



Ex Nemo ad Aliquis **“From Nobody to Somebody”**

Theatre Nemo’s role in Scottish Prisons

Written by Kirstin Anderson with a foreword by Fergus McNeill

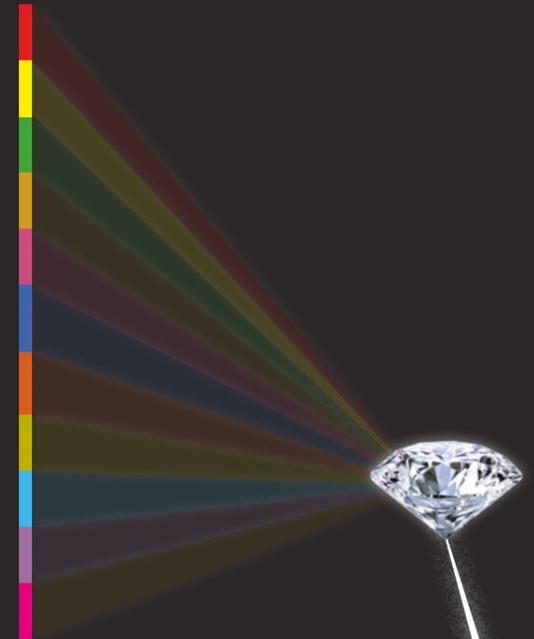
March 2015



Community Taiko Drumming Group
Govanhill Baths - Oct 2014
Photo by **Monika Grabowska**

Table of Contents

Foreword	3
Author Biography/Acknowledgements	5
Executive Summary	6
Chapter 1: Introduction & Context Setting	7
Chapter 2: The Relationship between the Arts, Wellbeing and Desistance	9
Chapter 3: Theatre Nemo Origins to Present	13
Chapter 4: How the work of Theatre Nemo can support the aims of the Scottish Prison Service	17
Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations	21
References	23
Appendix A: Theatre Nemo Projects /Work in Scottish Prisons	24
Appendix B: Example of Project Evaluation	25



Cover Image
Untitled
HMP Shotts - Feb 2015
Oil Painting by **Benno**

Back Page Image
Community Theatre Group
Gilmorehill - 2015
Photo by **Hugh McCue**

Foreword

by **Fergus McNeill**

Professor of Criminology and Social Work
University of Glasgow

One of the pieces of desistance research - a body of evidence about how and why people stop offending - referenced in this report is a book called 'Making Good' (Maruna, 2001).

It is an excellent book; one that I would like everyone involved with criminal justice to be required to read. But even as a great admirer of the book -- and as someone who returns to it and cites it often -- this thought-provoking report by Kirstin Anderson made me find something new in its title. Unconsciously, I've always placed the emphasis on the 'Good' in the title. This report has challenged me to think harder about the significance of the 'Making' in 'Making Good'. Let me explain why I think this matters.

The great sociologist, Zygmunt Bauman, tells us that we now live in a 'consumer society'; one in which we are defined by what we consume, by the labels we wear, the cars we drive, the music we listen to. Our preoccupations with celebrity and fashions (of all sorts) reflect this change. Living in a consumer society creates problems for all of us, because consumption is competitive and, by its nature, it is never more than fleetingly satisfying. There is always someone with more or better 'stuff' than us. But living in a consumer society is especially difficult for what Bauman calls 'flawed consumers'; people who lack the means to consume in ways that are approved of by the rest of us. Bauman includes people labelled 'offenders' in this group of 'flawed consumers' who break the rules of the market and must suffer the consequences, so as to teach the rest of us a lesson; to knuckle down to the challenges of consuming as the market dictates.

How does this all relate to arts in criminal justice and to desistance from crime? It's simple really. Much of the evidence in this report speaks directly or indirectly to the value and the importance of making and or re-making things, including making and re-making oneself. Human beings, it seems, fare better when they and their lives are productive. We get a sense of the value and even of the meaning of our lives in and through making things -- whether we do that in the context of home and family, work or play.

My first introduction to the seemingly limitless potential of the arts in processes of meaning-making came through my involvement in the research team that evaluated the Creative Scotland-funded 'Inspiring Change' project (Anderson et al., 2011). Though I personally saw relatively little of the work that prisoners and (other, more established) artists

produced together, in analyzing transcripts of focus groups in which prisoner-artists described their engagement in these processes, I was forced again and again to return to desistance theory, and to books like Maruna's (2001). The transcripts revealed repeated stories of confidence and self-esteem developing in the context of shared commitment to a creative process, of basic humanity affirmed by engagement with these processes and with outside artists, and of the affirmation that came from being seen as having produced something good -- of having made (something) good. The affirmation and endorsement of the work -- and of the workers -- was a new and inspiring experience for many of those involved. It allowed them to see themselves being seen differently -- by family members, by authority figures, by their peers. I'm sure that that experience both reflects and creates the possibility of (further) change. To use the language of the Scottish Prison Service's (2013) Organisational Review, it unlocks potential -- even if it is not enough, in and of itself, to see that potential fully realised.

The history of Theatre Nemo is, in itself, an exemplar of the process and potential that it offers to others. Isabel and Hugh McCue took a situation of personal loss and suffering and -- like great artists -- made something lovely; not a painting or a play or a requiem, but an organization and a community of people committed to supporting one another to make and to remake good. The modest claims and thoughtful reflection in this report neatly reflect the character of the organisation and its founders. Theatre Nemo is unpretentious and measured in claims about 'effectiveness' but rests on the courage of its convictions, aware that its practice is rooted in and true to the lived experience of the people involved, and well connected to theory and evidence that is just beginning to catch up.

I hope Theatre Nemo continues to go from strength to strength, and encourage you to read this excellent report from cover to cover.



Community Choir
Glasgow Green - Jul 2014
Photo by **Monika Grabowska**



Visual Art Exhibition
HMP Barlinnie - 2008
Photo by Hugh McCue

Author Biography

Kirstin Anderson has a Ph.D. from the University of Edinburgh. Her thesis, Music Education and Experience in Scottish Prisons, contributes to the developing research on the benefits of arts provision for men and women in prison and provides a baseline for further work on music education in Scottish prisons. In addition to the role of the arts in criminal justice settings, Kirstin is also interested in the research areas of desistance and professional development for teachers and staff working in prisons. Kirstin has presented at music, education and criminology conferences in Scotland, England, Cyprus, Canada and Northern Ireland. Her research is published in journals including The International Journal of Community Music, The Prison Service Journal and the Howard Journal for Criminal Justice (forthcoming).

At the time of writing, she is working with the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research (SCCJR) to explore the role of prison in supporting prisoners to desist from crime and address what this means in real terms for the prison regime, prison officer roles and working practices in the Scottish Prison Service.

Designed by MPG-Shotts

This publication has been designed and produced by imprisoned people from the Media Production Group in HMP Shotts, supported by New College Lanarkshire Lecturer, Iñigo Garrido.

Acknowledgements

Research and production of this paper would not have been possible without funding from Foundation Scotland as part of the Enterprise Ready Fund, which contributed funds to third sector organisations in order to maintain and develop their work.

Special thanks is given to staff from the Scottish Prison Service, the STIR editorial team at HMP Shotts for the design of this document, and Theatre Nemo who gave their time for interviews, as well as ensuring voices of some of the participants who took part in Theatre Nemo workshops in prisons were heard.

