

**CROY**

**DON**

**ITES**

# **EVALUATION**

**REPORT 2025**

**CROYDONITES  
FESTIVAL**

**8TH OCT - 1ST NOV**

# Key Figures and Geographical Reach

- **3,677 audience members**

- **96% of tickets sold**

- **46 participants**

(in Croydonbites, Croydonwrites & test audience for Trainwreck)

- **29 performances**

- **45 artists/practitioners**

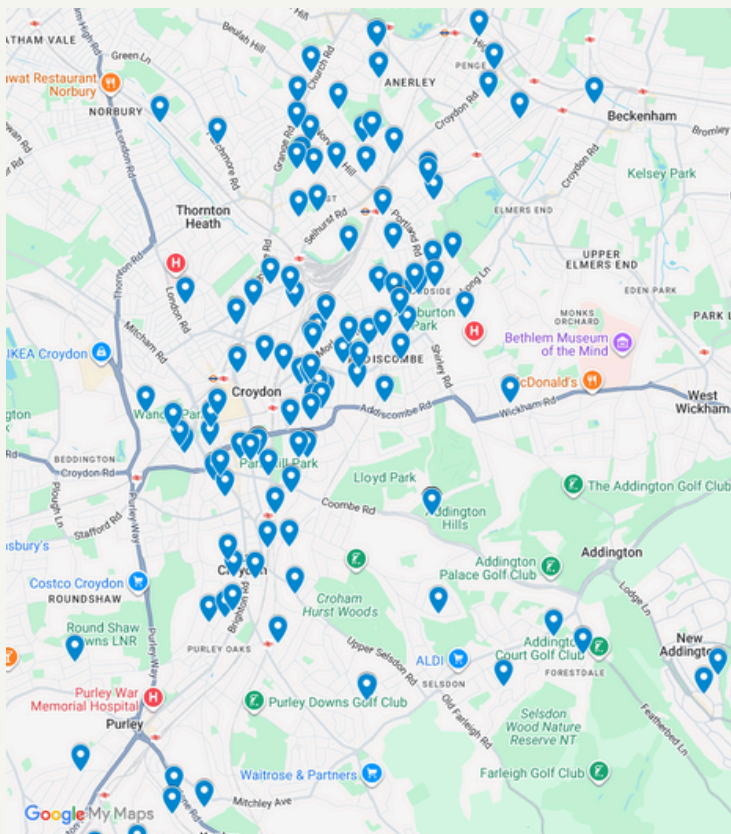
(17 Croydon locals)

- **7 venues**

(Stanley Arts, The Front Room, Oval Tavern, Braithwaite Hall, Northend, Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation, David Lean Cinema )



Adeola Yemitan, 'Good News' – The Front Room



**55%**

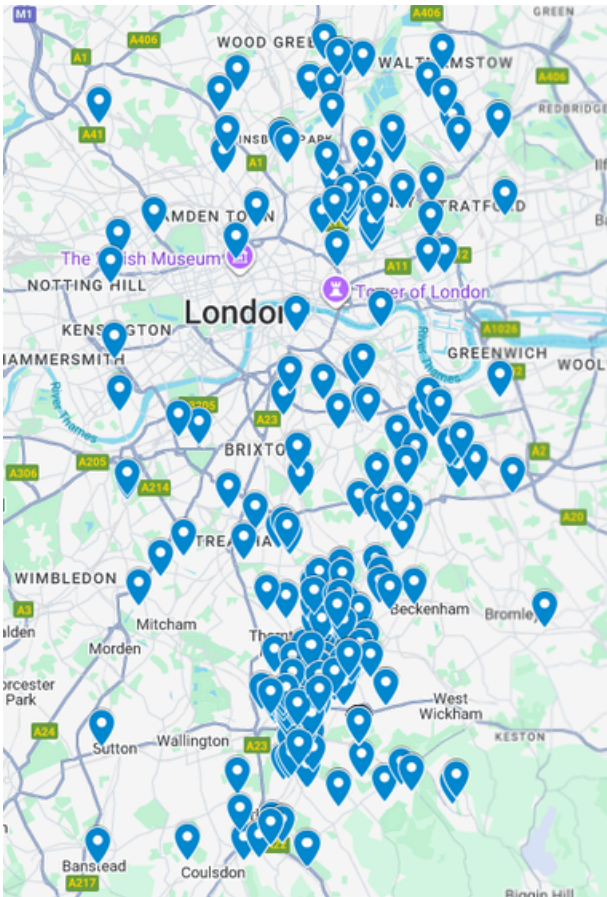
of audiences came from Croydon

**60%**

of those people came from Addiscombe, Selhurst, Broad Green, Shirley, Addington, New Addington, Thornton Heath and Waddon.

