinese ensemble [www.tangramsound.com/](http://www.tangramsound.com/)
- Na'ama Zisser, opera composer [www.naamazisser.com/](http://www.naamazisser.com/)

Further information about each of the awardees and images can be downloaded [here](#).

Further insights from the survey of over 1200 applicants into the way Covid-19 is changing freelance artists and producers working lives in music and the performing arts will be made available in due course.

- ENDS -

**For further information about the Live Work Fund, please contact Harriet Clarke or Truda Spruyt at Four Culture:**

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### **Notes to Editors:**

**Jerwood Arts** is the leading independent funder dedicated to supporting UK artists, curators and producers to develop and thrive. We enable transformative opportunities for individuals across art forms, supporting imaginative awards, fellowships, programmes, commissions and collaborations. We present new work and bring people from across the arts together in the galleries at Jerwood Space, London, as well as across the UK. [jerwoodarts.org](http://jerwoodarts.org)

Twitter: [@JerwoodArts](https://twitter.com/JerwoodArts)

### **Esmée Fairbairn Foundation**

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation aims to improve our natural world, secure a fairer future and strengthen the bonds in communities in the UK. We unlock change by contributing everything we can alongside people and organisations with brilliant ideas who share our goals.

The Foundation is one of the largest independent grant-makers in the UK. In 2019 we made grants of £36 million towards a wide range of work within the arts, children and young people, the environment and social change. We also have a £45 million allocation to social investments for organisations with the aim of creating social impact.

[www.esmeefairbairn.org](http://www.esmeefairbairn.org)

Twitter: [@EsmeeFairbairn](https://twitter.com/EsmeeFairbairn)

### **The Wolfson Foundation**

The Wolfson Foundation is an independent charity with a focus on research and education. Its aim is to support civil society by investing in excellent projects in science, health, heritage, humanities and the arts.

Since it was established in 1955, some £1 billion (£2 billion in real terms) has been awarded to more than 11,500 projects throughout the UK, all on the basis of expert review.

Twitter: [@wolfsonfdn](https://twitter.com/wolfsonfdn)

## The Linbury Trust

The Linbury Trust is an independent grant-making trust established in 1973 by Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover, and his wife Anya, Lady Sainsbury CBE. The Trust supports a wide variety of compelling and exciting projects across the world in the fields of arts, heritage and culture; the environment; and social and medical welfare.

Twitter: [@TheLinburyTrust](https://twitter.com/TheLinburyTrust)

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