Executive Summary

- This report presents a theory-informed exploration of how Theatre Nemo supports people in prison towards better mental health and wellbeing through the arts. This is done by taking a closer look at some theories of desistance and examining them alongside current research on the contribution that the arts can make to an individual's mental health, wellbeing and desistance journey.
- This report is not an evaluation of a specific Theatre Nemo project or projects. However, comments from prison officers, Theatre Nemo staff, and participants in prison who have taken part in recent Theatre Nemo workshops (2014) are used to give context to the paper.
- The survey of literature undertaken for this report included a review of arts-based practice in prisons, of desistance research, of the relationship between the arts and desistance, of Scottish Prison Service policy documents and of grey literature produced by Theatre Nemo (mostly documentary material including session reviews, project summaries and internal reports).
- Theatre Nemo has experienced growth over the last ten years with regards to the types of programming offered (including Taiko Drumming workshops, animation workshops with prisoners and their families and collaborative work with men and officers in HMP Barlinnie's Day Care Unit), the development of documentation and evaluation methods and the dissemination of their work to the wider community.
- The arts play a key role in health and wellbeing in schools, hospitals, care homes, community centres and prisons. Recent research has supported the view that the arts, including with those engaged outside clinical environments, can be shown to make longitudinal contributions towards individuals' physical and mental health (Gordon-Nesbitt, 2015; Fujiwara and MacKerron, 2015).
- The arts have been shown to encourage 'secondary desistance' (Cheliotis, 2014; Davey et al., 2014; Bilby, Caulfield and Ridley, 2013; McNeill et al., 2011) through the development of positive self-identity and supporting an individual's personal and social wellbeing.
- There has been a fundamental shift in attitudes towards the arts in prisons over the last ten years as evidenced by a growing body of research in the field and the increase in organisations that carry out arts work in prisons. Better collaborative working is needed between arts organisations and the Scottish Prison Service in order to achieve the goals set out in the Scottish Prison Service Organisational Review (2013) and the Review of Purposeful Activity (2014).
- The work of Theatre Nemo contributes significantly to the Scottish Prison Service's pursuit of the Nine Offender Outcomes. The first Offender Outcome, sustained or improved physical and mental wellbeing, is achieved by supporting individuals' wellbeing through the creative arts. The work of Theatre Nemo has also shown to support Offender Outcome Six, maintained or improved relationships with

families, peers and community and the first part of Offender Outcome Nine, 'Improvements in the attitudes or behaviour which led to offending', which have been evident in some of the work that Theatre Nemo undertakes.

- The work of Theatre Nemo supports a number of aims highlighted in the Scottish Prison Service's Strategy for Purposeful Activity. In particular, Theatre Nemo has demonstrated that their work can support men and women in prison in developing both their personal wellbeing (emotions, satisfaction, vitality, resilience and self-esteem) and social wellbeing by developing trust in groups through the development of creative arts.
- Theatre Nemo has supported the aims of the SPS Mental Health Strategy through the development of long-term work in HMP Barlinnie's Day Care Services. HMP Barlinnie's Day Care Services is staffed by a group of dedicated officers who have professional knowledge of supporting the men who attend from the residential High Dependency Unit. It is recommended that Theatre Nemo staff, on secondment or as a residency, and officers from Day Care Services work together in designing long-term programming that allows both staffs to exchange and develop best practices.
- HMP Cornton Vale and HMP Barlinnie have purchased their own sets of Taiko drums and it is suggested that they make plans to work with Theatre Nemo in designing a long-term strategy that will support this purposeful activity. Taiko drumming has been shown to have numerous benefits for individual's health and wellbeing. The craft is adaptable to the various skill levels of people in a given group, an aspect that is welcome in prison settings.
- The Scottish Prison Service should consider the use of bespoke training by Theatre Nemo for new recruits and professional development for existing staff on developing an understanding of self-stigmatisation surrounding mental health in our society and what they can do to support individuals in prison who have mental health issues. Initial work taking place in HMP Edinburgh includes a focus on awareness training of stigma around mental illness and the benefits of stigma reduction through non-clinical therapeutic interventions. This work could be developed further to consider specific needs for women, men, young people and ageing men and women in custody.
- Theatre Nemo and the Scottish Prison Service, by means of Throughcare Support Officers, should consider working together to research individuals' desistance journey in prison and out in the community. There is very limited research that 'addresses the effects of arts-based prison programmes after participants' release in the community' (Cheliotis, 2014: 12) and more work is needed in the field.

Chapter 1: Introduction & Context Setting

Theatre Nemo is often labelled as an arts organisation - and one focused solely on theatre - but describes itself as an organisation that gives 'a voice to social issues, especially mental health' through the medium of the arts (Theatre Nemo, 2014).

Theatre Nemo has been working in Scottish Prisons for the past eleven years, after starting a small project in HMP Barlinnie in 2004. Deputy Governor McCaig wrote in a letter to the Theatre Nemo team after that initial performance:

'The approach used by Theatre Nemo helps to de-stigmatise mental ill health and to see those individuals express themselves in the way that they did, has to be seen to be believed.'

The challenge with many arts projects in prisons is that many people, including within the prison service, do not get to do just that; see them. Over ten years later, Theatre Nemo still finds this a challenge. When interviewed on 17 January 2015, Co-Founder Hugh McCue expressed this frustration:

'It's difficult to convince people that haven't seen [the work]. All the feedback from the people who have witnessed it is extremely positive because they can see the changes. For the people who have never seen anything like it, I think it's hard to imagine how it happens.'

Therefore, this paper aims to highlight the work of Theatre Nemo in Scottish prisons and recommends that, in order for more people to see the value of arts in prisons, the Scottish Prison Service consider working more closely with Theatre Nemo in the future as the service develops its understanding of supporting better mental health and wellbeing for men and women in prison.

'Ex Nemo ad Aliquis', from nobody to somebody, was chosen as the title for this paper as prisoners have commented that participation in Theatre Nemo workshops makes them feel human, like they are somebody (Theatre Nemo, 2008; Nugent et al., 2013; McCue, 2015, pers. comm., 17 Jan). This aim, to recognise the importance of the individual, has been at the forefront of Theatre Nemo's work since the founding of the organisation in 1998 (Theatre Nemo, 2014).

Theatre Nemo focuses its work, which includes workshops across many art forms, in three areas: Community, Psychiatric Hospitals and Prisons. They also work in partnership with multiple organisations across the third sector, and continuously work to secure funding for the running of their programmes.

Despite the title of the organisation, Theatre Nemo embraces a range of art forms to be used in sessions including drama, visual arts (drawing, collage, painting), music (popular music, rap, Taiko drumming), Film (animation and short films) and creative writing (poetry and short stories).

Methodology

This paper is a theory-informed exploration of how Theatre Nemo supports people in prison towards better mental health and wellbeing through the arts. This is done by taking a closer look at some theories of desistance and examining them alongside current research on the contribution that the arts can make to an individual's desistance journey. Finally, an exploration of how the work of Theatre Nemo can support the aims of the Scottish Prison Service, as defined in policy documents, is taken.

The survey of literature undertaken for this report includes work on arts based practice in prisons, on desistance and

on the arts and desistance. Scottish Prison Service policy documents and grey literature produced by Theatre Nemo (mostly documentary material including session reviews, project summaries and internal reports) were also examined.

This report is avowedly not an evaluation of a specific Theatre Nemo project or projects. However, comments from prison officers, Theatre Nemo staff, and participants in prison who have taken part in recent Theatre Nemo workshops (2014) are used to give context to the paper. These comments were gathered by semi-structured interviews with staff from HMP Barlinnie (1), HMP Edinburgh (2) and HMP Cornton Vale (2), together with interviews with staff from Theatre Nemo (2). In addition to the use of feedback from women who participated in recent Taiko Drumming workshops at HMP Cornton Vale, comments from men and women who have participated in past Theatre Nemo workshops have also been used.



Visual Art Class
HMP Barlinnie - 2008
Photo by Hugh McCue

Chapter 2: The Relationship between the Arts, Wellbeing and Desistance

Much has been written on the value of arts in prisons as they can contribute to an individual's feelings of self-esteem (Silber, 2005; Digard et al., 2007; Cox & Gelsthorpe, 2008) and to their ability to develop positive relationships (Boswell et al., 2004; Goddard, 2005; Menning, 2010; Palidofsky, 2010), to the reduction of anger (Balfour, 2003; Wilson et al., 2008) and self-harm (Nugent & Loucks, 2011; Digard & Libeling, 2012), and to developing the motivation to learn and gain new skills (Miles & Strauss, 2008; Cohen, 2009).

The arts have been documented in prisons and criminal justice settings since as early as 1789 (McAvincy, 2011: 55). However, the requirement for arts organisations to demonstrate that their programs support the organisational aims of a prison service is increasing (Davey et al., 2014).

This chapter outlines how the arts have been shown to contribute to an individual's sense of wellbeing during a prison sentence. Secondly, this chapter looks at how an individual's wellbeing can support desistance upon release. Finally, there is a brief examination of the difficulties that arise when evaluating the arts and desistance.

