

Institute of Cultural and Creative Industries

ANNUAL REPORT 2021





INTRODUCING iCCi

The Institute of Cultural and Creative Industries (iCCi) at the University of Kent was launched in 2020, to work across its research, teaching and civic mission portfolios. It harnesses the University's world-leading research across science, social science and arts and humanities disciplines, our naturally collaborative approach to interdisciplinary teaching, and the creative work that goes on in our Gulbenkian Arts Centre, across our campuses and in our communities, to make a significant contribution within our region and beyond. Based at the Chatham Historic Dockyard, iCCi gives access to the University's significant programme leadership experience and world-class academic expertise.

More information: www.kent.ac.uk/icci

Frankenstein: How to Make a Monster (Mar 22): BAC Beatbox Academy.



GULBENKIAN ARTS CENTRE

Our ambitious new season, curated by David Sefton, has opened with a significantly richer and more diverse offering. It was launched at an event featuring young people from the ART31 project (see p4), as well as BAC Beatbox Academy. The season opened with Linton Kwesi Johnson (Jamaican dub poet and activist), a sold-out performance attended by many students. Over the course of the autumn term, 3,000 students engaged with our programmes and facilities.

Relaunched as Gulbenkian Arts Centre, the programme now incorporates the theatre, cafe-bar space, cinema and Colyer-Fergusson Concert Hall, utilising our fabulous Concert Hall for a wider range of public concerts and performance offerings than ever before.

Other Autumn highlights included

- US alternative superstars Yo La Tengo in a sell-out show in Colyer-Fergusson prior to their appearance at the Royal Festival Hall.
- Two collaborations with the London Jazz Festival (Nu-Civilisation Orchestra's Marvin Gaye project and Bryter Layter, a Nick Drake celebration from The Modern Jazz and Folk Ensemble).
- Stile Antico's A Renaissance Christmas.

The Suppliant Women (Nov 21): Image Mistereb

WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Our Creative Engagement work, including ART31, champions the belief that all children and young people, regardless of background or circumstance, have an entitlement to access high-quality arts and culture, to empower them to achieve their creative potential, and to genuinely engage young people as equal partners in any decision making that affects them. All of our projects use the arts as a tool to enable children and young people to – Take Part, Take the Lead and Take on the World.

Our Creative Engagement team worked with 4,110 young people in 2021. Young Company: During the lockdown at the beginning of the year, we successfully rehearsed and performed a production of 'Find a Partner' by our Young Company (aged 13-19) as part of the National Theatre Connections programme, entirely over Zoom! When restrictions started to ease, another group of young people worked on Company Three's 'When This is Over' project, devising their own play capturing young people's stories about the past, present and the future.

Regular Groups: From September we launched a new programme of regular groups at Gulbenkian including Youth Theatre for ages 13-25 and Creative Club for ages 5-12. For the first time, all of these groups were free to access, removing barriers to participation – thanks to funding from KCC and Arts Council England. Our Creative Engagement team worked with 4,110 young people in 2021.

ART31 Generate & Takeover Festival: Our Youth Board, ART31 Generate, is made up of young people from across Kent aged 13-25. They steer ART31's governance, and influence arts policy and practice. In June 2021, they successfully programmed and ran a Youth Takeover Festival called BounceBack, showcasing work from young people across Kent – both live at Gulbenkian and online.

Playground: A partnership between iCCi, Kent County Council and Artwork, commissioned for KCC's Reconnect Programme, Playground takes artists into libraries and early years settings to work with very young children aged 0-2 and their parents/carers, and includes an artist training and research programme to develop practice in this area.

Creative Careers events: iCCi delivered a series of online panel discussions looking at careers in 5 different creative industries for Creative Careers week in March 2021. We also ran two online Creative Industry talks, from Sketchbook Games and Sparked Echo, a session with Gulbenkian staff as part of EmpFest, and a panel discussion for students and local young people about Being a Freelancer.

bOing! 5,000 people attended bOing! Festival 2021 over the weekend. We presented 15 different events, involving 45 live performances and 145 artists – including one company who despite all the odds made it over from Germany! For the first time, bOing! featured a staff opening preview on Friday when many of the performances were available exclusively to UoK staff and their families, with 500 people attending this new event.



Rainbow Ballet at bOing! 2021. Image Manu Palomeque

ASSOCIATE ARTISTS PROGRAMME

This multi-year programme draws on the diverse pool of extraordinary artists in the season who will work with the campus in a range of ways. From student and community engagement to commissioning and co-producing, this initiative showcases the connections between the programme and the University in a bold new way. Aoi & Esteban are our Associate Digital Artists, in residence in Medway on the Dockyard site. Other Associate Artists are Jasmin Vardimon Company, BAC Beatbox Academy, The Foreign Office (Suppliant Women), John Woolrich (our resident composer, writing new work for the Brodsky Quartet and featured later in the season in a special event with internationally-renowned animators the Brothers Quay).



