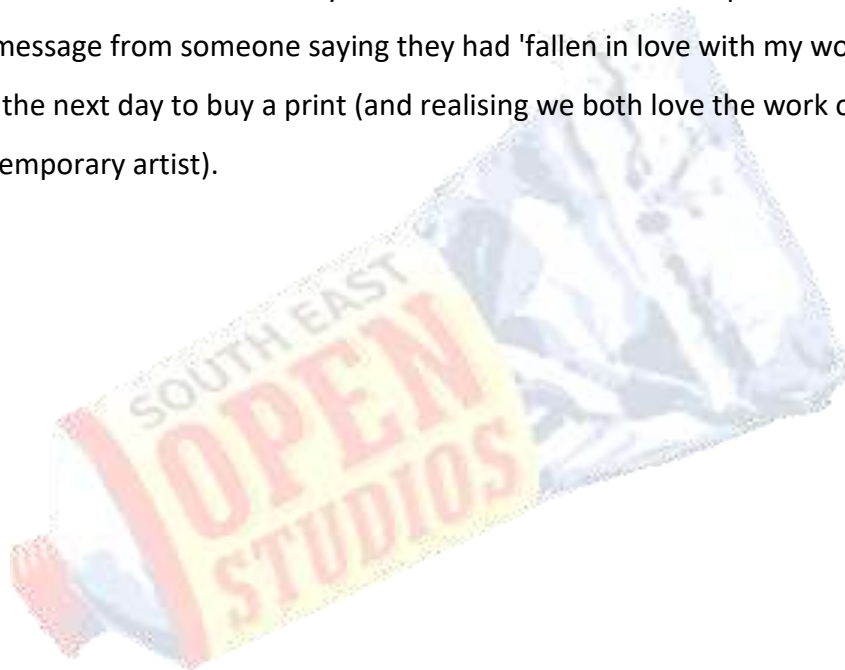


SEOS 2021 Annual Report (AGM)

We asked the members what was their best experience in SEOS 2021—

- The whole thing.
- Selling my work to the public.
- Less sightseers, but interested visitors and buyers.
- Meeting some new local artists as we quickly tried to put a local map together so we could support one another. It was lovely meeting them. Especially the newbies and being able to offer support.
- Teaching an eight year old and her grandfather how to throw a pot.
- Seeing all my work on display as a collection. Seeing old friends.
- Meeting a couple who had bought my work previously and came to see me to buy another piece.
- Just having the opportunity to chat with like-minded people. Having positive comments on my work.
- Interesting conversations with interesting visitors.
- Having a fellow artist, with whom we have been following each other's successes over the years, visit the studio and buy a triptych. And having a great conversation.
- Creating a wonderful artistic ambience in my newly built art cabin, the feedback was wonderful about my space.
- Genuinely interested buyers attending.
- Meeting people that didn't know my work before and the fact they had picked my ceramics as ones they wanted to make a special trip out to see.
- Making new friends, meeting other artists, welcoming back returning clients and having a goal to work towards.
- Having never tried to sell my artwork to the public before this has given me the confidence to take part in more Open Studio events and make use of social media to promote my work. I might even create my own website now. It was great meeting so many people interested in artwork and how it is produced.
- "I really enjoyed my first time taking part in SEOS. I was able to promote an event and reach out to my local community, raising awareness that practicing artist lives and is inspired by their immediate location.

- It was a great opportunity for a new audience to engage with my work in person and to see the location in which I create my work.
- Sharing my studio with another artist, which has led to a future opportunity later this year, where she will be a guest artist at my shop/gallery during December. Meeting other artists in my area. Getting a real & positive sense of community amongst many of us.
- Exhibiting with a group of talented artists. Being able to chat face to face with visitors and seeing the very positive connection between some of them and my work, plus the validation behind selling some higher priced pieces.
- The fact that we were open and the public came and most did spend. I do have visitors potting during SEOS - I fire their work and they return to collect the finished pieces.
- Receiving a message from someone saying they had 'fallen in love with my work' and having them return the next day to buy a print (and realising we both love the work of the same famous contemporary artist).



SEOS Annual Report 2021

Welcome

Once again we reach the end of the SEOS year – and a highly unusual year – and we take this opportunity to review the event and SEOS membership in 2021. This Annual Report and AGM allow us to present our operations and receive input from the members so we can move the organisation forward to the next event.