The Arts and Wellbeing (in Prison)

Michaelson et al. (2009) suggest that 'well-being is most usefully thought of as the dynamic process that gives people a sense of how their lives are going through the interaction between their circumstances, activities and psychological resources or 'mental capital'. Michaelson et al. (ibid: 4) suggest that there are personal and social dimensions that make up an individual's wellbeing. Personal wellbeing is described as a measurement of 'people's experiences of their positive and negative emotions, satisfaction, vitality, resilience and self-esteem and sense of positive function in the world (ibid)'. Where as 'social wellbeing measures people's experiences of supportive relationships and sense of trust and belonging with others (ibid)'. It is important to consider the personal and social aspect of an individual's wellbeing together, as each can influence the other.

As evidenced by the ongoing work of the National Alliance for Arts, Health & Wellbeing (Arts Council England, 2007) the arts can play a key role in health and wellbeing in schools, hospitals, care homes, community centres and prisons. Recent research has supported this view; that the arts can be shown to make longitudinal contributions towards individuals' physical and mental health, including those engaged in outside clinical environments (Fujiwara and MacKerron, 2015; Gordon-Nesbitt, 2015).

Much research has been undertaken to examine how the arts, in a variety of forms, can contribute to an individual's wellbeing while in prison. Cox and Gelsthorpe (2008) evaluated the impact of eight five-day Music in Prisons (MIP) projects (n=71 men) on offenders' wellbeing, their motivation to attend further education courses, and behaviour. Key findings from the study include: participants reported an increase in self-confidence and feelings of hope for the future; and participants reported that their participation in the project had made them feel differently about themselves and others (Cox and Gelsthorpe, 2008: 2).

Cox and Gelsthorpe suggest that the changes in participants' wellbeing, with regard to their sense of autonomy, humanity and self-confidence, are in part due to the way the MIP project leaders treated them as 'human beings' (2008: 17). Cox and Gelsthorpe suggest that elements of the MIP projects, such as having a final performance and making a professional CD of the music played during the project sessions gives participants a great 'sense of accomplishment' and can contribute positively to an individual's self-esteem. Also, the researchers reported that the participants' opportunity to express themselves through music, a way of expressing themselves which is completely different from anywhere else in the prison, contributed greatly to a better sense of self.

Digard, Graf von Sponeck and Liebling (2007) evaluated music sessions delivered by the organisation Good Vibrations whose aim was to improve the wellbeing of female offenders who were identified as being at risk of self-harm. They found that for many participants the Good Vibrations project was their first experience of belonging to a positive and supportive group. In fact, the way in which the sessions were organised and implemented by the instructors allowed participants to effectively self-lead the group (Digard et al., 2007: 6). The researchers propose that the process of defining roles within the group and sessions being participant-led enabled the participants to communicate more openly with one another. This more open communication led the researchers to suggest that such music sessions could possibly prepare offenders who were at risk of self-harm 'for more formal therapy' (2007: 12).



Theatre is used in many different forms in prisons including drama, drama therapy and theatre performances. Geese Theatre (2002: xii-xiii), a charity that has led drama with people in prison and those at risk of offending in the UK since 1987, suggest there are certain advantages of using a drama-based approach including:

- 'More personal: Drama can make learning more immediate and personally meaningful.
- Not reliant on literacy and verbal expression: when non-verbal methods are used, drama helps those who are less confident to express themselves.
- Active and spontaneous: Drama is a highly suitable approach for action-oriented individuals.
- Addresses thinking, feeling and behaviour: Drama addresses the person as a whole and takes into account thoughts, feelings and behaviour in equal measure.
- Practical and immediate: Drama is also a highly practical and efficient tool for exploring destructive behaviour and practicing alternatives.
- Enables practice: Drama can be used to help the participant practise and test new skills and new roles, while at the same

time practicing self-reflection.

- An instinctive approach: Drama harnesses the fundamental human ability to create and respond to stories. These can be stories addressing any aspect of human thought or conduct. They can reach profound levels and address universal themes such as the need in us all to feel worthwhile and to have a purpose in life.'

Goodrich (2004) led semi-structured interviews with offenders and staff (n=16, 5 staff and 11 prisoners) from HMP Dovegate's therapeutic community about their participation in a drama program led by the organisation Rideout (Creative Arts for Rehabilitation). Rideout leads drama and theatre workshops with offenders as a way to examine the causes that led them to prison and the consequences of being imprisoned. The researcher reported that both offenders and staff found the process of self-selection for the project to be positive and it fitted alongside the therapeutic unit's goal for prisoners to make their own choice. Personal benefits developed were increased confidence, self esteem, listening skills and patience. Participants also reported learning practical skills in the following areas: script writing, learning lines, acting, film-making and delivering drama based workshops (Goodrich, 2004: 2).

Moller (2003) argues that writing, producing and performing a



Visual Art Exhibition
HMP Barlinnie - 2009
Photo by Hugh McCue

play can offer offenders of all learning levels opportunities for growth. It is the 'sensory' experience of a play (the lights, the set, live actors on a stage) that 'transport the audience beyond the walls of a prison' (2003: 54). It is through the medium of theatre that both the actors and the audience can consider often 'silenced issues' in prison: love, loyalty, manhood, morality, power, and freedom (Moller, 2003: 54). Shailor (2011: 22) expands on this idea of approaching 'silenced issues' in a meaningful way: 'Theatre provides opportunities then for performers to become more self aware, to expand their sense of what it means to be human, to develop empathy, and to exercise their moral imaginations (by developing their understanding of what is true, what is good, and what is beautiful).'

Williams (2012: 238) suggests that the arts have the potential to 'create a space for reflection'. It has been suggested by Davey et.al (2014: 1) that the arts might have a role to play in supporting this opportunity to reflect and shape an individual's narrative identity, which could 'usefully assist them in the process of desisting from crime.'

Wellbeing and Desistance (through the Arts)

Desistance is a process of ceasing and refraining from crime by individuals who previously have engaged in a pattern of offending (Maruna, 2001). Desistance can include an individual stopping offending completely, offending less often or less seriously. Typically, at least for those who have offended persistently, the process of desistance is not straightforward; it includes periods of ambivalence and relapse. Desistance has been described as a path or journey an individual takes, one that is non-linear, rocky and uncertain (Healy, 2010). Desistance is complex and difficult to measure as each path

is highly individual and subjective.

Desistance is often thought of in three ways: 1) Primary Desistance, which has to do with someone changing their behaviour, i.e. not committing a crime, 2) Secondary Desistance, which has to do with how someone sees themselves as an offender, i.e. their identity and 3) Tertiary Desistance, which refers to a shift in one's sense of belonging to a community, i.e. how one is seen by others, and on how one sees one's place in society (McNeill, 2014). Recognising tertiary desistance acknowledges the important role of the social aspect of desistance. Indeed, desistance is a social process as much as a personal one (Owers, 2011).

The importance of society playing a supporting role in an individual's desistance journey is similar to the need to recognise the interconnectivity, and dependency, of one's wellbeing as being constructed by personal and social components. How does an individual's human and social capital contribute to their wellbeing? Do the arts and the nature of arts practice, which often takes place in groups, help develop and support desisters to form human and social capital while in prison?

Many arts organisations that work in prisons have increasingly aimed to show how their work can influence, or support, secondary desistance. Bilby, Caulfield and Ridley (2013: 50) suggest that the arts can 'start to develop the indicators for secondary desistance: changes in self-identity and personal agency and the development of social capital.' Shailor (2011: 24-25) suggests how theatre programs in prisons can allow for this social and individual reconstruction to take place:

'Prison theatre programs are places of refuge where the imaginations, hopes and humanity of the incarcerated can be more fully expressed. In this context, the transformation of

identity becomes a real possibility, as inmates rehearse new realities, develop new skills, and explore a wide range of roles in a context of discipline, commitment and teamwork.'

Maruna (1999) suggests that in order to understand changes in behaviour towards desistance, the individual's story must be understood. It is not just the story that is important, but also the telling of the story; in other words, how someone sees themselves and their life. Bruner (1987: 15; cited in Maruna, 1999) writes:

'Eventually the culturally shaped cognitive and linguistic processes that guide the self-telling of life narratives achieve the power to structure perceptual experience, to organise memory, to segment and purpose-build the very 'events' of a life. In the end, we become the autobiographical narratives by which we 'tell about' our lives.'