Croydon is the biggest borough in London, it deserves to have a vibrant theatre and arts scene. Art is an important way to help social cohesion." – Audience Quote

# Geographical Reach



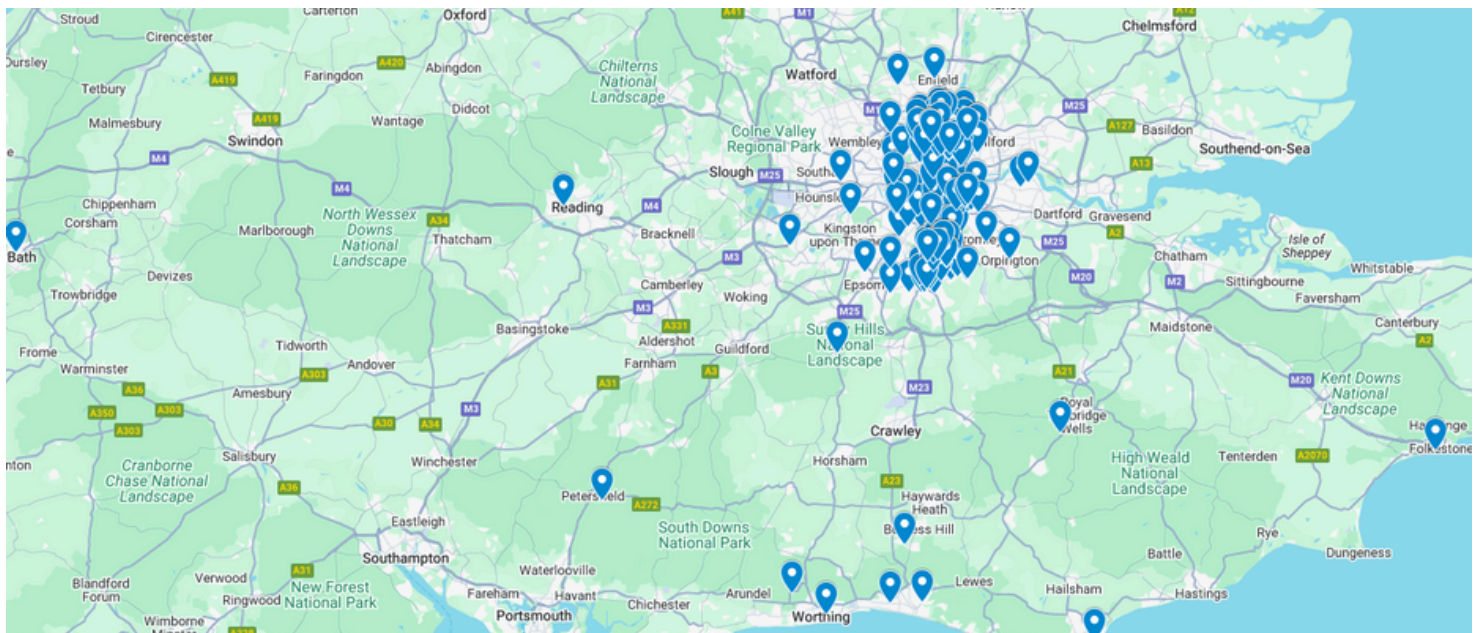
**35%**

Audiences came from across London as this second map of bookers demonstrates.



Audience, 'TrainWreck' - CYTO

**HOWEVER, CROYDONITES 2025 REACHED PEOPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY AS FAR AWAY AS BATH AND FOLKESTONE, WE ALSO KNOW THAT ONE ATTENDEE FLEW OVER FROM GREECE FOR THE FESTIVAL THIS YEAR.**