Contents

1. Chair's Report
2. Treasurer's Report
3. ACO Officer's Report
4. Website Officer's Report
5. Publicity Officer's Report
6. Guide Adverts Officer's Report
7. Guide Production Report
8. Guide Distribution Report
9. Social Media Report

1. Chair's Report - Jamie

This year has been one of the most unusual SEOS events, one that seemed always to be in doubt, and that we as a committee sometimes wondered would ever come off. As you know, we sounded out the membership, reworked our production schedule, delayed sign-up and print runs to put us in the best place in the event of cancellation, and in the end we decided to go for it. The decision was the right one, and we were able to put on a live event for the first time since the lockdown.

Safety was paramount, and I want to thank the members for putting artist and visitor safety first throughout the event, gathering contact details, putting up C-19 signage and ensuring the event complied with guidelines. The way we all pulled together was wonderful to see—

The social media team of Polly and Jess continued the astonishing feat of 2020 in expanding the virtual presence to run alongside the live event. Seeing the different artists' work pop up on the screen was wonderful, showcasing our work far beyond the confines of the south east and driving visitors to the shows. Their work has established social media in SEOS for good, and we look forward to building on this for next year—

Artist experience was variable, and the world situation meant that footfall was not as high as in previous years. This was to be expected, yet even with reduced visitor numbers, some artists reported wonderful contact with like-minded individuals, good sales and great pleasure in renewing their relationship with the public.

In addition, media coverage was incredible. Following on from last year's BBC SouthEast scoop, this year we had a full-colour four-page spread in *Kent Life*, another spread in *Times of Tunbridge Wells* as well as *Ingénue*.

I'd like to thank all the members for being with us throughout the year, and I hope you'll forgive me for putting so many positive comments at the start of this report. I think it is essential to show just how much positivity is out there, especially goodwill and support for the committee. As ever, I'd like to thank the committee, whose work ensures the event we have is such an important part of the artistic landscape in the South East. Thank you—

I'm pleased to announce that this year's winner of the draw for participant survey feedback is Beverley Johnson, who wins a half price entry to SEOS 2022.

Finally, next year is the 25th Anniversary of South East Open Studios, and we're planning a great one. It would be great if you could join us between the 3rd and 19th of June, 2022—

Jamie Walsh



2. Treasurer's Report – Charlotte

South East Open Studios

Chairman	Jamie Walsh
Treasurer	Charlotte Landman
Web Editor	Mark Welland
Guide Editor	Terry Ayling
Guide Distribution Officer	Charlotte Landman
Social Media Officers	Polly Hosp Jessica de Mattos
Minute Secretary	Victoria Wainwright
Newsletter Editor	Elitta Fell
Publicity Officer	
ACO Officer	Victoria Wainwright
Guide Advertising	Elitta Fell

A large, semi-transparent watermark logo is positioned diagonally across the lower half of the page. The logo features the text 'SOUTH EAST' in a small font at the top, 'OPEN' in a large, bold, red font in the center, and 'STUDIOS' in a large, bold, red font at the bottom. The background of the logo is a stylized, blue-toned image of a building or studio interior.

South East Open Studios

Report to the Members

In accordance with the engagement letter dated 30 March 2013, we have prepared, without audit, the attached financial statement for the year ended 30 June 2021 as set out on pages 2 to 4 from the books and vouchers of your organisation and from information supplied and certify them to be in

Dated

12 Wheatsheaf Close
Maidstone
Kent
ME15 9QA

B J Rice & Associates LLP
Tax Consultant & Accountants



South East Open Studios

Income and Expenditure Account for the ended 30 June 2021.

			<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
	<u>Notes</u>	<u>£.</u>	<u>£.</u>	
<u>Income</u>				
Members' entry fees & Entry Amendments	7	24,178	24,955	23,115
Entries refunded or held for 2021		-	(11,286)	-
Amendements to entries		50	-	-
Advertising space in guide		1,950	-	1,700
Bank interest received		-	8	7
Sundry Income		-	250	-
		£26,178	£13,927	£24,822
<u>Expenses</u>				
Guide printing and signage (for artists)		8,596	358	9,504
Guide production		3,000	3,000	3,000
Committee honorarium	2	9	9	8
Committee fees including mileage		6,071	6,396	6,409
Advertising		260	657	2,791
Printing and photocopying		133	34	867
Postage		509	132	445
Website costs including hosting, Dropbox & Flipboard		1,517	737	1,347
Image preparation		471	463	-
Insurance		202	-	400
Accountancy		600	600	600
Other cost	5	35	55	71
ACO promotion all costs		505	126	348
ACO mileage		193	32	109
		£22,101	£12,599	£25,899
Surplus (Deficit) for the year		£4,077	£1,328	£(1,077)