Is it possible that the arts can help begin that story people tell about their lives when the words are not present in the first place? Professor of Music, Karl Paulnack suggested this when welcoming incoming students to the Boston Conservatory of Music in 2004:

"Music in one of the ways we make sense of our lives, one of the ways in which we express feelings when we have no words, a way for us to understand things with our hearts when we can't with our minds. Music allows us to move around those big invisible pieces of ourselves and rearrange our insides so that we can express what we feel even when we can't talk about it."

Life narratives have the ability to show an individual's personality and background. In addition to these characteristics, Maruna suggests that it is the viewing of our own history that allows individuals to shape future choices and behaviour. To desist from crime, an individual must 'restructure his or her understanding of the self.' This restructuring of the self, however, is not enough. 'The self is both socially shaped and individually constructed (Meisenhelder, 1982; cited in Maruna, 1999).'

Could supporting the wellbeing of individuals in prison through the arts be the first steps of an individual's desistance path before they walk outside the prison gate? Is it possible to start that journey while inside a prison? These questions are difficult to answer, especially as desistance is highly complex and individualistic, which can make it difficult to measure and evaluate.

Evaluating the 'Being' and 'Doing'

'Being' and 'Doing' are used in this paper to mean creating, engaging with an art form and contributing to it with one's actions and voice. In his seminal study on desistance, Maruna (2001: 26), suggests that 'the going is the thing.' This is in reference to how people, ex-offenders, see themselves as moving away from criminal behaviour; they are 'going straight' or 'making good.' Recent trends in evaluating arts programmes and projects in prisons often include jumping to the end of projects. Some research objectives might ask; how do

offenders feel about their self-confidence after participating in a play? Has an offender's writing skills improved because of a poetry workshop? This type of evaluation is often used in order to justify claims that the arts 'work' in Criminal Justice and Prison Systems. However, some have argued that it is dangerous to justify the arts as 'tools of the prison to increase self-esteem and team building' (Balfour: 44).

The difficulty is that this type of research – which often emphasises the use of quantitative measures and is commonly referred to by Government and prison services as 'gold standard' – can, at times, fail to capture what make the arts, and offenders' experiences of them, beneficial (Anderson, 2012; Davey et al., 2014). Miles and Strauss questioned the validity of using 'gold standard' and outcome evaluation methods that may not be appropriate when looking at how arts initiatives may be useful in 'complex and social environments' (2008: 9). Such evaluation methods will usually reveal if something works or not (via a specific framework) but it often does not explain why or how an intervention may work for a particular group of people in a particular environment.

Additionally, benefits to participants might be seen in the 'doing' of the arts project but they are not always quantifiable (Cox and Gelsthorpe, 2012). Standardized measures are not designed to pick up the highly individual growth in a project group. Nor, are they designed to find those 'moments' when the 'being' or 'doing' click for a participant. Davey et al. (2014: 3) suggest:

'The argument here is theatre that attempts to adhere strictly to "what works" principles runs the risk of becoming reductive: In squeezing itself into the framework for the sake of meeting evaluation criteria, it risks sacrificing the very aspects of the work that make it uniquely valuable'

Engaging with an art form and contributing to it with one's actions and voice is no small feat, and this may be even more challenging in prison. It is empowering. Taylor (2011: 198-199) articulates this process of empowerment that can happen in the 'being' and 'doing' of engaging in the arts.

'Creating art is dangerous. Art gives a voice to those who have lost theirs, it provides opportunities for confidence, self-worth, and accomplishment. It empowers people to make change in their own lives. Creating art in prison is an act of resistance against the isolation, physical degradation and humiliation of prison, and the society that fuels it. Every poem written, every play performed, every stroke of paint on a canvas brings us one step closer to a community, to respect for individuality, and ownership over stories and lives.'

Ownership over stories and lives is a good beginning for ex-offenders who are trying to create new narratives when leaving prison. For example, Thompson (2008, cited in Davey et al., 2014) suggests that theatre has the potential to be more than a rehearsal; it can be an intense creative experience that creates the opportunities for the reshaping of identity.

Chapter 3: Theatre Nemo – Origins to Present

Theatre Nemo developed out of one family's experience of caring for a loved one with mental health issues. Isabel McCue, with her younger son Hugh, founded Theatre Nemo after her elder son, John, spent years in and out of psychiatric hospitals and prisons growing increasingly unwell.

Beginnings

McCue writes in detail about this time in her family's life as one of constant turmoil, stress and pain (Theatre Nemo, 2014), even more so when John took his own life after one of many periods of being institutionalised. Telling this story, the one that led to Isabel McCue creating Theatre Nemo, is important as the telling of personal journeys and the 'understanding of people's need to be treated as people' is central to Theatre Nemo's ethos as an organisation today (McCue, 2015, pers. comm., 17 January). The organisation's aim, to 'break down stigma and to give people a voice' is evident in all areas of their work (Theatre Nemo, 2014).

Theatre Nemo focuses their work, which includes workshops across many art forms, in three areas: Community, Psychiatric Hospitals and Prisons. The organisation's first project in a prison took place at HMP Barlinnie in 2004 with 5 offenders and 5 staff including 1 officer, 1 social worker, 2 mental health nurses and 1 student nurse (McCue, 2015, pers. Comm., 17 January). Little documented work exists today on the content of the 7-week drama project, titled Bar None, except for a letter from the Deputy Governor praising the work of Theatre Nemo and the methods used to support people who suffer from mental health in prison (Theatre Nemo, 2014). Theatre Nemo has worked in Scottish prisons every year since their initial project in 2004 (see Appendix A) with most of their work concentrated in HMP Barlinnie.

Facilitators

Theatre Nemo currently has a staff of eleven facilitators who lead and co-lead sessions across a range of projects offered by the organisation. Similar to supporting individuals in workshops, the process for supporting staff in facilitating is highly individual. It is not uncommon for new facilitators to come to Theatre Nemo with a range of skills; often times many are already community or freelance artists and musicians. McCue (2015, pers. comm., 17 January) outlines the process of a new facilitator joining the Theatre Nemo staff as a period of introduction followed by development and support opportunities designed to fit the individual facilitator. This introduction period almost always includes shadowing another facilitator and co-facilitating before a new facilitator runs projects on their own. Facilitators are supported in learning new skills needed to facilitate workshops.

The organisation has hosted a number of Skill Share Days where the entire Theatre Nemo staff is invited to gather, share best practice and take part in a masterclass from one of the experienced facilitators. McCue (2015, pers. comm., 17 January) suggests these days are vital for facilitators to talk about their practice and develop new ideas.

Unfortunately, there is currently no funding for these Skill Share Days and the organisation must ask people to give up their own time for professional development. This is an area that Theatre Nemo hopes to gain more funding to support in the future.

Finally, some Theatre Nemo facilitators have taken part in a mentoring course provided by the University of the West of Scotland (to support the Creative and Mentoring Project that took place with men in HMP Barlinnie in 2013) and the Mental Health First Aid Training (SMHFA) offered by the National Health Service. The SMHFA course addresses understanding mental health problems, understanding the relationship between mental health problems and drugs, how to respond if someone is at risk of suicide, what to do in a crisis and how to promote good listening skills (NHS, 2014).

Sessions

Theatre Nemo's approach to supporting mental health for individuals is to engage with the individual first, and not a label, such as 'prisoner' or the mental health condition, they may have. Theatre Nemo suggests that one of the best ways to do this - to recongise an individual's humanity - is through the arts.

Sessions are holistic. Theatre Nemo facilitators have an outline of the overall project aim before sessions begin, however, the development of the content that reaches that aim (i.e. composing original music or writing a script) comes from and is directed by the participants. Facilitators will have a range of exercises and warm-ups they may use in session but each facilitator is responsible for choosing material that is appropriate for the specific group they are working with that day. Theatre Nemo sessions are not arts therapy sessions (meaning, they do not have a therapeutic goal or focus), however, the sessions are often therapeutic in fact, and can support people in prison by providing a positive experience



within a custodial environment.

Despite a final performance not being the main focus of Theatre Nemo's work with men and women in prison, the facilitators recognise the importance of supporting groups to give a performance should they be ready. Feedback from audience members has been positive, especially from prison staff who work with the men and women on a daily basis. A health care manager at HMP Barlinnie wrote after seeing 'The Slipper Factory' in 2007, 'The performances are very challenging and very powerful and it reminds everyone watching that we are dealing with ordinary people who are demonstrating that they have the potential to change.'