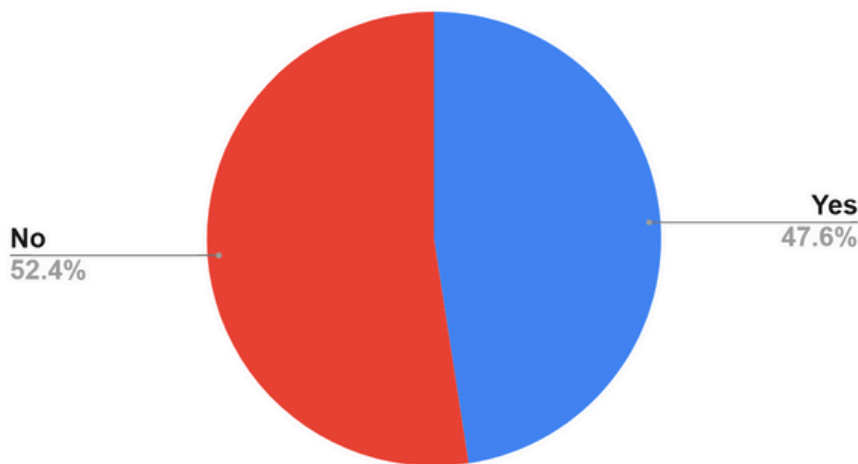


# Developing new audiences // engaging people in live performance

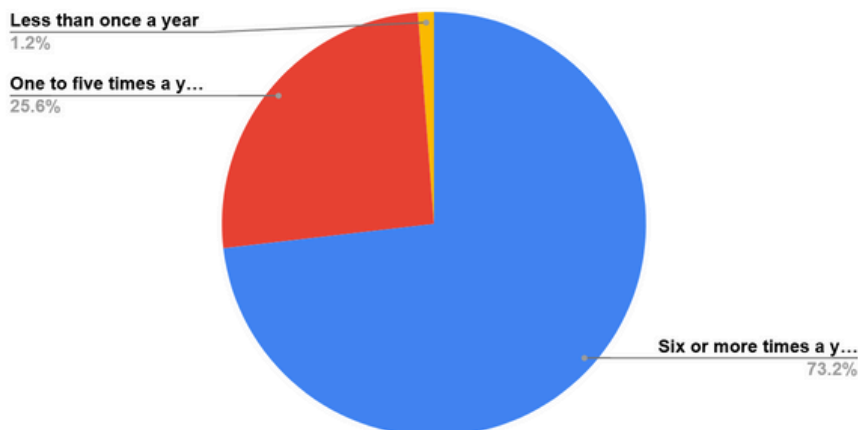
## 48% first time attendees to Croydonites

A large proportion are regular arts attendees, but we also know from the vox pops we recorded at the show on North End that many people who passed this event attend cultural events less frequently. 28% of ticket sales were concession price tickets, indicating a quarter of audiences were students, unemployed, over 60 or eligible for a reduced rate ticket due to being disabled.

1 Have you been to the Croydonites Festival before?



2 How often do you attend performance and other cultural events?



Opening Night Speeches - Braithwaite Hall

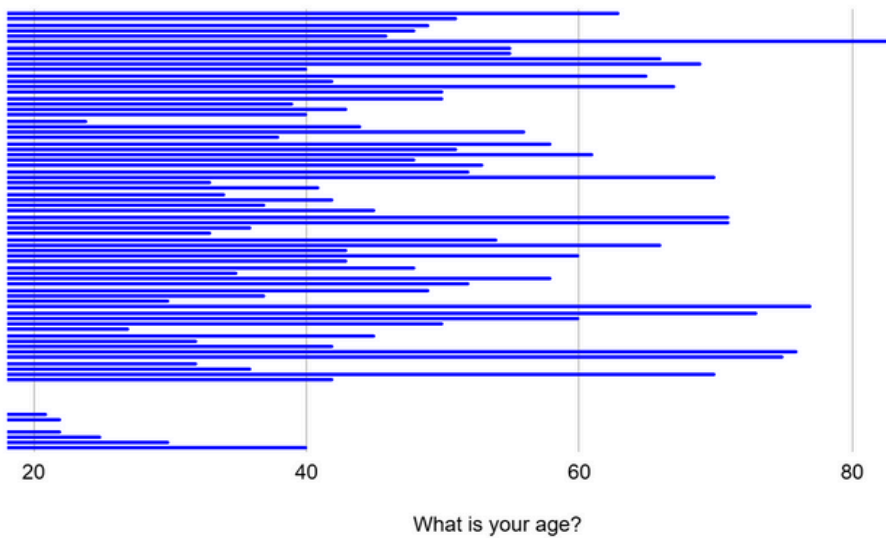
“Croydonites has a specific audience that come back to shows every time, it's an over looked area which clearly has an appetite for this kind of work. It sells so well and they get repeat audiences every year - there should be more!” - Audience Quote

# Audience and participant demographics

Age

Festival audiences were very diverse in age from 12 - 83 years old

What is your age?



Sharifa Butterfly, 'Dicks Pick's' - The Oval Tavern



Audience, 'Dicks Pick's' - The Oval Tavern.