South East Open Studios

Balance Sheet

30 June 2021

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>£.</u>	<u>2020</u> <u>£.</u>
<u>Current Assets</u>			
Cash in Bank (Savings)		4,508	4,508
Cash in Bank		<u>16,191</u>	<u>20,341</u>
		20,699	24,849
<u>Current Liabilities</u>			
Debtors	3	-	-
Sundry creditors	4	600	11,589
Grant Monies for Area J & M	4&6	<u>2,762</u>	<u>-</u>
		<u>3,362</u>	<u>11,589</u>
<u>Net Assets</u>		<u>17,337</u>	<u>13,260</u>
<u>Represented by</u>			
Brought forward balance		13,260	11,932
Surplus (Deficit) for the Year		<u>4,077</u>	<u>1,328</u>
		<u>17,337</u>	<u>13,260</u>

The Financial Statement was offered for approval by the committee

Jamie Walsh - Chairman

Dated

South East Open Studios

Notes to the Accounts

30 June 2021

1 Accounting convention

The financial statements are prepared under the historic cost convention

2 Committee members

Each committee member receives as honorarium of £1 and in addition they invoice for the services rendered to SEOS. The expenses included mileage allowance at approved rates.

3 Debtors

2020

4 Creditors

Accountancy	600	600
Grant Monies	2,762	
Monies held for Adverts in the guide 2021	-	900
Website costs & Dropbox	-	50
Monies held for Membership for 2021	-	10,039
	£ 3,362	£11,589
5 <u>Sundry</u>		
Card Fee	35	35
Sundries	-	20
	35	55

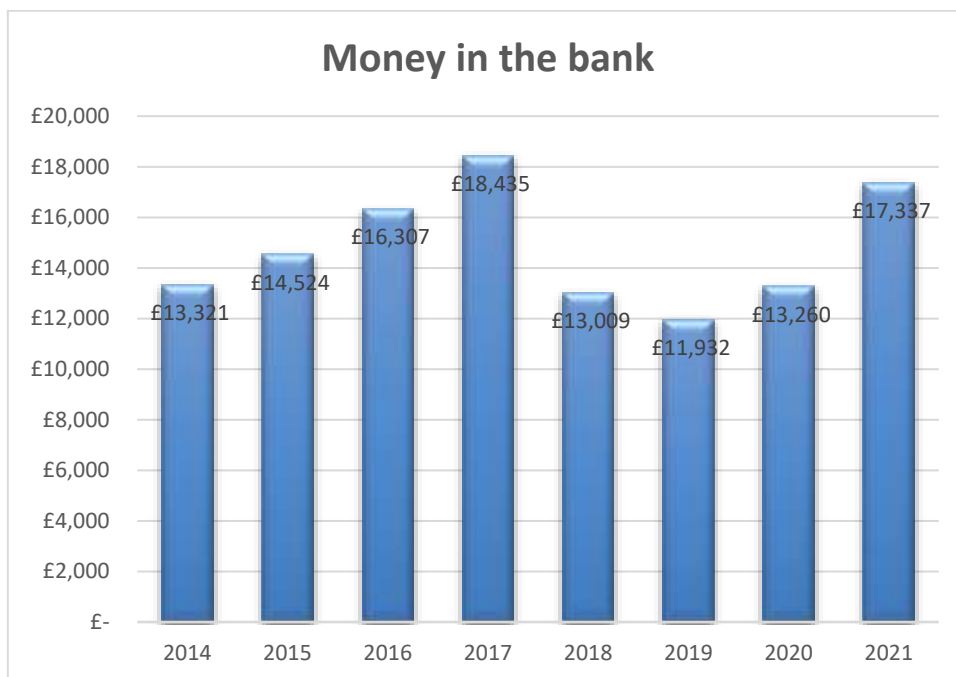
6 Grant Monies

The grant was awarded by Rother DC and Chalk Cliff Trust and amounted to £4,000. The money was to be expended in areas J & M of which £1,237 has been spent.

