

CROY  
DON  
ITES

# EVALUATION

REPORT 2024

FRINGE AND  
FESTIVAL

31ST OCT - 24TH NOV

# Key Figures

- 8,703 total audience reached
- 331 total participants reached

6 - All of Us Strangers REDUX

9 - CroydonWrites

15 - Croydonbites

15 - Artopia

23 - We Can Be Heroes

65 - Walking tours

98 - Schools performance

100 - Working Boys Club



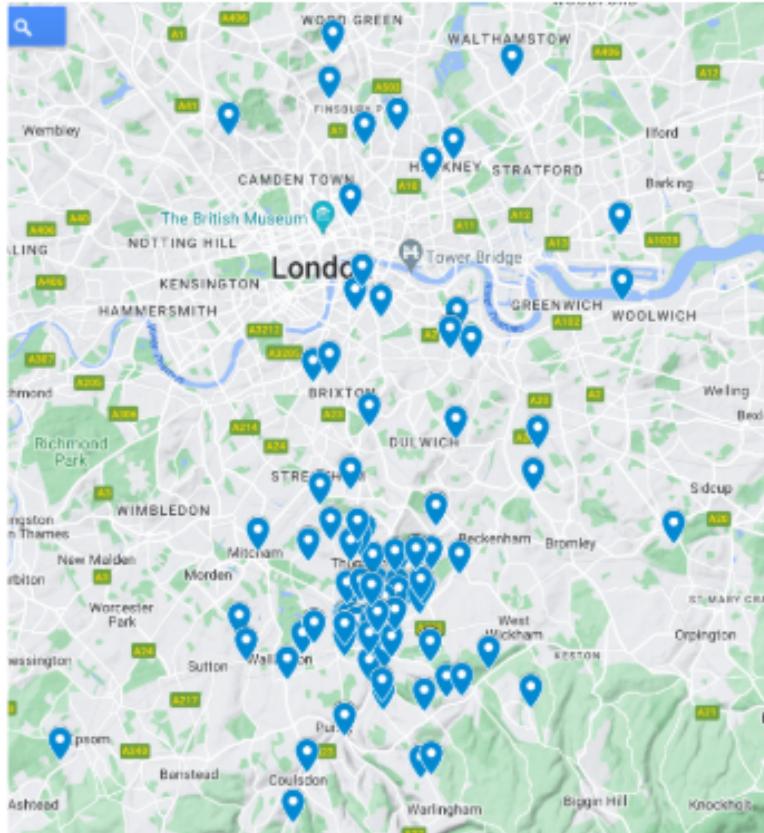
Tom Marshman, 'Section 28 and Me' - The Front Room



Arnaud Piraud & Community Cast, 'We Can Be Heroes' - Whitgift Square

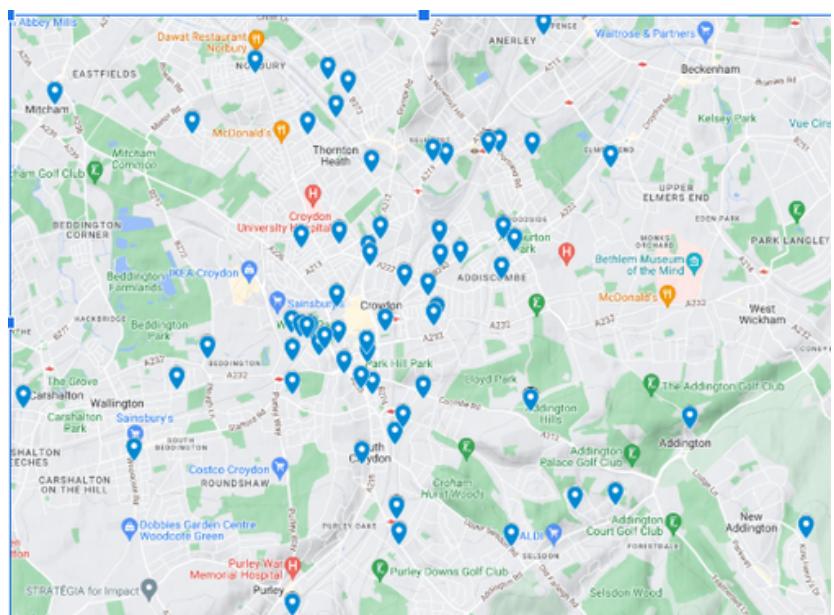
- 106 artists
- 75 total performances across 19 days
- 9 total venues  
Studio 55, Stanley Arts, The Venue, Talawa Studio, Green Dragon, The Front Room, Braithwaite Hall, Whitgift

