



Extraordinary  
musical  
encounters  
>

# Impact Report

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2022-23



*The Planets 2018* - various composers, performed by Ligeti Quartet, Bristol Planetarium.  
Photo by Lee Pullen.

# Our mission

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Sound UK enables artists to reach their creative potential through research and development, commissioning and producing excellent music projects that enrich and inspire people across the UK.

In partnership with leading organisations, we bring artists and the public together to experience extraordinary musical encounters, reaching and engaging diverse audiences nationwide.

Since 2001, we have supported and developed over 250 of the world's most creative artists and composers working across contemporary music. We have commissioned and presented over 80 acclaimed new projects to tens of thousands of audiences across the length and breadth of the country. From village greens to major concert halls, farms to national museums, beaches to national heritage sites, we have worked with over 100 of the country's venues.

# What We Do

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## Produce extraordinary musical encounters for all

In 2022-23 Sound UK produced a range of extraordinary musical encounters, bringing artists and audiences together. We worked with 42 music creators on 10 projects, with 7 music tours, 6 new commissions and 2 self-guided audio trails.

## Support artists to take creative risks

We supported another cohort of early career music and sound artists through our artist development programme, *Sound Generator*. This enabled 6 early career artists working at the forefront of new music and sound to research and develop new ideas with support from industry mentors.

We also supported artists to develop ambitious new work, including Arun Ghosh's *The Canticle of the Sun* and Keeley Forsyth and Ross Downes' *Bog Body*.

## Ignite curiosity and inspire minds through music

We continued to engage people of all ages with opportunities to participate in creative workshops. Broadside Ballad singing and songwriting workshops were delivered by artists Lisa Knapp and Nathaniel Mann of Hack-Poets Guild to primary and secondary school pupils, and Arun Ghosh with Sarathy Korwar delivered workshops to school children in East London.

[Read on to find out more about our projects in 2022-23.](#)



Arun Ghosh's *The Canticle of the Sun*, Spitalfields Music Festival, 2022. Photo by James Berry.

# In 2022–23 we were proud to work with and support:

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**42** music creators, **50%** of whom identify as female or non-binary, **43%** global majority and **19%** deaf or disabled.

Our work reached over **28,000** people, **9,321** live audiences and **18,757** online.

We invested **£9,800** in **6** new commissions.

We provided employment for **52** freelance musicians and **10** technical staff.

And supported **6** early-career artists.

Our participation programme benefitted **283** participants in disadvantaged communities across the UK.



# Supporting early career artists – Sound Generator

*“It’s pushed me well outside of my comfort zone and the amazing mentors I’ve spoken to have really prompted me to re-examine how my music can be presented. It’s definitely a big step forwards for me.”* – Andrew Woodhead, Sound Generator Artist 2022

**In 2022-23 we launched the second year of our artist development scheme to support early career artists and the work they present.**

**Following an open call, a panel of leading figures across contemporary music, chose six artists working at the forefront of music and sound.**

The Sound Generator programme gives contemporary music artists time and a safe space to research and develop new projects in collaboration with Sound UK and a national network of industry mentors.

Sound UK produced and toured one of these projects, NikNak’s *Sankofa*, to UK audiences in July 2022. This was NikNak’s first ever UK tour and it continues to receive bookings. Other projects are currently being developed and will be produced as part of Sound UK’s and partners’ programmes in 2023-24.

In 2022-23, Sound UK continued as a PRS Foundation Talent Development Partner.

*“This opportunity has been so significant in pushing me forward as an artist; to have the funding to allow creative room in realising something so ambitious is a valuable thing. The team at Sound UK have facilitated really useful mentoring opportunities and advice sessions.”* – Piera Onacko, Sound Generator Artist 2022



Arun Ghosh's *The Canticle of the Sun*, Spitalfields Music Festival, 2022.  
Photo by James Berry.

# Touring new work – The Canticle of the Sun

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We worked with composer Arun Ghosh to secure an Arts Council England project grant to write a substantial new work based on the poem *The Canticle of the Sun* by St Francis of Assisi.

We produced a 6-date national tour featuring Arun and a 7-piece band.

Watch  
the project  
film

*“It’s been brilliant to work with Sound UK...we’re all really well supported and respected.” – Arun Ghosh*

*“So uplifted, one of the best concerts ever, I am not exaggerating! Thank you all so much.” – Audience member*



NikNak's *Sankofa*, Strange Brew Bristol, 2022.  
Photo by Chris Lucas.