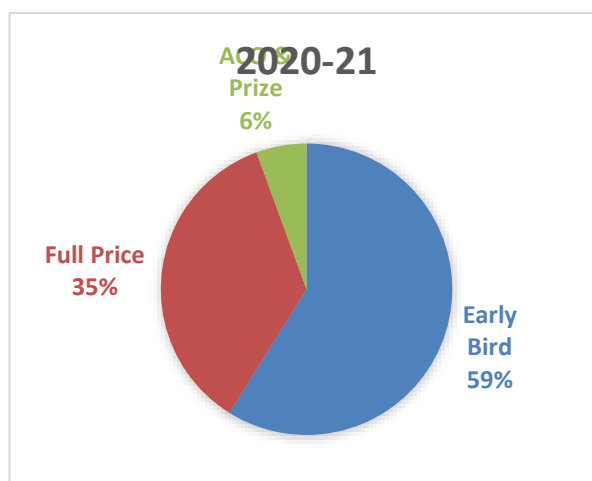
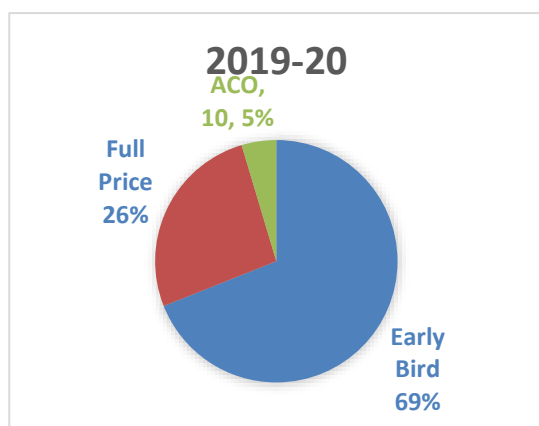
7 Unclaimed Refunds

There are unclaimed entry fee refunds of £292 for the year 2019/20 (5 artists) which has not been provided for in these accounts.

These are the accounts for South East Open Studios 2020-21, as you can see, we have a surplus for the year of just over £4,000. This is most made up for savings on guide printing costs and advertising in magazines, even though the guide printing cost is similar to 2019 it includes to Corex signs that we have printed this year. On the other hand, you can see that the website costs have increased.



Last year I drew your attention to one reason why our income may not be growing, our early bird discount bought in to spread Terry's work load out over the sign-up period has been too successful. This year we shortened the time that we applied the discount and it has increased our income slightly but we will not be able to see for full affect until we have a 'normal' year. Please see chart below.



I

have now included to honoraria list for this year and as you can see, we have not taken a raise for many years, I know we

have added a new role but over the years we have shed others so the total bill has not changed.

	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2014/15
Chair	800	800	£ 800.00	£ 800.00
Guide Editor	500	500	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
Website Editor	800	800	£ 800.00	£ 800.00
Publicity	0	500	£ 700.00	£ 700.00
Area Co-ordinators Officer	700	700	£ 700.00	£ 700.00
Treasurer	700	700	£ 700.00	£ 700.00
Minutes secretary 6 @ £40	240	240	£ 240.00	£ 228.00
Guide Distribution	500	500	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
Guide Advertising	200	£200 + 5%	£200 + 5%	£ 350.00
Social Media Officer	800	400		
Social Media Officer	800	400	£ 300.00	£ 300.00
Newsletter Editor	£35/Newsletter	£35/Newsletter	£35/Newsletter	£ -

One last point I have made every effort to refund any money not use for entry for this year but I have 5 artist that have not contact me to claim their refund.

3. ACO Officer's Report – Victoria

Overall a successful year with some predictable issues. Although many venues were very willing to have guides, many of these were tidied away during cleaning so these were not as visible as usual. Also we lost various key venues including Adult Education and other council run venues such as libraries due to their clear desk policy. However a significant number of branches of Tesco's and Waitrose allowed us to have dump bins. Again there were issues as several of these ended up being not very visible, due to the Covid queuing systems.

Footfall and sales seemed to average at a bit less than normal years with some areas experiencing their best ever year. Some also gained some good contacts leading to interesting projects. However some of this was due to signs and banners, personal contacts and events such as Open Gardens. We are reviewing signage for next year

The area from Sevenoaks through to Edenbridge had the additional problem of competing with Art in June which had publicity everywhere. Also the posters, despite being laminated, suffered in the sun with the red bleaching out.

