

# CREATIVE CAREERS ACADEMY

## In Progress Review | July 2019

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Creative Careers Academy at Somerset House aims to increase diversity in the creative workforce and to provide a structured entry route into creative employment for people aged 18-25. The academy offers five people two work placements each, over a period of nine months. The first Creative Career Academy was piloted between June 2018 and February 2019. The second programme commenced in late April 2019. The report below captures feedback and findings from the first scheme and reflects on the initiative as we approach the midpoint of the second Creative Careers Academy.

The 2018-19 work placements were hosted by the Somerset House Trust and by organisations based at Somerset House:

- Creative United
- Fuel
- Improbable
- Mighty
- Somerset House Trust, Visitor Experience and Retail/Residents departments.



### Creative Careers Academy employers 2018-19

BRITISH  
FASHION  
COUNCIL



Improbable



### The first Career Academy members were:

Dominic Osbourne (placed with the British Fashion Council and Somerset House Residents/Retail)

Emily Vaughn (placed with Fuel Theatre and British Fashion Council)

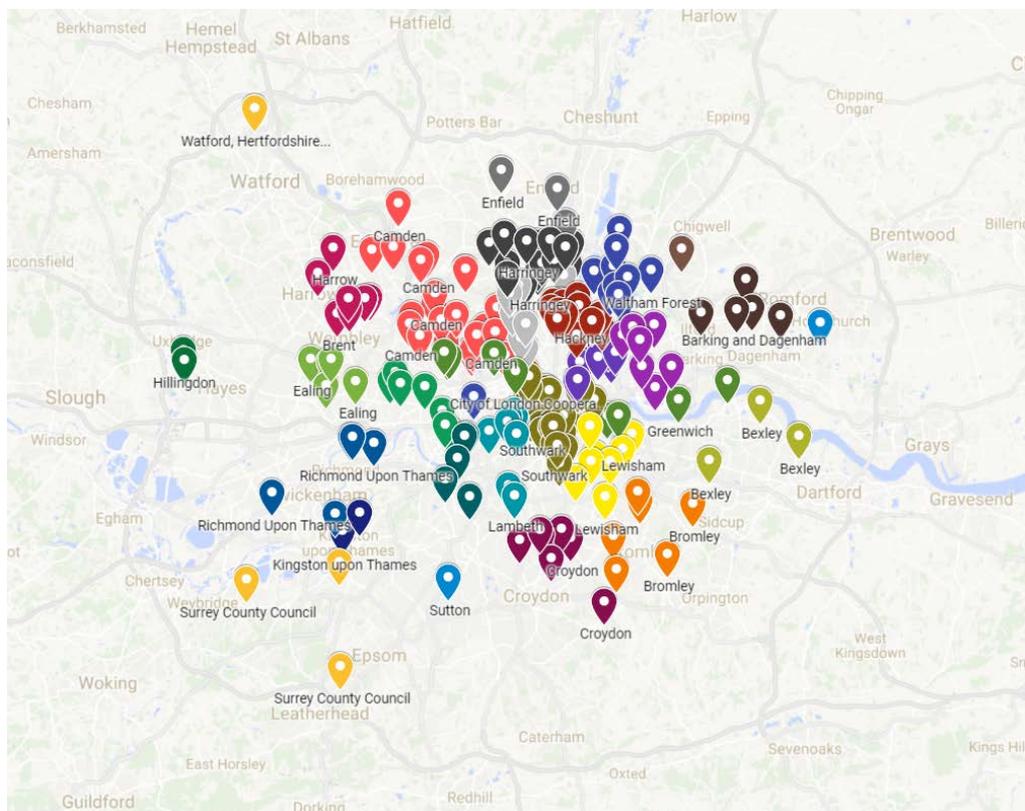
Monna Matharu (placed with Creative United and Mighty)

Renee Jackson (placed with Somerset House Visitor Experience and Creative United)

Sabrina Begum (placed with Improbable and Fuel)

Qualitative and quantitative data from the experiences of the Creative Careers Academy members were gathered through anonymous surveys, regular meetings, journal reports, and evaluation discussions chaired by independent peer reviewers. In addition, insight has been drawn from discussion with employer hosts, applications to the scheme, and from feedback gathered from participants attending Open Skills sessions offering early professional development insights to Creative Career Academy members and our wider network of young creative professionals.

### A map below shows the spread of applications in 2018:



### Summary in numbers

- 328 applications from across the UK
- 15 candidates shortlisted to attend selection day
- 5 Creative Careers Academy members appointed
- 10 placements hosted by four resident organisations alongside Somerset House Trust.
- 4 Open Skills workshops delivered to 104 participants
- 1 public event led by the Creative Careers Academy members
- 95 guests celebrating completion of the pilot

### End destinations of 2018 participants

- Renee Jackson is working in a freelance consultancy role at Creative United
- Dominic Osbourne is in a full time Talent Initiatives & Education Assistant role at British fashion Council
- Emily Vaughan is working full-time on a TV show as well as developing a children's pop-up book
- Monna Matharu is developing her own projects and studying her MA in Brighton
- Sabrina Begum, is working as *Culture Mile* Learning Apprentice at Museum of London