The contribution that prison officers can make in supporting Theatre Nemo sessions is greatly valued by Theatre Nemo facilitators. It is not uncommon for officers to state that they 'didn't know what to expect' or were 'skeptical' about what the arts can contribute before the project, but often see the value in the projects later as they observed the 'pride and confidence' participants developed as a result of the Theatre Nemo workshops.

Often times, officers will have worked with the men and women more consistently and have a longer point of reference than Theatre Nemo facilitators in terms of seeing growth for individual participants. Sometimes, this growth can be surprising:

'The men who were typically quiet and reserved would show the others how to play patterns correctly and the really outgoing individual was willing to take instructional help from him. There was more equality in the group; no top dog.'

Addictions Recovery Officer, Taiko Drumming at HMP Edinburgh

'We had one woman on Rule 95 (very aggressive behaviour, needs 3 staff present at all time). Staff had taken her on a walk

and brought her by to see the drums. I know her, I said, 'Have a go!' I showed her how to do it. She laughed and had a go and asked to come back the next day. She's not the type of person to get involved in things.'

Social Care Officer, Taiko Drumming at HMP YO1 Cornton Vale

One of the main concerns expressed by Scottish Prison Staff is that the projects offered by Theatre Nemo are often short term. Essentially, the work has to stop just as the men and women who are taking part are beginning to engage fully. This is a concern shared by Theatre Nemo staff and one they have been striving to address, and will continue to address, in their partnerships with prisons and funders as they see long-term delivery having the potential to make a real impact (McCue, 2015, pers. comm., 17 January).

Growth

A review of grey literature produced by Theatre Nemo showed growth over the last ten years in the following areas: 1) the variety of projects offered, 2) the development of evaluation methods used in reviewing their work and 3) disseminating their work to a larger community.

Types of Projects Offered

There has been an increase in the variety of projects offered by Theatre Nemo over the last ten years, one prominent example being Taiko Drumming, 'an ancient Japanese form of percussion' (Tamashii, 2015). New participants to Taiko drumming can quickly join in as the sessions are taught for people who have little or no previous music experience. It is highly rhythmical and physical. Pieces are learned as a group and written notation is not used. One Theatre Nemo facilitator (Regan, 2015, pers. comm., 30 January) described Taiko drumming as the 'perfect project to have in prisons' as it 'allows a group with different abilities to work together, it can be meditative and physical at the same time and it allows for

team building within the group.' When asked about a recent Taiko Drumming workshop, some participants from HMP Cornton Vale replied: 'I felt less stressed and excited about attending the next day'

'I was initially embarrassed. I think it may have been because it was my first ever encounter with a Taiko drum. It left me feeling liberated, exhilarated and of positive mind.'

Participant, HMP Cornton Vale

'It was like a natural life of happiness. I had the best 2 days in a long time there doing the drums plus in the days after.'

Participant, HMP Cornton Vale

Whelan (2013: 25) has shown that Taiko drumming can have many health benefits for groups including:

- Development of social skills, social benefits and teamwork;
- Improved mental health and wellbeing – drummers look forward to sessions and were happier and felt energized;
- Development of new skills – including concentration and listening music and drumming, and personal qualities including confidence and pride in achievements.

Another example of Theatre Nemo's development in terms of session content is the running of projects that includes offenders' families. Offenders' families can experience great social, psychological and economic losses when a parent or partner is incarcerated (Murray, 2005). One example of this work is a 10-week project Theatre Nemo ran in HMP Addiewell in 2011 that focused on working with three family groups, parents and their children, to create a short stop-motion animation. Nugent (2011: 1) suggests that stop-motion animation was chosen as it was 'unlikely that the families had been involved in this process before, and requires good teamwork in order to be successful.'

Positive outcomes of the project included the fathers in prison sharing a positive experience with their children, having a structure to visits and the arts project being a topic

of discussion during phone conversations between prisoners and their children. Nugent (2011: 4) suggests that the 'arts are a valuable tool for bringing families together...this project in essence is giving families the chance to be families, and also focused on developing their relationships through action and working together.'

Theatre Nemo has been delivering projects in HMP Barlinnie over the last ten years for men who are allocated a place in Day Care Services, many of whom are residents in the High Dependency Unit. Day Care Services is designed to care for individuals with complex mental health issues or social support needs, learning difficulties and addictions and who are not able to cope within the mainstream population (McCue, 2015, pers. comm., 17 January). The Scottish Prison Service officers who work in Day Care Services 'approach their work with sensitivity, empathy and respect' and work in their role with 'awareness and reflectivity' in every day interactions with the men in their care (Nugent, Vigneux and Donaldson, 2013). Theatre Nemo staff have worked on a variety of projects with men in Day Care Services, the most recent including 'A History of Barlinnie' (2013), a performance that contributed to the 'Barlinnie Arts Festival' (2013) and 'Voices from Barlinnie' (2014).

Development of Documentation and Evaluation Methods

Theatre Nemo has developed how they document and evaluate their work in prisons. Early projects (before 2007) were often followed up by a short report giving limited information about the content of sessions, focusing instead on feedback from participants and audience members. While not always consistent, projects after 2008 (see Appendix B) were often followed by an internal report that contained the following sections: location and duration, project outline, project outcomes, project indicators and feedback from participants, audience members, Theatre Nemo facilitators and prison staff (when possible). These project evaluation forms are useful in articulating more of the process of the sessions (what actually happened) over the project period and getting a general feeling for how the project was received at the time. Documentation and evaluation methods now include feedback from Theatre Nemo facilitators, annual reports from

Theatre Nemo administration staff and sourcing independent evaluations of their work (Nugent, 2011; Nugent, Vigneux and Donaldson, 2013), which often include both quantitative and qualitative measures.

Dissemination of Work

Theatre Nemo has increased the number of agencies with whom they collaborate over the last ten years. A review of independent reviews and session plan documents list the following as some of the main collaborators and supporters: the Scottish Prison Service, the Scottish Association of Social Workers, the Scottish Association for Mental Health, the Glasgow Association for Mental Health, the Glasgow Community Justice Authority, Positive Prison? Positive Futures, Willow, Just Us, Scottish Prison Arts Network, Gibson Street Gala, Scottish Government Rehabilitation & Reintegration Unit, Dundee Community Justice Centre, Glasgow Connected Arts Network, See Me, Media Education and Education Scotland, to name a few.

Theatre Nemo, in collaboration with the Butler Trust, gave a conference titled Designing a Creative Approach at the Scottish Youth Theatre in 2008. This conference brought together 72 representatives from arts organisations working in prisons, the Scottish Prison Service, mental health agencies and men from the current Barlinnie drama group. In addition to the performances by the men in the drama group, delegates chose from six workshops offered throughout the day including Empowerment, Visual Art, Drama, Trust and Teamwork, Storytelling and Film Compilation (Newell, 2008). Newell (2008: 3) wrote that the conference was excellent at 'getting a very diverse group of people together, providing them with some challenging ideas, some exciting experiences and celebrating some outstanding achievements whilst demonstrating the continuing need in prisons and their communities.'

Theatre Nemo has participated in numerous conferences to share their work, as well as festivals including the Headspace Festival in Glasgow and the 2012 Scottish Mental Health Arts & Film Festival.

Looking Ahead

There has been a fundamental shift in attitudes towards the arts in prisons over the last ten years, which is evident in the growing body of research in the field and the increase in organisations that carry out arts work in prisons. In Scotland specifically, there has been a range of support from national bodies like Creative Scotland developing a strand of funding specifically for the Arts in Criminal Justice, to the Scottish Prison Service committing to the development of an arts strategy (Scottish Prison Service, 2014) to the creation of the Scottish Prison Arts Network (SPAN); a network that supports arts practitioners, academics, and researchers that work in prisons.

Rather than see organisations that do similar work as competitors, Theatre Nemo works closely with other arts organisations that work in prisons. Indeed, The Citizens Theatre and Art Link Central are, along with Theatre Nemo, members of the Scottish Prison Arts Network Board of Directors. Similar to some other arts organisations that work in prisons, Theatre Nemo tailors the content of sessions to the participants, which means much of the work produced is original. As well as the sessions focus being on improving wellbeing, Theatre Nemo seeks to create links to community where possible, whether that is linking to their own community based services or signposting to other organisations (McCue, 2015, pers. comm., 17 January).