# Geographical Reach



**87%**  
OF AUDIENCES WHO ANSWERED  
OUR SURVEY  
LIVE IN  
SOUTH LONDON

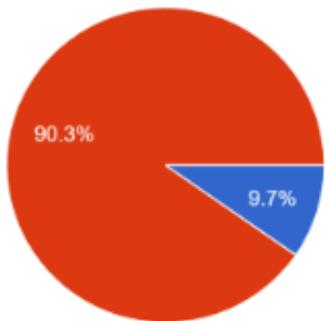
**68%**  
OF AUDIENCES WHO ANSWERED  
OUR SURVEY  
LIVE IN CROYDON  
WITH A WIDE SPREAD  
OF ATTENDANCE FROM  
ACROSS THE BOROUGH



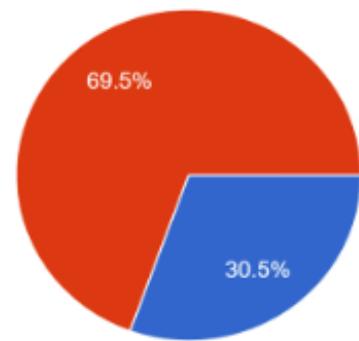
# Developing new audiences // engaging people in live performance

80% first time attendees to Croydonites

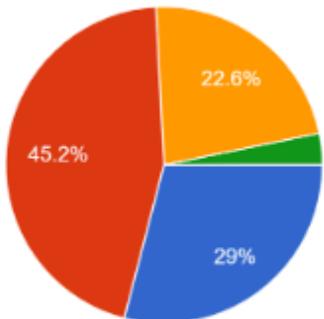
1 Have you been to Croydonites before?  
Schools audience



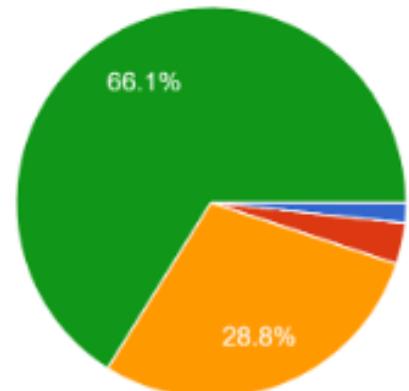
2 Have you been to Croydonites before?  
Fringe/Festival audience



3 How often do you attend performance and  
other cultural events?  
Schools Audience



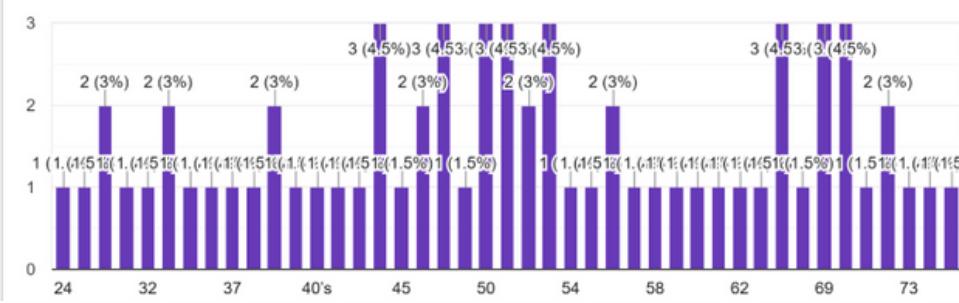
4 How often do you attend performance  
and other cultural events?  
Fringe/Festival audience