WHIST AΦE (May 22)

WORK WITH OUR COMMUNITIES

The Suppliant Women

The major theatre event of Autumn was *The Suppliant Women*, a re-staging of the ancient Greek play, written by David Greig and directed by Ramin Gray which has been seen in arts festivals all over the world and in London at The Young Vic. Featuring a chorus recruited from the local community Suppliant Women sold over 1,000 tickets across its 4-day run. This is the first instalment of a trilogy of plays; the next is *The Egyptians*, for which workshops are now in progress and which will be performed in 2023.

A panel of experts drawn from Classical & Archaeological Studies, Drama & Theatre, Global Challenges Doctorate Centre, Kent Refugee Action Network & the University of Exeter delivered several post-show panel discussions on the themes of 'Women, Migration & Community' and 'Seeking Hospitality Across Borders'.

We recruited and rehearsed a community chorus of 37 adults aged 18+ from the local community as part of *The Suppliant Women*.

Image Mistereb



iCCi SUPPORTED CULTURAL PROJECTS IN MEDWAY

We support a range of work in Medway, liaising between academic research, our students and local communities:

The **Heritage Action Zone** involves Historic England working in partnership with Medway Council and other local and strategic partners to deliver a programme of support to meet Chatham Intra and Medway Council's requirements by improving our understanding of, conserving and promoting, Chatham Intra's historic environment. The aim of the Heritage Creative Quarter, **Chatham Intra Heritage Action Zone**, is to promote sustainable economic growth, using the rich historic fabric and environment as a catalyst. Through this Delivery Plan, the HAZ will provide a targeted response to the economic, social and environmental needs of Chatham Intra high street. Chloe Street Tarbatt, an academic from the School of Architecture and Planning, is leading on Kent's plans for the consortium.

Medway Light Nights is a spectacular free festival of light that transforms Rochester's iconic buildings and spaces into works of art. Architectural Visualisation students from the School of Architecture and Planning at The University of

Kent in Canterbury have created 'Illuminarealities', an art installation divided into two parts: one on the Six Poor Travellers' House, and one at the front of Rochester Cathedral. Feeding on the stories and messages from Charles Dickens' literature, Illuminarealities aims to animate architecture with the history, culture and art of Rochester.