Shared venues predictably did best with lone or off the track studios reporting lower footfall. We should continue to help artists find opportunities to share with other artists attracting more visitors who are more interested in the varied work and feel less intimidated. Clusters of artists also attract more footfall and trail maps can work well in areas where there are a group of artists who naturally form a trail. Eg. A lot of glassmakers in close proximity or artists who could form part of a walk. However, they do not always work and in one area caused a division between the

local participants. This could go against the idea of Open Studios if it is grouping artists into more gallery-type events.

ACOS can discuss with their artists whether this is appropriate for them. Also need to encourage artists to sync their times and dates as visitors go to see one studio to find the other closed but this can be difficult not all artists want to open up as much. There were the usual issues regarding road blocks, parking, weather, football and Father's Day. Again, the key reason for visitors going to studios appears to be down to the guide image. There were no reports of any issues relating to covid.

Some artists feel that the SEOS brand could be stronger and more relevant

All feedback on SEOS social media was positive

We also had a lot of new artists this year, mainly due to the social media drive but also due to ACO recruitment.

Suggestions going forward were about rebranding, signage, looking into more collaboration with local art colleges and maybe see if companies could sponsor us locally. Also do all the free listings such as Visit Kent and Tourist Board.

Also suggestions that we renew our budget for strategic marketing and promotion. However, we probably had more magazine coverage this year as we had an advert in Ingenue and three editorials in the Times of Tunbridge Wells, Kent Life and the Hastings Observers, which were free.

An extra thank you this year to all of our ACOs who went above and beyond during this extremely difficult year, not just during the event but during registration.

I would now like to resign from my post as the ACO Officer and welcome a new addition to the committee, Claudia Weigand. Claudia is extremely experienced as an artist and business owner and former Chair of Chalk Gallery in Lewes. She will be working with the areas to figure out ways that we can make next year, our 25th anniversary, an even better year.

4. Website Officer's Report – Mark

With the possibility that SEOS may have been called off again this year, it was decided to better support the SEOS experience by showcasing member artist work via the website.

To this end we created a search/menu system to guide art lovers in search of both art to view and studios to visit. Each artist member had their own page with pictures and links to their website or social media platforms.

We wanted a measure of the effectiveness of these features and activity on the site so we also set up Google Analytics.

GOOGLE ANALYTICS

From the last week of May until the end of June the site had over 5000 new users visit it. These were mainly UK based but also attracted users from all over the world including around 500 from the USA.

Interestingly we had over 1,000 website visits from users in London.

The average engagement time for UK users was over 1m 30s which I think is excellent. All of the users created over 75,000 clicked/viewed events.

In total the website racked up nearly 45,000 views.

The busiest landing page was <https://www.seos-art.org/all-artists/> (nearly 20,000 visits) This is the page to search for artists and studios.

Next with nearly 14,000 visits was the site main home page. <https://www.seos-art.org>

3rd was the flipbook page at 8,500 views. <https://www.seos-art.org/seos-art-guide-2021/>

DEVICES

Over 50% of users views the web site on a mobile device, Followed closely by a desktop device, with less than 10% using a tablet.

CONSIDERING NEXT YEAR

Given that these stats point towards an overwhelming successful deployment and use of the website, we will need to consider how the website can continue to offer the same user experience in future years. This year was an experiment in using an online resource, Artwork Archive. It's a tool to manage and collate artists and their work, which can integrate with SEOS website.

The cost of a Artwork Archive for organisations is not cheap and is very time consuming. Only the will and time of a few members of the committee allowed this experiment to happen and it gave us a great insight into what would be needed if the website was to continue to showcase artists and their studios for both the 3 weeks in June and the rest of the year.

If members and the committee feel it has been worth it, then I would suggest that the cost implications are reviewed so that a budget is made available to continue with the site and its current features.

5. Guide Editor's Report – Terry

Having condensed the guide production process last year so that I would be free to go to Australia (that didn't go well!) I proved it was possible to take a couple of weeks off the time needed to put the guide together, so in the autumn of last year when we discussed plans for SEOS 2021 I

suggested we could move the sign up period forward a month so that artists would have more of an idea of what the conditions might be, come June. I think this did help because from memory the Government's 'road map' was in place before the end of February and this told us that if all went to plan an event in June would be possible.

As you will have noticed moving the sign up period by a month did mean you didn't get your guides until mid May - about two weeks later than previous years. The question now is, which would you prefer, later sign up or earlier guides? There is a third option - a shorter sign up period. We had a meeting recently and this was discussed. The suggestion was that sign up should be reduced to the month of January and this would mean the 'Early Bird' period would be just the first week. If we took this route then the guides could be printed and delivered to Charlotte by mid April meaning artists could have their guides by the beginning of May.