# Audience and participant demographics

## Audiences

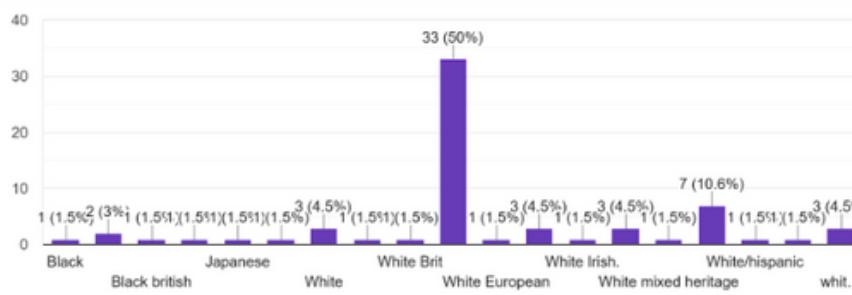
### Age group



- 0-16 2%
- 16-25 2%
- 26-35 14%
- 36-45 20%
- 46-55 28%
- 56-65 17%
- 66-75 17%

Attendance at the school/colleges performance for Simon Manyonda, Blessed, Tryna Shake This Curse were predominately 16 and 17 year olds. We also had young audiences attending Hurly Burly's Opera for under 2s and family audiences taking part in Genome Theatre's Quest round central Croydon.

## Ethnicity

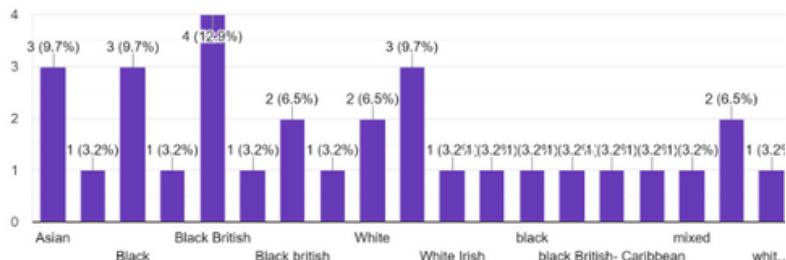


- Black/Black British - 8%
- White British - 64%
- Mixed - 5%
- White Other - 23%

Festival audiences who answered our questionnaire show a predominantly white British/European audience, however in person attendance was from people from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds.

# Audience and participant demographics

## Ethnicity



Amy Gwilliam, 'Frankie Foxstone aka The Profit' - Walking Tour



Bedlam Oz, 'Slinkys' - Walkabout

- Asian 13%
- Black/Black British 49%
- White 32%
- Mixed 6%



CroydonBITES: Adeola Yemitan, 'Good News' - Studio 55

- 15% of total audiences were D/deaf and or D/disabled or have a long term health condition
- 63% were women
- 35% were men
- 2% other/preferred not to say

# Artists and participant demographics



Marlon Matenhese, 'PARADIGM' - Studio 55

## Participants

- Ages ranges from 14 - 61 year olds
- 17% of participants were D/deaf and or D/disabled or have a long term health condition
- 74% were from global majority backgrounds
- 58% were women
- 25% were men
- 17% described themselves as non binary

"There is quite a particular narrative that goes along with Croydon and it's not a great one. It's nice to be able to draw on the more positive aspects of culture in Croydon and really celebrate how creative it is as a place. It is becoming more and more of a creative hub and I think it's fantastic to have an organisation like Croydonites and an evening of great art like this, that highlights what the borough has to offer."