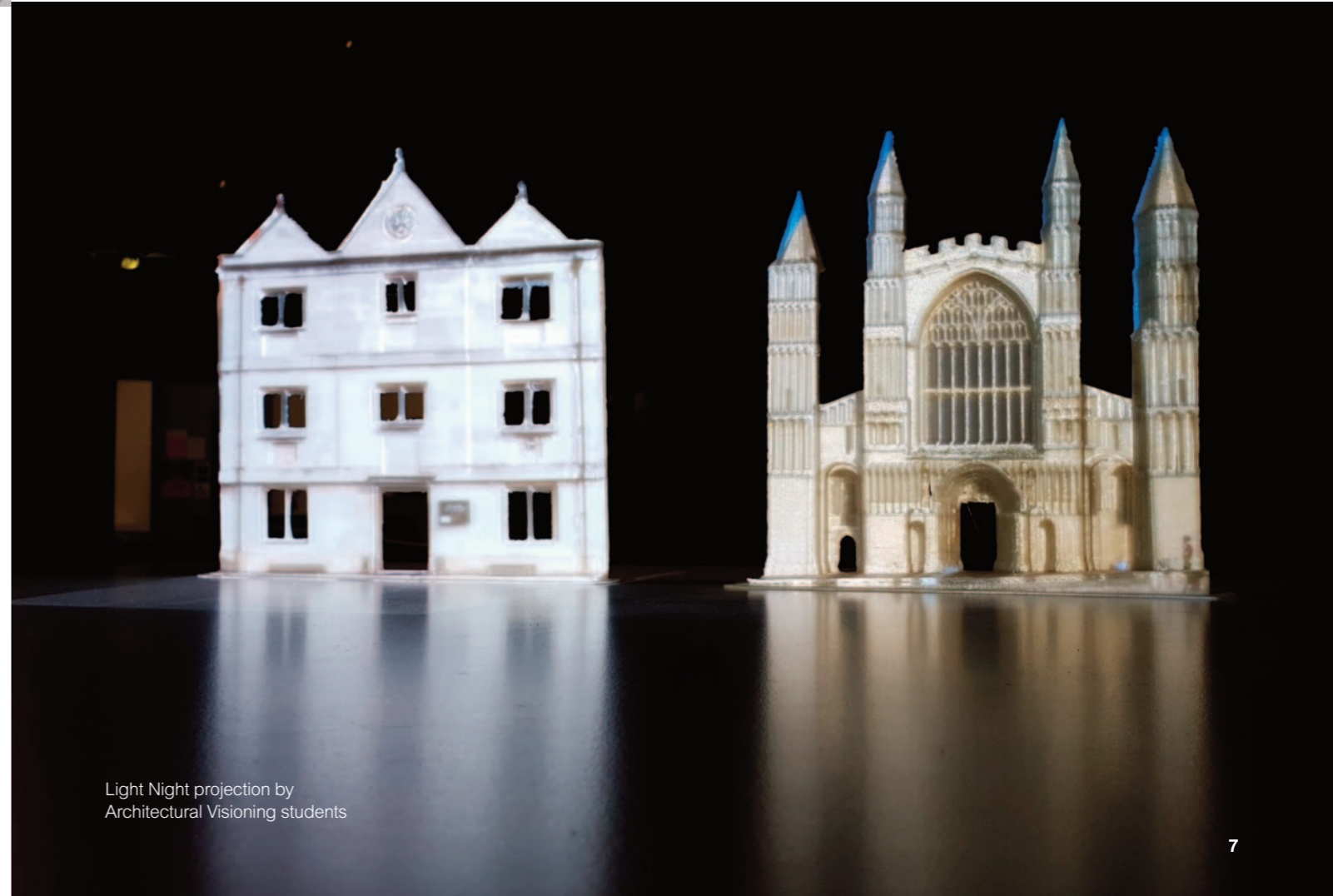
With colleagues from Engineering and Arts and Humanities, we helped to coordinate the **Medway Rapture Gaming Festival** of 2021 - the first year of what will become an annual event. Despite the pandemic, it saw 80 acres of Gaming Halls, Live Stages, Creating Games Expo, Careers and Education Zone, Art Zone, Museums and Exhibits. The festival helped promote the wide range of digital research and teaching the university offers, and showcased not only current students' work, but also the work of alumni who have gone into fields such as virtual reality design. Three academic schools took part in last year's festival: The Department for Music and Audio Technology, and the Schools of Architecture and Engineering. <https://rapturegamingfestival.com/>

The Walk

In October, iCCi was responsible for the Canterbury 'leg' of The Walk, the largest public arts event in the world in 2021, featuring Amal, a 3m puppet of a young refugee girl who travelled from Syria, through Europe, to Scotland drawing attention to the plight of refugees. The Walk was a hugely successful community event. The Creative Engagement team ran workshops with seven schools from across Kent to create banners for Amal's arrival at the Cathedral. They worked alongside alumni puppeteer, Peter Morton, who made a giant fox puppet with School of Arts students. The puppet joined Amal on her journey through Canterbury. A Virtual Reality piece was also set up in a container outside the Gulbenkian, that showed what it is like crossing the channel on a dinghy, to tie in with the immigration themes of Amal's journey. Operations for the arrival of the schools (and Amal) at the Cathedral and the walk to the Canterbury campus were organised by the Gulbenkian team, and a special evening of Refugee Tales was hosted at the Gulbenkian.

Over 3,000 people joined Amal in Canterbury city centre, and the event was marked by a double-page photo of Canterbury High Street in The Guardian. We engaged with 300 school children, including a group from Kent Refugee Action Network, as part of The Walk.

Image Mistereb



Light Night projection by Architectural Visioning students



DOCKING STATION

The Docking Station project to create a new hub for the creative and cultural industries and home for iCCi in Medway is now progressing with £5.6m secured through Medway Council's successful Levelling Up Fund application. Further fundraising to secure the remaining £5-6m is ongoing through the University's Campaigns team and in collaboration with project partner the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust who are leading on an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The project has been developed in partnership with Medway Council and the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust and is supported by Cultural Development Fund investment from DCMS, through Creative Estuary, a programme led by the University of Kent, which aims to transform the Thames Estuary into one of the most exciting cultural hubs in the world. Creative Estuary funding has kick-started project development by enabling the completion of feasibility studies and paving the way for further investment.

The project will involve the conversion of the Police Section House, a Grade II listed Ancient Monument (SAM) at the Chatham Historic Dockyard, as well as the creation of a large new signature building at the rear of the Police Section House which will house a state-of-the-art immersive digital gallery. The Docking Station will deliver a new creative and digital workspace as well as education and social space.