Another result of the pandemic was that we had fewer guides printed. Our concern was - would all the normal pick up points take them, so I was asked to get a range of quotes from 10,000 to 27,000. You may be interesting to see how the price of the individual guide changes as the quantities increase. At one point we were thinking 10,000 guides might be a sensible order. At this quantity each guide was costing 46p but as we got nearer to the event it became apparent that we would need many more so the final order was for 23,000 which meant the unit price came down to 37p

These prices are just for printing the guide - if you add in the cost of artwork 23,000 guides are around 50p each, so the box of 40 that each artist gets costs £20. This being the case it's important that guides are used wisely and that there are not too many boxes left over at the end of the event.

In my previous reports I have sometimes flagged up something that artists could do to make my job a bit easier, some might call it moaning but I'm going to do it again. When signing up you are asked to fill in your home and studio address. Please can you fill them both in, in full, even if they are the same. Putting in 'same as above' or 'as last year' or as some do, half an address or just the postcode really isn't very helpful. All in caps isn't good either. We don't have a magical database that automatically corrects and punctuates your entry - it comes to me exactly as you typed it, so unless you want your proof sent to Same As Above please complete all the boxes when you are signing up next year.

Terry Ayling

7. Guide Advertising Report – Elitta

Having emailed 185 addresses of possible advertisers, roughly 10 no longer exist at that email and I wasn't able to find new addresses and 5 replied saying they weren't interested this year because of Covid concerns.

We had 17 advertisers for 2021, most replied immediately and sent/paid their ads in good time. The remainder needed reminders to either pay and/or send in their artwork.

I am hoping that the 2021 Open Studios have shown that despite all uncertainties, we went ahead, the event was successful and that advertising in our Guide is well worth the money and effort.

8. Guide Distribution Report – Charlotte

This year's guide distribution went well as in previous years despite the later than usual delivery date (due to Covid-19), because of the short time to distribute the guides and places where guides were usually collected from being closed, we reduced the print run to 23,000 guides. The guides were delivered in one lorry load which has to be unloaded by hand luckily this year the driver was happy to help and with the help of my parent the guides were neatly packed in their garage. The guides were delivered on a Friday and all collected by the following Tuesday (fastest turn round ever). I would like it to be minuted that we as SEOS extend a big thank you to my parents for the help lifting and shifting the guides.

9. Social Media Report – Polly and Jess

This year SEOS social media went from good to great! We continued to focus on raising the profile of our artists throughout the year – showcasing their work, highlighting relevant art and craft related activities across the South East and generally spreading the joys of SEOS.

We ran 3 successful ad campaigns; 'Registration Open Now', 'Guides are Out' and 'Get ready for the Event'. On average, these campaigns tripled our organic reach for these posts. We are considering running highly targeted local area-based campaigns next year to increase SEOS exposure in the areas that have fewer artists.

At the point of registration we gave artists access to branded 'I am a SEOS artist' posts that proved very popular, particularly as we got closer to June. In the lead-up to the event we gave every artist an individual feature and linked the post to their artist page on the website. During the event we also posted group videos showcasing the artists in each ACO area. It was wonderful to have so much engagement from artists helping build momentum and excitement for the event!

In addition this year we undertook a series of 'Artist Takeovers'. These have proved extremely successful – giving artists a platform to reveal more about themselves and their practice, providing material that can be reposted, thereby driving up engagement on both our page AND the artists' own pages.

This year around 80% of our artists are active on social media (in comparison to 50% last year) and this has had a terrific impact on our statistics; Leading up to and during the event (on Facebook & Instagram), we saw an incredible 10,260 individual interactions with our posts!

Across Facebook and Instagram our posts reached more than 23,200 people during the event and our Twitter posts had 10,200 impressions during June. This is a direct result of our artists commenting, liking and sharing our posts – thank you so much, we literally couldn't do it without you!

We have continued to achieve continued growth over the last year leading to total followers post event (as at 6th July 2021):

- Instagram – 3,007
- Facebook – 2,318
- Twitter – 9,041

Social media is an essential tool for the artist. If you aren't already on social media, but feel ready to dip your toe in – we are here to help and guide you through the process. For those of you active on social media – don't forget to check our Instagram 'stories' to see regular reposts of your work throughout the year.

Stay tuned for even more exciting ideas we have planned for next year!