## Artists

- Ages ranged between 25 - 72
- 52% of artists were from or have strong connections with Croydon
- 47% of artists were D/deaf and or D/disabled or have a long term health condition
- 36% were from global majority backgrounds
- 76% were women
- 24% were men
- 56% described themselves as heterosexual
- 14% bi sexual
- 14% queer
- 7% gay

# Marketing impact



Louise Bastock, 'Dick's Pick's Comedy Night' - The Green Dragon

'It's so important to have something that celebrates the vast range of creatives based in and around Croydon. As a borough, Croydon gets quite a lot of bad press so it's amazing that this festival highlights so much good.

It's also about making theatre accessible to all. I love that it's an opportunity for creatives to connect and collaborate, something so important in the creative and performing arts industry.'

## How did you hear about the show?

- Croydonites email/website 25%
- Word of Mouth 23%
- Artist told me 15%
- Programme or posters 13%
- Social media (Instagram, FB, local WhatsApp groups) 12%
- Remaining 12% were from Culture Croydon mailings, Inside Croydon and The Croydonist listings

**39% of ticket bookers were booked at concession rate**



Phoebe and Roger Wagner, '(Pub)lic House' - The Green Dragon

# Quality of work and feedback on the programme

What did you think of the show (in three words?)



## Feedback from Audiences

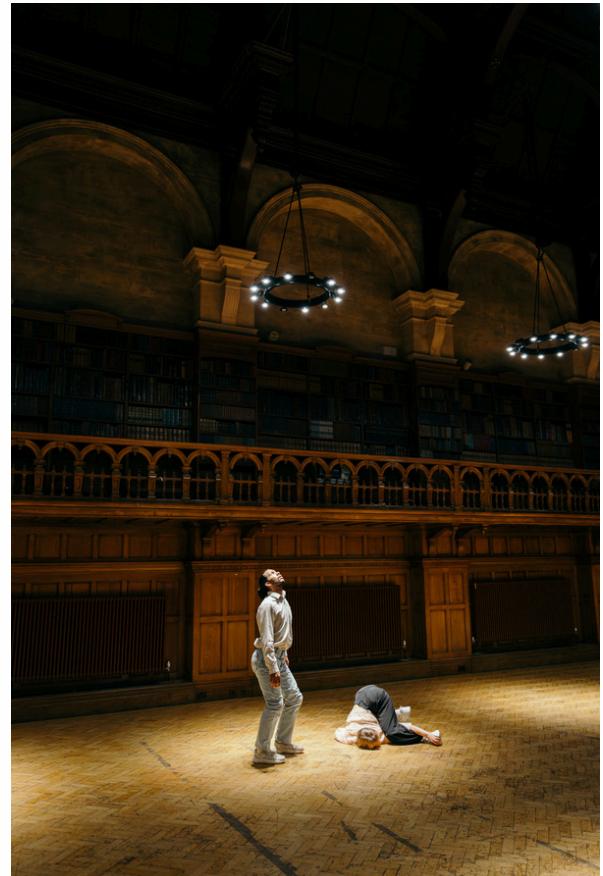
‘Croydonites is excellent and much needed. We shouldn't have to go to London to see high quality art.’

‘Funny, interactive and value for money’

‘This festival is vital. Croydon needs spaces like this so that people can see culture in their normal, everyday life.’

‘It's so important, I think this is a very Croydon centred story I think it's very relevant and very resonant to many people.’

‘Unclassifiably brilliant, unique.’



‘Mesmerising, amazing to see world renowned, international talent coming to Croydon.’  
Sarah Baltzinger and Isaia Wilson, *Megastructure* – Braithwaite Hall

# Participants

## We Can Be Heroes

'Loved meeting new people and performing in my home town. Really impressed that a bunch of strangers were able to come together and create something beautiful'.

'Thank you for letting me shake off my disabled badge for the weekend and just rock out. I want to do more of this.'

'Thank you so much for providing this amazing opportunity. I will never forget it.'

'I have learned to become myself and come out of my shell. To be more confident in my skills and self expression'

## Young Content Creators

'This inspires people to do different things in their community, it brings Croydon back to life.'