Award-winning architectural practice Fielden Clegg Bradley Studios, who specialise in sustainability, heritage architecture and placemaking, has been selected for the project following a design competition and initial concept designs have been completed. A business planning consultant has come on board to provide a detailed business plan for the Docking Station to ensure the project maximises the benefit to the CCI sector, Kent students and the wider FE establishment and ensures a sustainable operational model is created that will support the development of digital arts and innovation in the sector. The design team is expected to begin more detailed design work in April 2022.



CREATIVE ESTUARY

Creative Estuary is a £4.3M Cultural Development Fund (now extended and expanded financially due to Covid), multi-partner project led by the University of Kent, sitting within iCCi. It aims to transform 60 miles of the Thames Estuary across Essex and Kent into one of the most exciting cultural hubs in the world, enhancing its visibility and identity; supporting more than 400 new jobs, and delivering new skills, qualifications, and apprenticeships across an area of 1.5million people. It includes strands on culturally-led place-making, workspace provision and skills development.

The creative and cultural industries contribute more than £100bn per year to the UK economy, helping to attract investment, catalyse innovation, and enhance distinctive places and communities. To safeguard their future, the project ensures investment in space and placemaking, facilities and skills and training.

Estuary 2021 From May 22 to June 13, our partners Metal and Cement Fields (who are based on the Canterbury campus) delivered the second Estuary festival which brought together communities and audiences after being separated for months because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The festival had a live audience of 208,764. Over 23 days there were 63 commissions produced by 265 artists in 94 locations in the landscape and 66 partner venues.

Professor Samer Bagaeen, the founding Professor of Planning at the University of Kent, leads Creative Estuary's **Cultural Co-location** strand of work. 'Co-location' means exploring opportunities to integrate cultural facilities and other uses into civic buildings and outdoor spaces, and facilitating places for creative activity. There are three elements to the project overall: two pilot projects, one in Ebbsfleet and one in Purfleet, and a programme of learning, sharing and influencing.

The **RE:Generation 2031** strand of Creative Estuary is developing an innovative approach to growing the creative skills of young people aged 16 to 25 years in disadvantaged areas of North Kent and South Essex. This Strand works closely with the iCCi team that specialises in young people's cultural leadership. Highlights include the O'Dreamland Emerging Producers programme – eight young people have been selected to work with Turner Contemporary for the next 18 months. We have recently started a project in partnership with Ideas Test and supported by Medway Council, Theatre 31 and Kent County Council called Make Waves, helping the next generation of event makers and creators in Medway through a practice-based creative development programme that will give them hands-on experience of large scale arts projects, including the Medway Light Nights festival in February 2022, and the funds and support to design and deliver their own project in summer 2022.

Creative Estuary **Ideas labs** bring together individuals and groups who would not usually find other opportunities to interact, such as academics, artists, business owners and young people. Unique themes stimulate collaborative ideas, generate new fundable projects for commission, meet challenges facing the industries and/or workforce, and consider the environment and wellbeing of those living, working and visiting the Estuary. Kent academics have been very successful in developing projects and gaining funding through the labs. Funded projects include:

Our Wellbeing Lab: Dr Julie Hedayiouglu, Centre for Health Services Studies, used creativity and heritage as a way to explore the topic of death, dying, bereavement and loss to support a healthy life and general wellbeing, in her project *The Coffin Tales Roadshow*.

Dr Christiana Iordanou's (Psychology) project *The Floating Museum of Stories*, looked at the lost stories and voices of the community to explore the impact the pandemic & isolation has had on wellbeing, specifically seeking out community groups that aren't usually reached or represented.

Dr Dieter Declercq (Media Studies) and Dr Ambrose Gillick's (Architecture) project *Failspace* looked at the impact that ideas of perfection/ imperfection have on societies' wellbeing. They provided a safe space that allowed people of all ages to play, explore and ultimately 'fail' without judgement.

Our Environment Lab: *Creative Commons* a series of three online public panel discussions led by artist practitioners and specialists led by Dr Joseph Tzanopoulos (Anthropology and Conservation), looking at the topics of: Historical Commons and Landscape Character, Commons, Ecosystems and Public Interventions and the future of Estuary Commons.

Dr Aki Pasoulas (Music and Audio Technology), Dr Rob Barker (Physical Sciences), Dr Lavinia Brydon (Film) and Caroline Millar's (artist and PhD Researcher, School of English) project *Liminal Space: "(Un)used space?"* is an immersive, interdisciplinary, mixed method and site-specific research project that interrogates the concept of "remote" or "desolate" places by revealing the hidden voices and activities that occur within them.