# Touring new work – NikNak Sankofa

We produced a 9-date debut tour of NikNak's *Sankofa* in 2022–23.

*Sankofa* is an immersive sound and visual experience exploring the narrative of a young black woman, Afrofuturism and her comic book heroes through Turntablism. *Sankofa* features interplay between Loëpa's imagery and NikNak's live improvised Turntablism, sculpting soundscapes in surround sound.

*Sankofa* was the first tour to emerge from our artist development programme, Sound Generator. Continuing our drive for sustainability, this was also our first tour where all travel was via public transport (train).

Watch  
the project  
film

*"They give you time to dive into your research and do what you're doing...highly recommend...thank you Sound UK."* –  
NikNak

*"Loved it! Thank you for bringing interesting music and events to Bristol."* – Audience member



# Touring new work – Hack-Poets Guild



Hack-Poets Guild, Howard Assembly Room Leeds, March 2023.  
Photo by Simon Godley.

*“Working with Sound UK has been a total delight,  
professional, yet warm and welcoming... a perfect balance.”*

- Artist feedback

In March 2023 we produced the debut tour of Hack-Poets Guild – an innovative new collaboration between three of folk’s most prestigious artists, Marry Waterson, Lisa Knapp and Nathaniel Mann.

The 7-date tour reached audiences around the country with sell out performances in a number of locations, including Oxford and Bristol. Originally commissioned by Sound UK and OCM, the project also featured a debut album *Blackletter Garland*, which was released on One Little Independent to coincide with the live tour, and has been met with huge critical acclaim. The tour continues in summer and autumn 2023.

*“I don’t get out much (disability) and events, groups of people, noise all take a toll on me that take days to recover from. I can’t begin to express how worth it the gig was. The history, the interpretation, the beauty and rawness of the songs and performers, breath taking. I had shivers and goosebumps several times and cried once. I feel privileged to have attended.”* – Audience member



# Producing new work – Reading Audio Trails

We were commissioned by Reading Borough Council to create two self-guided audio trails for Reading's High Street Heritage Action Zone.

Created by local artists Aundre Goddard, Fiona Talkington and Richard Bentley, each trail takes listeners on a journey of discovering, celebrating Reading's heritage and revealing hidden histories along the two routes.

Click  
to learn  
more



Reading Audio Trails, *A Huntley and Palmers Journey*, June 2022.  
Photo by John James.



*"Always a pleasure to have any involvement with Sound UK, their imagination, inspiration, their long-term experience and outstanding professionalism. Thank you." – Artist*



*Arcadia Live*, International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, March 2023.  
Photo by Coen Dijkstra.

# Live premiere and tour – *Arcadia Live*

We produced a hugely successful premiere and 7-date tour of the acclaimed film *Arcadia* by Paul Wright, with live soundtrack from a 9-piece band, featuring composers Adrian Utley and Will Gregory.

The tour reached over 4,000 audiences in locations across the country from Bristol to Sunderland and reaching a diverse range of communities. We also premiered the film at International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam with a sold out performance.

*“A stunning piece of work, a privilege to see and the score was out of this world.”* – Audience member

*“What an amazing project...the audience loved it and there was a terrific response at the end...I am very grateful for you enabling the show. It’s a real game-changer bringing this kind of work into Sunderland, so thank you for that.”*  
– Tamsin Austin, Venue Director, The Fire Station

# New commissioning – Bog Body

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We commissioned a new piece by Keeley Forsyth and Ross Downes, *Bog Body*, which was selected for PRS Foundation and Southbank Centre's New Music Biennial 2022.

Exploring the ancient, ritualistic role, and environmental importance of peat bogs, *Bog Body* is a powerful, innovative, audio-visual performance piece crafted around the drama of Forsyth's voice in collaboration with composer Ross Downes.

*"Sound UK are my go to when it comes to trusted innovative producers...without the collaborative support of Sound UK none of this would have been achievable. Sound UK have not only helped me realise these projects but also, with their hands on approach and consistent belief, they have been instrumental in my artistry continuing to thrive."* – Keeley Forsyth



Keeley Forsyth performing in *Bog Body*, Southbank Centre, July 2022.  
Photo by Jamie Gray.

# SOUND UK

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