'I have learned interviewing techniques and that the public has many different groups of people who all enjoy both similar and different things.'

## Croydonwrites

'The festival was expansive, surprising and enjoyable. I definitely think it is important. Croydon has such a negative reputation and it can be demoralising to live as an artist as such, so it was good to see the community and Croydonites coming together for them.'

'Fun and rewarding. I thought the workshop was a great idea and I enjoyed seeing some theatre which I wouldn't have seen otherwise. It is so important to showcase emerging talent and performers, and give them the chance to develop, and experiment with new shows. It gives opportunities to smaller theatre companies, as well as to Croydon residents, who have the chance to see something different and creative on their doorstep.'



Na-Keisha Pebody, 'LEI-LDN' - Studio 55



Richard DeDomenici, 'All of us Strangers REDUX' - The Venue

# Artists & Venues

'Was a brilliant experience. We loved every minute of it. There was great support from the staff, venue and marketing department. Would love to be part of another Fringe in the future'

'It's an amazing opportunity for new talent to thrive, as finances are not a barrier to putting on a show and I cannot overstate how important this is as an artist!'

'I am at a very early stage in my career, and I can't imagine anywhere else that would have taken a chance on me and given me a space. It felt amazing to be part of something, and see my name on the same poster as so many incredible and established performance artists. I feel so validated.'



HurlyBurly Theatre, 'You Are The Sun' - Stanley Arts

'All of the shows were brilliant. Took me into parts of Whitgift & Centrale that I didn't know existed!'

'Excellent. Good atmosphere. Accessible. Very welcoming, including the man on door, the man on the bar and Katie - thanks for finding me a chair! Funky and strange.'

'Quirky!'

'Good use of disused retail space.'

'I never knew it existed and I love it!'

'The venue in centrale was such a great setting and a great use of vacant space in the town centre. You should have this is a permanent spot all year around for tasters and teasers and rehearsal space. Braithwaite Hall is stunning. Incredible to have access to such a historic venue.'

# Impact on Croydon

## Is it important that the festival is happening here in Croydon? If so, why?

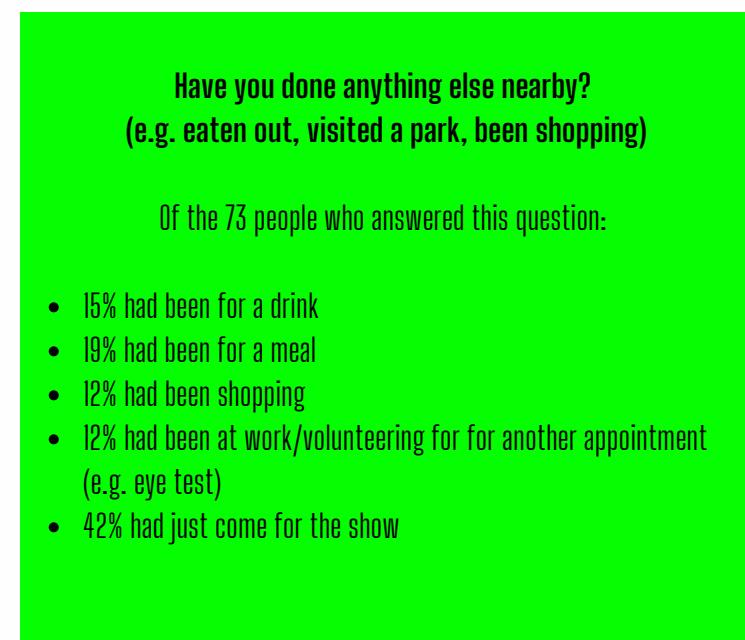
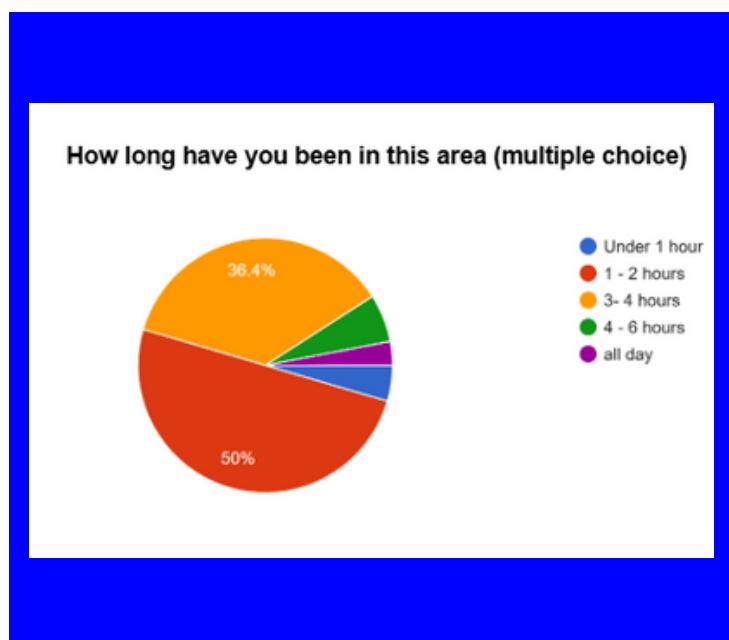
'Croydon is going through really bad times. This festival is a bright spot of culture that aims for development of participants rather than just showy events. There is potential for more legacy from this than from some one off arts events. It is exciting, diverse and inclusive. The focus on fair payment and economic access is also really valuable and unusual. I was impressed with the diversity of the audiences, supported by the programming.'

