

# DEAF EXPLORERS

January 2013

We think Explorers is a fantastic opportunity.

We invited deaf creative's to apply, challenging them to present proposals that would stretch their artistic practice, encouraging them to be inspired by international artists.

The response was brilliant with extremely high quality proposals from the West Midlands & across the UK.

We hope you like them, if you are an arts organisation and wish to meet and support an explorer to show or develop their work please contact us...

**Alison Smith**



**My Comedy style is mostly influenced by Black American stand up. I will travel to USA to meet, train and tour with iconic Deaf comedians.**

**Rinkoo Barpaga** is an emerging artist born and raised in Birmingham. He was brought up in a bilingual environment, living with two languages, Deaf and Hearing. In 2012, he began performing as a BSL Storyteller achieving success in London and Scotland. His friends encouraged him for nearly decade to become a stand up comedian. Rinkoo decided that this would take him to the next level and is excited that

deaf explorer will support him to make his ambitions a reality. His comedy style is mostly influenced by Black American stand up comedians Eddie Murphy, Richard Pryor, Dave Chappelle, Kevin Hart and Katt Williams. He is looking forward to overcoming the barrier of performing to a hearing audience and a ground breaking performance for his first gig.



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**ARTS COUNCIL  
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**Semhar Beyene & Billy Read**

**The outcome will be part of a development for Def Motion**

UK's only touring all deaf dance crew. Based in the West Midlands and London. Our work, we create original material and re-work classic Michael Jackson choreography and deliver live performance shows and dance workshops. Our proposal aims to develop different teaching styles for choreography through Def Motion. To identify the need for Deaf dancers workshops. To visit an international Deaf-led dance group to develop our own performing art practice. We will combine all the three objectives cohesively to be able to create new work practice beneficial for our performers and this can be achieved by bringing different creative people together on this project. We want to primarily focus on exploring different dance practices in a Deaf capacity, where all performers are Deaf or hard of hearing and understand how they learn with and without aural abilities, looking closely at their visual receptive and productive skills in music and dance.



"I am emailing dance companies like ourselves across the world, we plan to meet dance companies based in Hong Kong, Singapore and Philippines. We want to collaborate, they want to work together"

**Billy Read**



"Ever seen an all-deaf dance crew? I want to influence the lives of young deaf people to embrace music and dance"

**Semhar Beyene**



**Ruth Montgomery**  
**Unlearning sound etiquette with Christine Sun Kim**

**Ruth Montgomery** has a lifelong passion for music and the arts. Although profoundly deaf from birth she graduated with a 2.1 B.Mus (hons) music degree majoring in Flute performance at the Royal Welsh College of Music. Her deafness has not deterred from working as a musician, teacher, workshop facilitator and visual artist today. Explorer will support her by giving her the resources she needs

to develop ways of making music 'visual' by meeting award winning American artist Christine Sun Kim.

She will be creating music that links to Deafhood, Deaf history, sign language and accompanying mixed media that will show the emotions and stories that reflect what music is being played. Music can be seen as inaccessible to the Deaf community and she hopes that her project will provide a new perspective to the 'Deaf Arts' and also to show others the potential of what music is really all about.



**Ruth Montgomery Flautist**  
 "Thrilled to be part of the Deaf Explorers project"



“Explorers is interesting because I will meet and be mentored by such an accomplished poet who has already achieved so much in the field of sign language poetry would be an amazing experience, and I think it would really help me improve my skills as a sign language poet.”

**Donna Williams**



## Ideally, everyone is my audience

### I hope to make my BSL poetry accessible

My name is **Donna Williams** and I'm a British Sign Language poet. I love poetry, and Sign Language poetry is beautiful and expressive. I still can't believe I'm lucky enough to be a BSL poet and I'm developing my style and confidence in this art form. In March 2012, I was part of 'Signing Hands Across the Water', where I met, shared ideas and performed with American Sign Language poets. I was intrigued that the ASL poets both had a voiceover provided by interpreters that they had established working relationships with, whilst none of the BSL poets did. The discussions throughout the poetry festival opened my eyes to the various issues surrounding translation. I would like to explore much more about spoken / BSL poetry, and wonder if a 'perfect balance' could be achieved whereby sign language poems are

understood and enjoyed by all, irrespective of previous knowledge of sign language. I will go to USA to meet Peter Cook and Kenny Lerner, who together make up the Flying Words Project, a highly experienced ASL poetry duo who have been performing internationally for many years.