Theatre Nemo staff, in both management roles and facilitators, has increased. This has allowed the organisation to provide a number of short pilots in Scottish Prisons from 2013-2014 (McCue, 2015, pers. Comm., 17 January). The organisation is also keen to seek funding for additional Skill Share Days, where the entire facilitator team comes together to meet, exchange best practice and take part in a masterclass from one of the practitioners.



Chapter 4: How the work of Theatre Nemo can support the aims of the Scottish Prison Service

There are many ways in which the work of Theatre Nemo naturally supports the aims of the Scottish Prison Service put forth in the Organisational Review (2014). This section highlights a number of those areas concerning the work around the Nine Offender Outcomes, Purposeful Activity and Partnership Working.

Nine Offender Outcomes

Safer Scotland (2006: 5) outlined 9 Offender Outcomes, which the Scottish Prison Service has accepted and since worked towards:

1. Sustained or improved physical and mental well-being
2. The ability to access and sustain suitable accommodation
3. Reduced or stabilised substance misuse
4. Improved literacy skills
5. Employability prospects increased
6. Maintained or improved relationships with families, peers and community
7. The ability to access and sustain community supports, including financial advice and education
8. The ability to live independently if they choose
9. Improvements in the attitudes or behaviour which lead to offending and greater acceptance of responsibility in managing their own behaviour and understanding of the impact of their offending on victims and on their own families

As discussed throughout this paper, the work of Theatre Nemo contributes greatly to the first Offender Outcome, sustained or improved physical and mental wellbeing, by supporting individual's wellbeing through the creative arts. This is seen in many of the follow up reports on Theatre Nemo's projects from participants and prison staff. For example, prison officers at HMP Addiewell 'observed that, during the weeks of the [Theatre Nemo] project, the prisoners involved appeared calmer and happier than usual' (Nugent, 2011: 2).

'[The programme] brought me out of my cell and out of my shell'

Participant, HMP Barlinnie (Day Care Services)

'One fellow didn't say a word in the first couple of sessions but by the end of it he was speaking his mind and saying brave things like, 'I felt a bit intimidated when I came here, and I still feel that, but I feel like I know the boys here better.' He was speaking of his own volition. He was saying this to a group of governors and other prisoners.'

Theatre Nemo Facilitator, HMP Barlinnie

The work of Theatre Nemo has also shown to support Offender Outcome Six, maintained or improved relationships with families, peers and community. Feedback from workshop facilitators and prison staff has expressed more positive relationships with peer and families as a result of sharing the performances and artwork with them (Nugent, 2011). Theatre Nemo makes efforts to stay in communication with participants upon release and have had ex-offenders contact them upon release and join them for community programmes (McCue, 2015, pers. comm., 17 January).

The first part of Offender Outcome Nine, 'Improvements in the attitudes or behaviour which led to offending' have been evident in some of the work that Theatre Nemo undertakes. A representative from Advocacy Matters commented after Theatre Nemo's 2007 production of 'The Slipper Factory' that, 'Theatre allows people to be creative, emotional and thoughtful to each other – all qualities not often encouraged in men.' Maruna (2001: 8) associated individuals who were able to desist from crime as creating a 'pro-social identity for themselves.' McNeill et al. (2011: 8) found that participation in the arts can 'constructively challenge and disrupt negative identities' that prisoners may have internalised.

It is difficult to evaluate what effect better mental well being would have on some of the other outcomes, such as Offender Outcome Three, reduced or stabilised substance abuse, and Offender Outcome Four: Improved Literacy Skills, as these might be indirect outcomes of the work that Theatre Nemo does with participants, but are not seen as the main aim.

Purposeful Activity

The work of Theatre Nemo supports a number of aims highlighted in the Scottish Prison Service's publication, 'Delivery a Strategy for Purposeful Activity in the Scottish Prison Service' (Scottish Prison Service, 2014). Indeed, the work of Theatre Nemo is discussed in the document under the section on Creative Arts (p. 52-56).



Visual Art Exhibition
HMP Barlinnie - 2008
Photos by Carlo Viscione



As described in Point 4.12 of the strategy for purposeful activity, wellbeing is 'not viewed as the sole responsibility of healthcare professionals'. The Scottish Prison Service's holistic model of purposeful activity can be used to examine Theatre Nemo's work as purposeful.

As seen in figure 4.1, the five areas of the Scottish Prison Services' holistic model are Wellbeing, Citizenship, Volunteering and Reparation, Life Skills and Resilience, Offending Behaviour and Learning and Employability. Theatre Nemo has demonstrated that their work can support men and women in prison in developing both their personal (emotions, satisfaction, vitality, resilience and self-esteem) and social wellbeing by developing trust in groups through the development of creative arts.

McCue (2015, pers. comms. 17 January) suggests that, for some participants, the workshops lead to less aggression and offer experiences for the participants to communicate calmly and verbally, 'social skills which can contribute to them communicating more effectively with other organisations such as mental health teams, housing and counsellors'.

In reference to Learning and Employability, (Cheliotis, 2014: 14) suggests that 'arts-based programmes have commonly been employed to improve prisoners' overall learning capacity and motivation', especially those with 'learning difficulties and educational deficiencies'. Employability in Scotland (2015) suggests that there are stages in preparing an individual to employability. Identifying a job for a person in prison, or in the community for that matter, is not enough. First, one's capacity to take on work must be developed. This capacity building includes 'changing attitudes and addressing perceptions of employment' and 'providing information, encouragement and help to overcome barriers' (Employability in Scotland, 2015). One example of this capacity building in Theatre Nemo's work is their collaborative work with Scottish Prison Staff in Day Care Services at HMP Barlinnie, which is detailed in the following section of this paper under Partnership Working.

The work of Theatre Nemo, and many other arts organisations that work in prisons, might be thought of as meaningful activity as well as purposeful. The word meaningful is used in this context to suggest that the work is of value, or meaning, to the individual taking part and not only purposeful in that they are actively taking part in an activity outside of their cell.



Visual Art Exhibition
HMP Barlinnie - 2009
Photo by Hugh McCue



Fig 4.1 (Scottish Prison Service, 2014: 5)

Partnership Working

Theatre Nemo staff, in collaboration with officers in Day Care Services, piloted a Creative and Mentoring Project in 2013. This pilot consisted of three parts: 1) a Creative Programme in the HMP Barlinnie Day Care Services of seven weeks, 2) a Mentoring Pre-Release program of three weeks and 3) a Mentoring Post-Release programme of six months. The Creative Project (n=20 men) involved the use of research, poetry, artwork, theatre and media to explore the history of HMP Barlinnie. Participants in the Creative Project reported feeling 'happy, relaxed, and good about themselves as a result of taking part (Nugent, Vigneux and Donaldson, 2013). Two men, Daniel and Ewan, volunteered to take part in the mentoring part of the project; both men were met at the gate on their day of release and supported by their mentor through phone calls and meetings. At the time of the evaluation, Daniel was back in HMP Barlinnie and Ewan had secured a placement to study technical theatre at his local college (Nugent, Vigneux and Donaldson, 2013).

The intention of the mentoring project had been to support men coming out of prison in a creative capacity, however, it was not uncommon for Theatre Nemo staff to engage with agencies on housing and benefits matters for the men they were mentoring. McCue (2015, pers. comm., 17 January) explains:

What we aimed to do was mentor people post release through engagement with our creative sessions in the community, focusing on their development in the workshops and supporting our mentees to recognise the skills they were developing, then looking at how we can take these skills and

move forward to something else. Perhaps more formal training opportunities, or other community groups we can access to move them forward positively? But it's hard to do any of that when they don't even have a house to go to on release. We've kept quite a lot of what we learned and have put it into our general practice, which is about keeping in touch with people. It's looking out for things to point to, to signpost them into other projects, overall being more mindful of how we can support this person in moving forward.

Cheliotis (2014) suggests that partnerships between arts organisations, prison services and third sector agencies are necessary to 'address the broader needs' of people coming out of prison as well as their creative needs. This is an area that Theatre Nemo and the Scottish Prison Service would benefit in working together.