'It's so important to have something that celebrates the vast range of creatives based in and around Croydon. As a borough, Croydon gets quite a lot of bad press so it's amazing that this festival highlights so much good. It's also about making theatre accessible to all. I also love that it's an opportunity for creatives to connect and collaborate, something so important in the creative and performing arts industry.'

'Croydon is a town that a lot of talented and successful artists have emerged from. Since the crash in 2008 the town that I used to be inspired by has struggled to get back on its feet. Bringing high quality theatre to Croydon will take advantage of the great transport links that Croydon has to offer and put Croydon on the map as a cultural destination.'

'Absolutely. Croydon community needs more reasons to support each other and come together.'

'Croydonites is crucial! It's one of the most deprived boroughs where there is very little funding or tangible input for the arts and for people of all ages to get involved in the arts or to be part of an event.'



## What was your main reason for coming into this part of town?

82% of people surveyed had just come into Croydon to see the show. The remaining 18% were in Croydon for work or shopping and passed our performances.

## How did you travel to the venue?

27 people who answered this question had all travelled to the venue on public transport (tram, train, bus) or by walking

# Social Media and Press

## Stats

**Instagram:** 2676 followers - 35% increase

\*One like and DM from All of Us Strangers director Andrew Haigh

**Twitter:** 1583 followers - 17% increase

**Facebook:** 991 followers - 9 % increase

**Mailing list:** 1307 members - 20 % increase

## Links to articles

<https://www.croydonist.co.uk/croydonites-24/>

<https://insidecroydon.com/2024/10/15/croydonites-festival-oct-31-to-nov-3-tickets-on-sale-now-3/>



Nathan Brown-Bennett, 'Again, Again and Again (AKA. Cancelled X2)' -  
Studio 55



## How the data was gathered?

90 audience surveys  
26 participant surveys (22 Be Can Be Heroes/2 Young Content Creators/2 Croydonwrites)  
17 artists surveys  
59 Vox Pop interviews  
Box office data gathered through Tickets Source and manual booking sheets  
Social media comments  
FOH team counting physical footfall in town centre

## Learnings

- The support of local partners Croydon Council, Croydon BID and Whitgift was vital alongside Arts Council England funding.
- Having our own space Studio 55 in Centrale Shopping Centre allowed us to programme a huge variety of work across the dates at different times and offer rehearsal space.
- We would organise the Fringe at a different time of year next time to ease capacity and lead in time.
- Artists clearly need low risk opportunities to present work in fringe contexts like ours.
- We will continue to present work that is wide ranging in form and scale - a key to this year's success was having such a range - dance, immersive theatre for one person, big flash mob performances, new writing and comedy which was very popular.
- Audiences were delighted to experience work on the street, outside formal performance spaces and there is a clear appetite for more
- Offering free tickets to local schools and colleges was essential to enable attendance.

