



Usha mixed media and movement artist

Usha Mahenthalingam is an inter-disciplinary artist, combining her training in visual arts and movement – she weaves worlds and responds to the life of enquiry within education, health and ecology...

Educator/ Artist / Explorer: ‘process, play and pattern’, ‘awakened and restful states in learning’, holistic approaches early years to elders, raising self esteem and aspiration, embodied and experiential learning, celebration of making, moving, invention, expression, communication and the power of imagination!!

Selected projects:

- 1997 - 1999 **Learning to life:** youngsters + teenagers excluded from school, Dyslexia association, Nottingham
- 2005 – 2007 **‘Why Bother?’** Human rights and environmental sustainability Wellbeck Primary School, CP
- 2007 **“Cultivating a Climate of spirituality across the curriculum“** Hemsphill Hall Primary, Creative Partnerships
- 2010 – 2012 **‘Raising Aspirations through the Creative Arts’.** 6 Nottingham Schools – plus Staff training and design of “tool kit” - ‘CAHMS + Epic Partnerships’ working with vulnerable learners
- 2012 - **Space for Stories**, developing communication, imagination and joy in the written and spoken word.
- 2013 - **Confetti** - facilitating first year students to play, choreograph + create installations for film Nottingham
- 2013 + 2014 **Summer Transition School** - 2 week Creative Arts programme -. Bulwell Academy Nottingham
- 2013 - **UN human rights** Middleton Primary School Banners
- 2013 / 14 /15 /16 /2017 - **Diversity Day** with 200 year 7 Pupils @ Fernwood Secondary School Nottingham

Early years (selected)

- 1996 - 2000 - Douglas Primary school Artist in Residency - Creative arts curriculum development for school
- 2002 - 2006 - **Magical space Arboretum nursery - Artist in Resident** creative arts and movement. CP
- 2014 - **International world week** Foundation and year1 pupils Middleton Primary School Banners
- 2014 - **Arts Award** Blessed Roberts Widmerpool Primary School, Arts Council and Mighty Creatives
- 2013 - **Space for Stories** for early years - Palfrey Sure Start, child + parent every day objects + improvised play in collaboration with Dragon Breath Theatre

Creative Mentor 2013 - 2022 (ongoing) ...working with children in care Derbyshire County Council
Social Pedagogy: (Hands hearts and mind) - Attachment - Play - Creativity

Research: “Water Literacy” Nottingham University Dept of Education, in collaboration with Papplewick Pumping station, 5 pilot schools, Academics and a team of Artist . 2011 - 2013.

Research partnership funded by the Esmee Fairbairn and Garfield Weston Foundations

Signature pedagogies: One of ten Artists studied across the country - Research by Nottingham University studying the different approaches artists bring to learning in School environments. Creative Partnerships 2010

Arts in Health and wellbeing : Hospitals, Children’s Hospices and Sure start programmes

- 1999 Doncaster Royal Infirmary residency and staff training
- 2000 - 01 supporting antenatal + postnatal young Mothers - Sure start Gedling Nottingham creative arts wk’shops
- 2003 - 04 **“Moving from within - captured moments”** vulnerable women, Newark - visual arts and movement in collaboration with Dance 4
- 2007 - 13 **Children’s hospices:** Rainbows Loughborough , Acorns West Midlands and St.Andrew’s North East Lincolnshire – creative arts and movement in Palliative care as part of Breath space programme, Dance Art Foundation London
- 2012 - **Young teenage Mothers at risk** - Arts commission for Arkwright and Meadows Community Gardens
- 2013 - **Nottinghamshire hospice** - 10 days creative arts + movement programme working with elders.

Arts Training programmes in Education: Head Conferences and Early years and Health: Hospices, Dyslexia Association, Sure start, EPIC Raising Aspiration... recent trainings:

- 2011 **BAM early years** training day
- 2013-14 CLADAC co delivering on **neuroscience and creativity** - Mighty Creatives
- 2014 **National Social Pedagogy Conference**: relationship of creative arts + social pedagogy - Derbyshire
- 2018 **Creative Mentor training day** for Rotherham Arts (Derbyshire County Council)
- 2017 **Retained reflexes and learning** - training session - Staff @ Fernwood Special school - Nottingham
- 2019 **Creative Arts Inset Training Day**: Radcliffe Infants and junior school - Nottingham
- 2020 **Creative Arts Inset Training Days**: Borrow Wood Primary - Derby
- 2021 **Space / Learning / Emotional literacy** - part of attachment awareness training- Virtual School - DCC

Arts Engagement / Public Design

2003 Community consultation and design for **Sneinton Library railings** - Nottingham City Council and sculptor Hillary Cartmel

2006 - **Signage for Springfield's Primary School** Nottingham - facilitated design of...

2009 - 2011 **Tree House build** Consultant and Creative facilitator of Robinhood Primary School , Building schools for the future programme in collaboration with Campbell designs.

2013 **Middleton Primary School** Nottingham 4 large wall hangings based on the UN Rights

2014 Ashfield Special school '**When the river meets the Sea**' - mixed media reception panels

2016 - 2019 Meadhamstead Special School Peterborough: Artist in Resident - creative arts programme with Pupils and Staff - textiles, window transparencies and mixed media panels.