Our Creative Heritage Lab: Dr Richard Perks (Music) and Dr Kate McClean (Graphic Design) have started work on an interdisciplinary, location-based, collaborative project, *AR 'scapes: Voices from the Concrete Barges* which seeks to establish ways to access and disseminate concepts of 'future heritage' and 'multiple-perspective local heritage' through creative technologies and media.

Dr Jeremy Scott (English Language) is developing a performance project on the history and creative heritage of the Thames Barges called *Fluidity*.



MUSIC DEPARTMENT

The Music Department offers a vibrant programme of extra-curricular music-making, Music Performance Scholarships and concerts at the University of Kent. It is based in the award-winning Colyer-Fergusson Building.

Regular Lunchtime Concerts, free to all and open to the public, have in 2021 included Glyndebourne Tour Orchestra, Jonathan Meyer, sitar player and Asako Morikawa, viol player. Our Christmas programme during December included Orchestra/Choir Christmas concert and Big Band Swingalong. Our Cathedral Concert will be in March 2022.

Jonathan Mayer will be working with Ridima Sur, a third-year Astrophysics student at the University. Hailing from the Hooghly district, West Bengal, Ridima holds a Music Award at Kent, and last year was filmed as part of the Scholar's Spotlight series of short performances in Colyer-Fergusson Hall given by some of the students.

Extra-Curricular ensembles: 220 students engaged with our extra-curricular music groups in the autumn term and, on the Medway campus, a guitar ensemble and other groups have been set up during 2021.

Season highlights

- Following the Lunchtime Concert from members of the Glyndebourne Touring Orchestra / Pit Perfect Scheme, the players sat alongside the students in the University String Sinfonia workshopping two pieces for string orchestra.
- Members of the String Sinfonia were in action in a University carol service in the Cathedral in December, showcasing the versatility of music for string orchestra, including Elgar's Introduction and Allegro and some light-footed folksong arrangements by John Rutter.

Music Department Scholar
Ridima Sur performs (2021)



WHIST VR: Photo by Paul Plews

RESEARCH

Our role is to facilitate more interdisciplinary working, between colleagues in science, social science and arts and humanities disciplines, and to connect our researchers and students to our regional creative industries. Our research priorities are to facilitate work in: Creative and Cultural Education, Health and Wellbeing, Human-machine Creativity and Creative Heritage. We work closely with Kent's multidisciplinary Signature Research Themes: Migration and Movement; Future Human; Food Systems, Natural Resources and Environment. We have begun work this year with academics in Computing, Engineering, Psychology, Law, Business School, CHSS, English, Arts and Templeman Library Special Collections.

The Fellowship Programme recruitment began at the end of 2021. The main goals of the programme are to contribute to the Research and Development of the Cultural and Creative Industries and to promote interdisciplinary research (technology/arts and humanities) across all disciplines. The Fellows are expected to be ambassadors of good practice in their own domains as well as demonstrate the benefit of a cross-disciplinary approach.

CULTURAL INNOVATION FORUM

iCCI at Kent leads the Southeast Cultural Innovation Forum, an umbrella group of ten creative HEI institutions (UCL, Pearson, UCA, Westminster, Essex, Ravensbourne, Bedfordshire, Christchurch, Sussex), that has come together to create dialogue and action across shared values and common interests. Our partnership ignites positive change across our region through a shared commitment to enhancing culture and creativity.

- Is a response to the current, and the growing importance of the arts and the creative industries in the contemporary economy and across society.
- Nurtures the talent needed to ensure the creative sector thrives in and beyond the Southeast of England.
- Engages directly with the challenges of social justice and cultural equity as they relate to, and beyond the sector.

www.seculturalforum.ac.uk/



CREATIVE KENT

Creative Kent communicates the core of what iCCI does: connecting UniKent's creative practice across disciplines; forging links between research and teaching and off-campus cultural and creative industries.

Creative Kent was launched alongside the Arts Centre and programme, and has been discussed at the Staff Conference. It includes our Associate Artists, who are part of the season but have also undertaken to work with our students and local communities to share their practice. It builds on the Creative Campus of a few years ago, which resulted in the labyrinth outside Eliot College among many other projects. But it extends this beyond the campus, to celebrate and grow creative work across the county and to raise the profile of the exciting work already taking place. It makes an offer to our region to become involved with the multidisciplinary innovation that universities can offer.

www.kent.ac.uk/creativekent

Wild at bOing! 2019.
Image Jason Pay

Keep up to date: kent.ac.uk/icci

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Gulbenkian
Arts Centre

CREATIVE
ESTUARY



Nobody by Motionhouse (Apr 22): Image Dan Tucker