



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
- 2022-23 - **Creative Collaborations Program** Rosehill + Greenfields Community school.

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
- 2022 - 23 **Creative Collaborations** - Rosehill School + Greenfields Community school. The power of curiosity.
- 2022 - 23 **Arts Award - Gold** Borrow Wood Primary School Derby
- 2013 - 23 **Creative Mentor** (ongoing) ...working with care experienced children and young people Derbyshire County Council and TMC . 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 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

Creative Collaborations Nottingham 2021- 22 - 23

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 - Health - Hospices, Dyslexia Association, Sure start, EPIC (Raising Aspiration) :

- 2011 **BAM** early years training day
- 2013-14 CLADAC co delivering on **neuroscience and creativity** - Mighty Creatives + Jo Stockdale
- 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
- 2005 '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 / wellbeing / body + movement based learning

- 2001- 2006 Skinner Releasing 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.
 - 2013 - 14 **One 2 One** supporting movement awareness and creative reflection (Move-into life practice)
 - 2014 -23 **Somatic sustenance**: sessions + or CPD for Creative Arts Practitioners + Curators
 - 2014 - **Somatic workshop: Skinner releasing** based explorations Penfarch Movement Centre Wales
 - 2021 - 22 **CROWD** - facilitator + guide supporting artists community practice within the CROWD program.

Somatic based residencies:

- 2020 - CAP 'Creative Articulations Process' my own exploration with supported space from Dance4
- 2022 - BE-ing in Touch 3 month residency @ FABRIC exploring positive touch, the wonder of skin + creativity.

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**" local residency "Litter dog poo or flowers - which would you prefer?"?
- 2002 - **BIG Wheel** Nottingham City Council Green Transport Festival
- 2004 - 06 **Mischief Makers Collective**: Creative Acts of Positive Action towards a sustainable environment
- 2011 - **Red Thread** solo performance Candi Sukuh Temple Art Festival, Move-into -life /Amerta 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 @ NAE
- 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 (completed edits)
- 2022 - Notts Dance Festival - Be-ing in touch workshops and research sharing day.

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 light, reflection and refraction as part of immersive + interactive installations 2006 - 2011

Awards:

Environmentalism 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 - RMT Consultant
RMT School readiness	Developmental movement - movement based learning '18 - '20
Brain GYM®	Brain Gym Training '20 - 21 - Brain Gym movement facilitator

Films:

- Being in touch
Run Dance Random acts of Rhythm
Time Passing Time Land of Aprons, pinny plot and play
Heaven on earth Film