# Case Studies

'Studio 55 is great, really professional and surprising to find it in the shopping centre' - Audience quote

## Dick's Picks Comedy Night - 2 November 2024

Local comedian Dick Denham put together a mixed bill of comedians including Nick Helm (8 out of 10 Cats, Uncle), Sharifa Butterfly and Til Fletcher, mc'd by Louise Bastock and featuring an emerging local comedian Elgin Edison.

The evening sold out quickly and we hosted 60 people in the upstairs space at The Green Dragon pub. This is the first time we've worked with the Green Dragon who welcomed us into their venue for free. They reported a 10% increase in bar sales that evening and we noticed at least 15 audience members eating in the pub before the show

'We can't wait to have Croydonites back this year!'



Chardine Makaveli-Singh, 'A Cronx Tale' - Studio 55

Croydonites hired Unit 55 in the lower mall of Centrale Shopping Centre for one month during the fringe and main festival. Renamed Studio 55 it hosted 39 performances, 8 days of rehearsals and welcomed over 300 audience members.



Dick Denham, 'Dicks Pick's' - Green Dragon

# Case Studies

Over the past 10 years Croydonites has raised £322k of public funding, of which £76,270 has gone towards local artists in the form of commissions and fees.



The Manikins - Studio 55

Company Skin are a duo from Cardiff and London who have been making and performing work together for over 20 years.

They appeared in the Fringe Festival and drew a large audience including members who travelled from Oxford and a large contingent from Crouch End. After their show they took half their audience to the Dog and Bull pub on Surrey Street market and reported after that they were very impressed by the Croydon's Mens Chorus who happened to be singing there that night

'Instead of going into London I can see exciting things here. it is much easier for me to have it made accessible for me'

Audience quote

'I've never seen anything going on in the town centre like this. more please!'

Audience quote

The Manikins is an immersive theatre show for an audience of 1 person lasting between 60-90 mins. The show had 28 performances over a week at Studio 55 and tickets sold for £50-£100. The show sold out very quickly and attracted audience members from a broad geographical area including Manchester, Bristol, Dublin and even Antwerp in the Netherlands.



Company Skin - The Venue

# Case Studies

Emmy and Joy are two local comedians who presented an evening of comedy during the Fringe Festival. They attracted a young crowd, many of whom turned out to be from the newly developed Lunar House.

Sarah Teale performed as part of the fringe and brought a large audience from Clapham, Peckham, Hackney and Dalston, the audience stayed around for a long time 'drinking the bar dry' by all accounts at The Front Room.



Emmy & Joy - The Venue

Wendy Houstoun is a performer with over 40 years of making and performing behind her. She has worked with some of the most prestigious performance companies in the UK most notably DV8 in the 80s. She attracted an audience from across London Norfolk, Fareham and Great Malvern.



Emmy & Joy - The Venue



Wendy Houstoun - Studio 55

'It's fantastic to host Croydonites every year and we value their partnership which we first started in 2019. They bring new audiences to our venue and help enliven Croydon's night time scene in the town centre. Their programme is a vital catalyst for the creative community both here and beyond the borough'

The Front Room - Venue Partners

Director: Anna Arthur  
email: [anna@croydonites.com](mailto:anna@croydonites.com)

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Associate Director: Katie Hurley  
email: [katie@croydonites.com](mailto:katie@croydonites.com)

Associate Director: Sophie Eustace  
email: [sophie@croydonites.com](mailto:sophie@croydonites.com)

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