In 2014, Theatre Nemo received funding from the 'See Me' Community Innovation Fund to work with Scottish Prison Service officers in developing their understanding of self-stigmatisation surrounding mental health in our society and what they can do to support individuals in prison who have mental health issues. This work is currently taking place in HMP Edinburgh. Current workshops focus on awareness training of stigma around mental illness and the benefits of stigma reduction through non-clinical therapeutic interventions (McCue, 2015, pers. comm., 17 January).

Theatre Nemo is often sent referrals from local health authorities (McCue, 2015, pers. comm., 17 January), a practice they welcome but would like to see developed in a more formal process.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

The mental health and wellbeing of people in the care of the Scottish Prison Service is a worthy concern, one that can be supported through the arts.

Conclusion

Theatre Nemo is one of the few organisations in the sector that delivers services in the community, psychiatric hospitals and prisons, which puts them in the position where they can be a source of consistent support to an individual in prison and by means of throughcare back in the community. However, as discussed in this paper, this is not an easily documented process, and work needs to be done collaboratively with the Scottish Prison Service and external agencies in learning and documenting how this can be done. As outlined in their 2013 Organisational Review, the Scottish Prison Service recognises the impact a prison sentence can have on an individual and their desistance path. For many offenders, participation in the arts can challenge and reassess the negative identities they have of themselves, a beginning to developing a positive self-identity and a step on their desistance journey.

In addition to supporting men and women in Scottish prisons, Theatre Nemo can play more of a role in supporting prison officers in their daily work through specific awareness training on the value creative processes can contribute to better mental health and wellbeing. Initial work is currently taking place in HMP Edinburgh and includes a focus on awareness training of stigma around mental illness and the benefits of stigma reduction through non-clinical therapeutic interventions. This work could be developed further to consider specific needs for women, men, young people and ageing men and women in custody.

There has been a fundamental shift in the attitudes towards the arts in prisons around the world as more and more prison services, public bodies and third sector organisations recognise the value that arts activities and practices can bring to a prison environment. The Scottish Prison Service has recognised this shift and is actively looking for meaningful ways to include the arts in prisons. The purposeful activity review (Scottish Prison Service, 2014: 55) suggests that the 'secondment of arts and creative practitioners leading to full-time residency' as a sustainable way to provide value for money as an alternative to 'contracting out services and commissioning projects of various lengths.' Theatre Nemo has years of experience working with men and women in Scottish prisons with a unique approach to supporting wellbeing through the creative arts. A more formal collaboration with the Scottish Prison Service, in terms of a secondment or residency, could prove valuable to furthering the understanding of the value

the creative arts have in prisons for individual's wellbeing and contribution to secondary desistance.

Recommendations for Collaboration

- Theatre Nemo has supported the aims of the SPS Mental Health Strategy through the development of long term work with HMP Barlinnie's Day Care Services. HMP Barlinnie's Day Care Services is staffed by a group of dedicated officers who have professional knowledge of running the Day Care Services and supporting the men who attend. It is recommended that Theatre Nemo staff, on secondment or as a residency, and officers from the Day Care Services work together in designing long-term programming for men accessing Day Care Services, that allows both staffs to exchange and develop best practices.
- HMP Cornton Vale and HMP Barlinnie have purchased their own sets of Taiko drums and it is suggested that they make plans to work with Theatre Nemo in designing a long-term strategy that will support this purposeful activity. Taiko drumming has been shown to have numerous benefits for individual's health and wellbeing. The craft is adaptable to the various skill levels of people in a given group, an aspect that is welcome in prison settings.
- The Scottish Prison Service consider the use of bespoke training by Theatre Nemo for new recruits and professional development for existing staff on developing an understanding of self-stigmatisation surrounding mental health in our society and what they can do to support individuals in prison who have mental health issues. Initial work taking place in HMP Edinburgh includes a focus on awareness training of stigma around mental illness and the benefits of stigma reduction through non-clinical therapeutic interventions. This work could be developed further to consider specific needs for women, men, young people and ageing men and women in custody.
- Theatre Nemo and the Scottish Prison Service, by means of Throughcare Support Officers, should consider working together to research individuals' desistance journey in prison and out in the community. There is very limited research that 'addresses the effects of arts-based prison programmes after participants' release in the community (Cheliotis, 2014: 12) and more work is needed in the field.



Community Taiko Drumming Group
George Square - Jul 2014
Photo by Monika Grabowska

References

- Anderson, K. (2012) Music Education and Experience in the Scottish Prison Service. Unpublished PhD Thesis. The University of Edinburgh.
- Balfour, M. (2003) The use of drama in the rehabilitation of violent male offenders. Lampeter, UK: Edwin Mellen Press.
- Bilby, C., Caulfield, L. and Ridley, L. (2013) Re-imagining futures: Exploring arts interventions and the process of desistance. Arts Alliance.
- Boswell, G., Wedge, P., and Price, A. (2004) The Impact of Fathers Inside: An OLSU and Safe Ground Parenting Course for Male Prisoners at HMP Ashwell. Safe Ground.
- Cheliotis, L. K. and A. Jordanoska (forthcoming) 'The Arts of Desistance: Assessing the Role of Arts-based Programmes in Reducing Reoffending', Howard League of Criminal Justice.
- Cheliotis, L. K. (2014) The Arts of Desistance: Evaluation of the Koestler Trust Arts Mentoring Programme for Former Prisoners. Koestler Trust.
- Cohen, M. L. (2009) 'Choral Singing and Prison Inmates: Influences of Performing in a Prison Choir'. The Journal of Correctional Education. 60, 1, 52-65.
- Cox, A. and Gelsthorpe, L. (2008) Beats & Bars. Music in Prisons: An evaluation.
- Davey, L., Day, A. and Balfour, M. (2014) 'Performing desistance: how might theories of desistance from crime help us understand the possibilities of prison theatre?' International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology. SAGE.
- Digard, L. and Liebling, A. (2012) 'Harmony Behind Bars: Evaluating the Therapeutic Potential of a Prison-based Music Programme', in L.L. Cheliotis (Ed.), The Arts of Imprisonment: Control, Resistance and Empowerment, Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Digard, L., Graf von Sponeck, A. & Liebling, A. (2007) 'All Together Now: The therapeutic potential of a prison-based music programme'. Prison Service Journal 170, 3-14.
- Employability in Scotland (2015) The Employability Pipeline. Available at: <http://www.employabilityinscotland.com/employability-pipeline/the-employability-pipeline/> (Accessed: 26 February 2015).
- Fujiwara, D. and MacKerron, G. (2015) Cultural Activities, Artforms and Wellbeing. Arts Council England. Manchester.
- Geese Theatre (2002) the Geese Theatre Handbook: Drama with Offenders and People at risk. Baim, C., Brookes, S. and Mountford, A. (Eds). Waterside Press.
- Goddard, G. (2005) Fair!: An evaluation of a Music in Prisons' and National Youth Theatre collaboration at HMP YOI Bullwood Hall.
- Gordon-Nesbitt, R. (2015) Exploring the Longitudinal Relationship between Arts Engagement and Health. Arts for Health. Manchester.
- Healy, D. (2010) The Dynamics of Desistance: Charting Pathways Through Change. Routledge. London.
- Maruna, S. (2001) Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives. Washington, DC: APA Books.
- McAvinchey, C. (2011) Theatre & Prison. Palgrave MacMillan.
- Menning, N. (2010) 'Singing with Conviction: New Zealand prisons and Maori populations'. International Journal of Community Music. 3, 1, 111-120.
- McNeill, F. (2014) 'Three Aspects of Desistance'. Discovering Desistance. Available online at: <http://blogs.iriss.org.uk/discoveringdesistance/2014/05/23/three-aspects-of-desistance/> (Accessed on: 10 December 2014).
- McNeill, F., K. Anderson, S. Colvin, K. Overy, R. Sparks and L. Tett (2011) 'Kunstprojecten en What Works; een stimulans voor desistance?', Justitiële verkenningen 37(5): 80-101.
- Michaelson, J., Abdallah, S., Steuer, N., Thompson, S. and Marks, N. (2009) National Accounts of Well-being: bringing real wealth onto the balance sheet. New Economics Foundation. London.
- Miles, A. and Strauss, P. (2008) The Academy: A Report on Outcomes for Participants, June 2006-June 2008.
- Murray, J. (2005) 'The effects of imprisonment on families and children of prisoners', in A. Liebling & S. Maruna (Eds.), The effects of imprisonment (pp.442-492). Cullpmton, England: Willan.
- Newell, T. (2008) Review on Theatre Nemo Conference: Designing a Creative Approach. The Butler Trust.
- National Health Service (2014) What will I learn on the course? National Health Service. Available online at: <http://www.smhfa.com/taking-course/what-will-i-learn.aspx> (Accessed on 13 January 2015).
- Nugent, B., Vigneux, S. and Donaldson, C. (2013) Interim Evaluation of Theatre Nemo's Creative and Mentoring Project.
- Nugent, B. (2011) Theatre Nemo Animation Project: HMP Addiewell.
- Nugent, B. and Loucks, N. (2011) 'The Arts and Prisoners: Experiences of Creative Rehabilitation', The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice, 50(4), 356-370.