### Creative Career's Academy 2019-20 employers



### 2019-20

Placement 1: Tuesday 07 May – Friday 06 September 2019

Placement 2: Monday 16 September – Friday 30 January 2020

- Di'mond Sharma Joesph Fuel & Akram Khan Company
- Alex Williams Somerset House Visitor Experience & Hofesh Shechter
- Teresa Fan Creative United & Somerset House Residents team
- Rhys Laird Somerset House Residents team & Fuel
- Hodan Ibrahim Sound & Music & Somerset House Visitor Experience

### Key findings from 2018-19

- Perspectives and experiences of the Creative Careers Academy members were naturally very personal to them. What worked for one person, was not necessarily right for another.
- The cohort of 5 Creative Careers Academy members provided a huge amount of support to each other, but also wanted a level of autonomy and individuality that they found hard to obtain within the programme.
  - o ACTION: This should be considered in the project design where an individual 'flight plan' is evolved for each participant.
- Adapting the language of the scheme from funding proposal language outlining the need and challenges facing diverse young creatives to language which the participants felt comfortable with an ongoing journey.

- ACTION: we should continue to listen and learn from all project contributors to refine this and build in more structures in meetings and project design to support this.
- The participants were selected because of their potential and evident determination and talent. They proved to be very capable and feedback from placement hosts was very positive. The strength and perseverance of the CCA members was key to the successful conclusion of the pilot.
  - ACTION: The scope and purpose of the scheme in supporting under-represented talent should be reviewed frequently to ensure there are clear priorities for beneficiaries.
- Broadly participants were very positive about their first placements but some were less positive about their second – potentially due to anxiety and uncertainty about the specifics of the placements. In the pilot year, allocation of second placements took place towards the end of the first placements, this was unavoidable due to changes in participating organisations.
  - ACTION: improve transition between placements by introducing a ‘reset week’ which enables participants to reflect on their experience so far and to prepare for their new placement. Continue to support CCA members to investigate the opportunities of their second placements. In future schemes consider enabling candidates to select potential placements during the recruitment process, and build in the lead-in time to do this.
- **Open Skills workshops** received good evaluations from attendees from the wider Creative Careers network but were not so useful to the Creative Careers Academy members.
  - **ACTION:** reposition skills workshops to sit with the CJS, and focus the CCA on peer learning and personal industry insight.
- **Mentors** were seen as a very positive support to the Creative Careers Academy members, and the mentors themselves were positive about the experience.
  - **ACTION:** continue to offer mentors and improve training and support for them, to provide insight into inclusivity and specific challenges faced by placementees. Continue to work with SHT colleagues to diversify the staff volunteering as mentors.
- Communication and planning: as a pilot, some details and opportunities were less clear at the start. The turn-around from key staff coming on board to going live with the project was very short. The challenges of developing and delivering a new project and quick start of the project impacted on the experience of both placement hosts and the Creative Careers Academy members who all highlighted the need for clearer communication and purpose from the Creative Careers team within the Somerset House Trust.
  - ACTION: Continue to work with participants and partners to strengthen the project design and development. Continue to consult with all participants to ensure the right communication channels are being used effectively.

### Summary Reflections

Following participation in the scheme, Creative Careers Academy members cited a growth in professional confidence and a sense that whilst individuals varied in their levels of satisfaction at points through the scheme, they all agreed that they had benefitted from new insights and professional connections and on-the-job learning.

Experiences from the inaugural Creative Careers Academy suggest that there is much to learn, refine and embed. However, the overall positivity of participants and employers to see the scheme through suggests that there is inherent value in the approach, and that Somerset House’s community can work together to challenge traditional barriers that have prevented the creative

workforce becoming more diverse, inclusive and sustainable. It is our ambition to harness the insights of talented young creatives emerging into the sector, and leading creative organisations as part of the Somerset House Community to develop models of peer learning and collective support that enable creative employers to offer fairly paid entry level roles, and support diverse creatives to explore their career options through direct experience, networking and mentoring.

## Thank you

Thank you to **everyone** who supported the Creative Careers Academy, particularly to the pioneering CCA members, mentors and hosts organisations who made the scheme happen:

### 2018 members:

Dominic Osbourne  
Emily Vaughn  
Monna Matharu  
Renee Jackson  
Sabrina Begum

### 2018 Placement hosts:

Creative United: Alex Tucker and Mary Alice Stack  
Fuel, Anna Williams  
Improbable, Ben Monks  
Mighty, Lynne Sutcliffe and Alex Martin  
Somerset House Trust, Visitor Experience and Retail/Residents departments, Lee Thompson and Penelope Wilmott

### 2018 Mentors:

George Collum  
Karishma Rafferty  
Paul Elam  
Joanna Green  
Philippa King-Williams

### Open Skills contributors 2018:

Makerversity  
Jian-Wei Lim, Somerset House Trust  
Rachel Elan-Simpson, Google Sprint  
Remi Harris  
Creative United  
Hyphen Labs

As well as our very generous funders who kindly support the program: The Blavatnik Family Foundation, CHK Charities, the PF Charitable Trust, John Lyon's Charity, the Swire Charitable Trust and The Haskel Family Foundation.



Creative Careers Academy Members 2018-19

L-R: Monna Matharu, Renee Jackson, Dominic Osbourne, Sabrina Begum, Emily Vaughn