After this project hopefully the audience will enjoy the poetry I create more, and maybe I will influence others to have a go at creating their own poetry, that would be brilliant. By having good voiceovers that do justice to the sign language poetry, I hope to make it accessible for everyone, and reach out to hearing people who have not given much thought to sign language in general, never mind the concept of sign language poetry. I would love to raise awareness in this way, & tackle ignorance about deaf issues / sign language.



Theatre

“Very excited about the project and looking forward to visit Sweden and Norway. “

**Mary-Jayne Russell de Clifford**

## Mary-Jayne Russell de Clifford Moving from Community Theatre to Professional Theatre

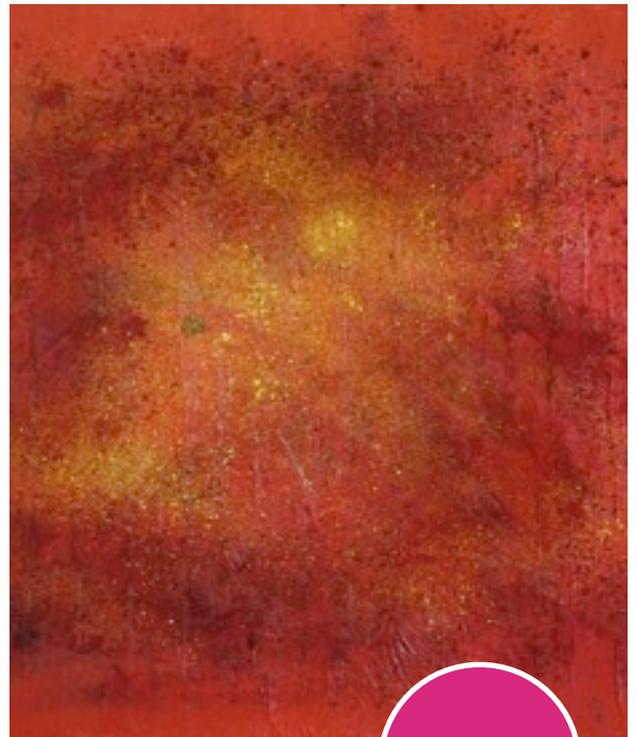
**Mary-Jayne Russell de Clifford** have been a freelance Drama Leader and Drama Facilitator since she graduated at University of Reading studying Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies in 2005. She is profoundly Deaf since birth and had a dream to achieve a theatre company. She wants to move forward and upward with her career to become an Artistic Director and the Deaf Explorer is a great opportunity to take her to Tyst Teater in Sweden and Teater Manu in Norway. She will meet the Artistic Director of each of the theatre company who will teach and guide her how to develop a quality of work in a high professional standard and she wants to break down the barriers to interact between deaf and hearing community.

## Rubbena Aurangzeb-Tariq You, Me & Bollywood

I'm **Rubbena Aurangzeb-Tariq** (1971), a Deaf British Muslim artist based in London. I have a studio in London where I develop my work. Since 1992 I've exhibited in America, Sweden, Paris, Canada, and the UK. I create paintings and mixed-media installation pieces. Exploring culturally mediated separateness, difference, and points of shared understanding are key themes in my work.

Traveling to India will offer me a unique opportunity to engage with the local and artistic community of Bollywood and experience it within its indigenous milieu. I will also participate in cultural exchange activities with the local deaf community through teaching debate, discussion and exchanging perspectives.

I'm particularly interested to learn how Bollywood is experienced from an Indian Deaf perspective. It will enable me to get behind the received iconography of Bollywood and to develop deeper understandings and insights. This experience will become the basis for new installation artwork which I will exhibit in India and the UK.”



Visual Arts

“I'm particularly interested to learn how Bollywood is experienced from an Indian Deaf perspective. “

**Rubbena Aurangzeb-Tariq**