Guest Lecturer: colleges and higher education University

1999-2005 South Nottingham College of Art and Design - Foundation studies

1990-95 Loughborough College of Art and Design - Textile degree

2005 Guest lecturer on 'Participation in the Arts' - ARC The Humber Centre for the Built Environment

2011 Coventry University, Dance and Somatic Practices - Applications of the Skinner releasing Adults and Children's pedagogy in diverse settings

Movement Artist + workshops - somatic practices + body/movement based learning

2001- 2006 Skinner Releasing teacher (Adults and Early years classes)

2010 Co Founder of **Rundance** random acts of rhythm - 2010 supporting **Mental Health Awareness week**

2011 Rundance supporting British Heart Foundation celebrate it's 50th Anniversary www.rundance.org

2013 - 14 **One 2 One** supporting movement awareness and creative reflection (Move-into life practice)

2014 - **Warming Focusing Centering** - sessions for Art Dance and Movement Practice

2014 - **Somatic workshop: Skinner releasing** based explorations Penfarch Movement Centre Wales

Performance / Theatre / Dance / Environmental / Ecological / Festival

1996 - 97 - 98 "**Between the Notes**" Company, Lichfield Music Festival, Director Matthew Barley

2001 "**The Ring**", Director Felix Ruckert Notts Dance Festival Dance 4

2000 - 01 "**Heaven on Earth**" residency in my own back yard..."which would you prefer?" Litter dog poo or flowers?

2002 - **BIG Wheel** Nottingham City Council Green Transport Festival

2004 - 06 **Mischief Makers Collective**: Creative Acts of Positive Action towards sustainable environment

2011 - "**Red Thread**" solo performance Candi Sுகuh Temple Art Festival , Indonesia

2012 - **Still Walking Festival** - Eyes @ Rest sensory typography Blindfolded tour of Bridley place Birmingham

2013 - **Dragon Breath Theatre** - Water Literacy historical / educational performance @ Papplewick pumping station

2013 - **Still Moving Moving Still** - Director Sara Giddens Dance 4 - Dance in the Galleries Nottingham new Contemporary

2013 - **Wasteland Junkies** - collaboration with Simon Raven for Wasteland Twinning programme

2015 - 17 **Spark Arts Children Festival** - Tangled / Mix ups Mayhem / - Holi

2016 - 18 **Sherbourne calling** - a buried river, site specific performance / installation/field studies Coventry Uni

2018 - **Still Moving - Moving Still performance** - Director Sara Giddens - Birmingham Conservatoire

2018-19 Films : Land of Aprons - Time passing Time - Hawthorns

Exhibitions

- 1993 **"Brightness Beyond Brick"** one women show, screen printed textiles Angel Row Nottingham
1995 **"How to be Bottom"** commissioned mixed media pieces Midsummer Night's Dream, educational show case of Shakespeare for schools, Barbican London
1999 – 2001 **"Heaven on Earth"** exhibition and film: Art Gallery Waterstones, Arts Council, Renewal Trust ,YOTA, Nottingham City council
2013 **Wastelands** - Archive Installation as part of Wastelands Twinning @ NG1 studios
2020 **Unus Multorum / plas bodfa** - (online exhibition April - October 2020 due to Covid)

Public Commissions:

- Interior Design, prints, banners, lino floor, gates and railings, wall hangings
1989 banners and screens Peter Hodgkinson Centre Lincoln Hospital Arts Council
1998-99 Lino Floor Doncaster Community Arts + Creche Nursery @ Point Little
1992 Feasibility study and commissioned wall hangings for Dewsbury Hospital Caring Arts
1993 Belgrave library Leicester . Garden in the sky screen printed banners
1994 Screen prints for Rampton Prison Hospital
1997 Commissioned Gates for The Arts Council East Midlands in collaboration with Chris Campbell

2018 Commissioned Textile wall hanging with Pupils @ Meademesteade Special school

Commercial Industrial Design:

fabric + stationery collections 1986 - 1992

Enjoyments + practices

my allotment, dancing, cooking on an open fire, cob oven baking, walking in nature, fishing in skips, photography - mindful meditation - playing !
"Fancy" the extraordinary ordinary - collaboration with Marcus Rowlands: playing with phenomena, movie-moment of objects, sound, light, reflection and refraction as part of immersive + interactive installations 2006 - 2011

Awards:

Environmentalist of the year, 2002 **Green Guardians Award** - Wildlife trust for Heaven on Earth film
Tate ART Award 2004, for work undertaken at the Arboretum Nursery Nottingham - Artist in residence.

Training / Education

Foundation year	Goldsmiths College of Art and Design London '81
Screen printed textiles	BA hons Loughborough college of art and design '85
Skinner releasing	Somatic movement for adults - Joan Skinner Seattle USA '96 -'01
Pilot postgraduate	Certificate in AWP (Artists working with people) Salamanda Tandem, Nottingham County Council, Leeds University '04 - and construction - Learning Works Notts City Council '04
Basic horticulture	
Permaculture	Penny Livingstone Stark + Star Hawk '06
Children's Skinner releasing	Teacher training certification Seattle '06
Move into life Training	Sandra Reeve '06 -'07
Amerta Movement	Amerta Movement Prapto Suryodarmo Indonesia '11-'12
RMT Rhythmic movement	Developmental movement - retained reflexes '16 - '20
Brain GYM®	Movement Facilitator - movement based learning '20/21

Films:

- Run Dance Random acts of Rhythm
Land of Aprons, pinny plot and play
Time Passing time
Heaven on Earth