Appendix A: Theatre Nemo Projects/Work in Scottish Prisons

Project Title	Year	Art Form	Prison
1. Bar None	2004	Drama	HMP Barlinnie
2. Anonymous Points of View	2005	Drama/Film	HMP Barlinnie
3. Animal Farm	2006	Drama	HMP Barlinnie
4. Designing A Creative Approach (In collaboration with The Butler Trust, Performance from the cast HMP Barlinnie.)	2007	Multiple Art	HMP Barlinnie
5. Psychotronic Inquisition	2007	Animation	HMP Cornton Vale
6. Slipper Factory	2007	Drama	HMP Barlinnie
7. Two Paths	2007	Film	HMYOI Polmont
8. Slipper Factory	2008	Drama/Film	HMP Barlinnie
9. Does Anyone Know	2008	Drama/Film	HMP Edinburgh
10. Silent Repetition	2009	Drama/Film	HMYOI Polmont
12. Art Project	2009	Visual Art	HMYOI Polmont
13. Corporation of Conscientious Mayhem	2009	Drama	HMP Barlinnie
14. 5-Year Stretch	2009	Mixed Media Exhibition	HMP Barlinnie
15. Natural Industry	2009	Visual Art and Film	HMP Barlinnie
16. I Remember the Future	2011	Drama	HMP Glenochil
17. Call for Help!	2011	Animation/Film	HMYOI Polmont
18. Three Families Inc.	2011	Animation/Film	HMP Addiewell
19. Time Thief and Apocalypse	2011	Animation/Film	HMP Barlinnie
20. Barlinnie Spring	2012	Music/Visual Art	HMP Barlinnie
21. My Name Is	2012	Drama	HMP Barlinnie
22. A History of Barlinnie – Part 1	2013	Visual Art and Audio	HMP Barlinnie & Smithycroft Sch.
23. A History of Barlinnie – Part 2	2013	Visual Art and Audio	HMP Barlinnie & Smithycroft Sch.
24. Barlinnie Arts Festival	2013	Taiko Drumming	HMP Barlinnie
25. Mentoring Project	2013	Mentoring Project	HMP Barlinnie
26. Voices from Barlinnie	2014	Audio Interviews/Film	HMP Barlinnie
27. Taiko Drumming Workshops	2014	Taiko Drumming	HMP Edinburgh
28. Taiko Drumming Workshops	2014	Taiko Drumming	HMP Cornton Vale
29. Seeing the Person, Seeing Ourselves: Understanding Self-Stigmatisation in Mental Health	2014/2015	Work with SPS Officers	HMP Edinburgh
30. Taiko Drumming Workshops	2015	Taiko Drumming	HMP Cornton Vale

Appendix B: Example of Project Evaluation

Does Anybody Know / HMP Edinburgh 2008

Location & Duration: HMP Edinburgh, 12 weeks (2 sessions per week)

Project Outline

To engage with participants to produce a live drama performance incorporating collected words and poetry, creating original work created by the participants through improvisation and creativewriting techniques.

The 12 weeks were divided into three periods lasting three weeks each:

- Initial Period drama exercises to develop confidence and trust, create group identity
- Mid Period introduction to poetry, adaptations to existing work
- Final Period editing of created work which later was incorporated into the performance

Project outcomes

- Increase participants' self-esteem, confidence, communication- and interpersonal skills
- Develop skills such as acting, performing, literacy
- Offer a relaxed and friendly atmosphere to bridge gaps and break down stigmas
- Demonstrate the positive effects of being part of a team and working together towards a set target (performance/screening)

Project indicators

- Confidence (putting forward ideas, initiative, criticism)
- Self-esteem (being part of a team, working together, creativity, developing skills)
- Attendance (average number of participants)
- Team-work (how well participants worked together towards the same targets)
- Signing-up (how many participants & people form audience

want to join)

- Continuity (how many people stated that the workshops should be continued)
- Final outcome (positive comments about the final outcome/ performance)

Feedback

We have asked the participants and visitors to fill out a feedback form at the end of the exhibition. The form did not ask any specific questions but simply asked to "leave any comments". We then looked at the comments and transferred their essence to see if they match our set indicators. It was therefore possible that one comment was valid for multiple indicators.

The majority of the prison population which came to see the production stated that they enjoyed the performance, and would wish to join future workshops, hoped that we continue the workshops.

Prison Staff saw an increase of self-esteem and confidence within the participants and that the participants engaged as a whole and identified itself as a team, able to put forward own ideas, take on constructive criticism, work towards set targets and develop skills.

Total number of feedback forms returned: 15

Quotes from participants and audience:

"A powerful production. I am particularly pleased to see elements such as writing & acting being explored. A worthwhile venture that has untold benefits."

"Very well presented. Thought provoking material. Great to see the lads so enthusiastic."

"I thought the performance by the guys was great, intense, expressive and informative. I would be glad to join in on the next workshop that is going to happen here in Edinburgh prison."

"It was a good, strong and deep performance. The cast and crew put a lot into it. It should be kept up!"



Visual Art Class
Hmp Barlinnie - 2009
Photo by **Hugh McCue**

"Very powerful performance, which was obviously highly motivating for everyone involved. Very far reaching as for skills like confidence, literacy, presentation and organisation. Excellent - well done."

Feedback from workshop facilitators

"The subsequent performance and resulting short film 'Does Anyone Know' were received to great critical acclaim from all, most importantly the very positive reaction from prison peers of those who participated must be noted as they were in direct contrast with the negative culture and viewpoints which hindered the project throughout, the work of the group was held in great esteem by the individual's prison peers. These final products reflect the incredible work of the participants throughout the project. The confidence of delivery is a very clear indicator of how much this project has helped individuals grow positively in relation to interpersonal skills and in developing coping skills and means of expression which will enhance their lives as individuals."

"It is felt by the facilitator that working methodologies adopted were successful in helping individuals grow in self confidence, that development of interpersonal skills was clearly evident, and that ultimately those who participated have benefited greatly from their involvement, further, each person encountered a positive learning experience which will enhance and inform their chosen life path."

"In the beginning of the project the group we had far exceeded our expectation, they were very open to the work we were doing and progressed very quickly, unfortunately the numbers started to drop and we found out that there was a lot of bullying going on in the halls regarding the workshops. This

along with the normal drop in numbers due to participants being released meant that the group quickly diminished to four participants. Speaking to staff on site we attempted to try and overcome the bullying by getting officers and some of the participants encouraging people to come back to the sessions this had a small impact in that a number of people returned for a few sessions but this didn't last, it was said that because we were working with people from the high dependency unit there was a stigma attached to the work we were doing."

Location and external staff

The location at hand (prison chapel) was ideal and the staff involved in the project was helpful, dedicated and passionate. It is formally recognised and recommended by Theatre Nemo facilitators that at least one member of HMP staff should participate fully throughout as a group member, ultimately this will not only develop their full understanding of what is involved, but also underline and support the (intended) perception of inmates that they are part of a group which is not centered on their identity as a prisoner, but on their greater identity as an individual.

Conclusion

We can truly say that this project was a huge success. All participants have benefited from the project in terms of confidence, self-esteem, team work and skills and we believe that this experience demonstrates the positive effects of the workshops we provide. We have to make sure (together with the prison staff) that bullying is challenged immediately and that people are not being stigmatised.

