



Kaleido Arts

PRESS RELEASE

February 23rd 2010

ARTS COUNCIL ALLOWS CLOSURE OF ANOTHER DISABILITY ARTS ORGANISATION

Kaleido Arts, the regional agency run by Deaf and disabled artists, will close on March 31st 2010

Kaleido Arts, the regional agency supporting Deaf and disabled artists in the South West, was shocked to find out that Arts Council South West have confirmed that they will be cutting Kaleido's funding completely from the end of March 2010.

As a result the Kaleido Arts Board has taken the difficult decision to close the office on March 31st 2010.

Kaleido Arts is the latest in a long list of organisations run by disabled people to have its funding cut by the Arts Council. London Disability Arts Forum, the National Disability Arts Forum, the West Midlands Disability Arts Forum and Shape East Midlands all closed or went into liquidation in the recent past.

Arts Council England South West will be allocating the budget themselves instead. Given the likelihood of cuts to the Arts Council budget in future, the targeted funding could end up being cut altogether.

The Arts Council do not employ any disabled people at all in their South West regional office (Arts Council disability data 2009). By contrast Kaleido has been the only Arts Council England South West funded regional development agency run by a Board made up of 85% Deaf and disabled people. Half of the staff team are disabled.



Kaleido Arts argue that it is a retrograde step if the Arts Council, rather than Deaf or disabled artists, make the final decisions about how the funding for supporting Deaf and disabled artists and audiences is used.

Deaf and disabled artists in the South West, who have been over consulted with, but under assisted for years, have been invited to yet another round of Arts Council consultation about the arts.

Only 2.2% of the Arts Council South West arts award funding in 2008/9 went to disabled artists. Given that around 20% of the population in the South West is disabled, Deaf and disabled artists are clearly under represented.

The recent Arts Council "Taking Part" survey briefing also shows that, despite the fact that people in the South West have the highest levels of participation and attendance at arts activities in the country, for people with a limiting illness or disability attendance is only 53.7% versus 67.4% nationally for the rest of the population, and 72.3% for the rest of the population in the South West region.

Before they close the staff at Kaleido Arts will be contacting all the people on their database to refer them to other organisations.

You can call them on 01392 219 440

or e mail them at info@kaleidoarts.org

Alternatively look at the Kaleido Arts website www.kaleidoarts.org

or their Facebook page.

Kaleido Arts are asking artists and the general public to express concern about this decision. You can write to Alan Davey the Chief Executive of the Arts Council at Arts Council England, 14 Great Peter Street, London, SW1P 3NQ or e mail him at chiefexecutive@artscouncil.org.uk

Ends 501 words



Note for Editors

If you would like further information about Kaleido Arts or you would like to talk to a Deaf or disabled artist currently receiving support from Kaleido, please contact Ralf Togneri or Rachel Carter on **01392 219 440** or email info@kaleidoarts.org

Kaleido Arts supports more than 200 Deaf and disabled artists across the South West region and is in regular contact with over 700 people and organisations interested in their work. The staff help around 30 artists a week.

Kaleido Arts, Bradninch Place, Gandy Street, Exeter, Devon, EX4 3LS

01392 219 440 www.kaleidoarts.org

Facts and figures

- In 2008/9 Arts Council South West awarded 6.25% of its 80 Grants for the Arts awards to 5 disabled artists but only 2.2% of the funding (£113,528). Given that around 20% of the population in the South West is disabled, Deaf and disabled artists are under represented.*
- The recent Arts Council "Taking Part" survey briefing shows that, despite the fact that people in the South West have the highest levels of participation and attendance at arts activities in the country, attendance at arts activities is 53.7% for people with a limiting illness or disability versus 67.4% nationally for the general population and 72.3% for the general population in the South West region. Participation in arts activities is 43% for people with a limiting illness or disability, versus 47% nationally for the general population and 52% for the general population in the South West region.**
- There were around 900,000 disabled residents in the South West in 2006/2007* - just under one-fifth of the population, the same as the Great Britain average.*
- 15% of the region's working population has a disability. Disability rates are highest in Plymouth, Cornwall and Dorset.*
- Just over half of disabled people in the South West are in employment. This is considerably lower than the employment rate of non-disabled people.*
- Almost one-fifth of unemployed people in the region are disabled and the unemployment rate for disabled people is almost twice that for non-disabled people.*
- 45% of disabled people in the South West are economically inactive. This is lower than the national rate but more than three times higher than the regional rate for non-disabled people.*



- Incidence of disability rises with age and almost half of working age disabled people in the South West are aged 50 and over.*

*Arts Engagement in England from 2005/06 to 2007/08. Findings from the first three years of the Taking Part survey. Anna Oskala and Catherine Bunting, September 2009 published by Arts Council England

** South West Observatory report: A statistical examination of economic exclusion in the South West of England Prepared by Hilary Stevens (2009)

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