"Croydonites makes Croydon - and the people here - feel worthwhile again and valued. It's not just moneyed folk and areas who warrant having art available to them. It animates an area, and brings joy to it's inhabitants. Not to mention helping the people there feel seen, not ignored/ avoided." - Audience Quote

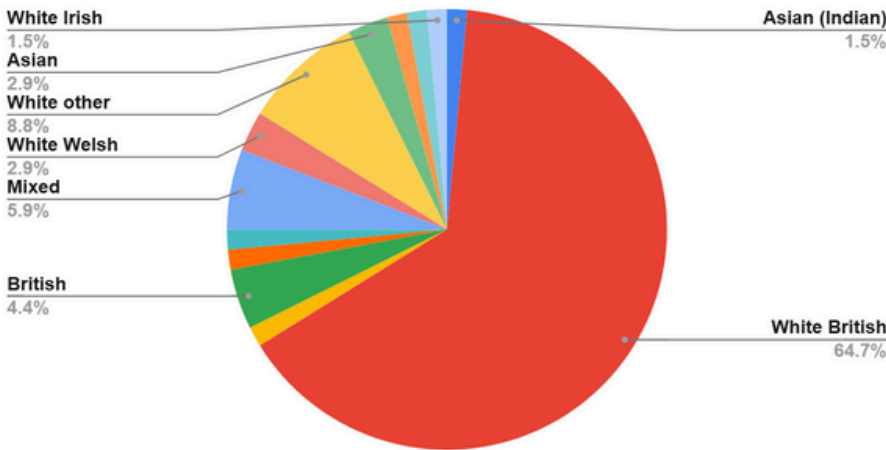
**"Croydon needs a lot more love. It's huge, well-connected, diverse and full of history and interesting venues. We're a ready-to-go audience - just keep sending in the world class entertainment."** - Audience Quote

# Audience and participant demographics

## Ethnicity

Data from the festival audiences who answered our questionnaire, shows a predominantly white British/European audience, however in person attendance told a different story and included people from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds.

How would you describe your ethnicity? (e.g. Asian, Asian British, Black, Black British, White British, White Other)

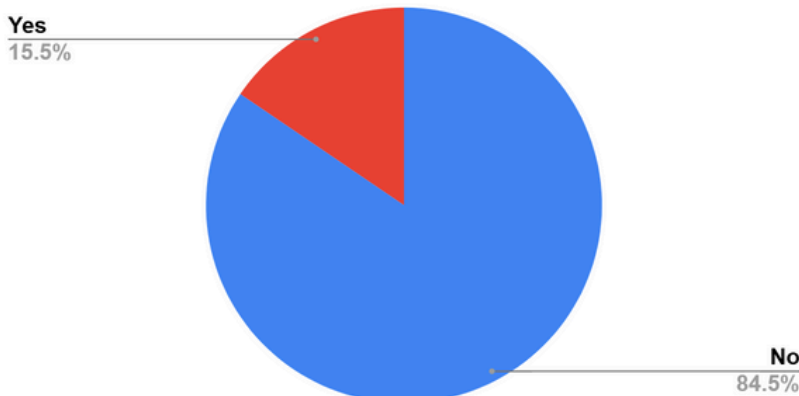


Tom Cassani, 'Iterations' - The Braithwaite Hall

## Disability

**19.6% of Croydon residents are classified as disabled or have a long term health condition. Our survey indicates that we reach 15.5% of disabled audiences**

Do you identify as a D/deaf and or D/disabled person or have a long term health condition?



"Croydon needs more culture, it brings people in. It also gives people who live here a sense of pride & lifts spirits." - Audience Quote

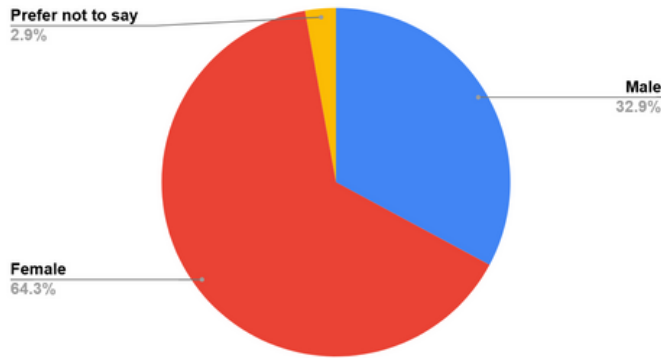
"Thank you Croydonites for bringing such a varied programme to Croydon every year! (One of the few things to cherish in Croydon these days) Even when poor mental health would mean I might cry off attending shows I'd booked in central/east London, my commitment to supporting Croydonites means I usually manage to drag myself out....& I never regret it!!" Audience Quote

# Developing new audiences // engaging people in live performance

## Gender identity and Sexual Orientation

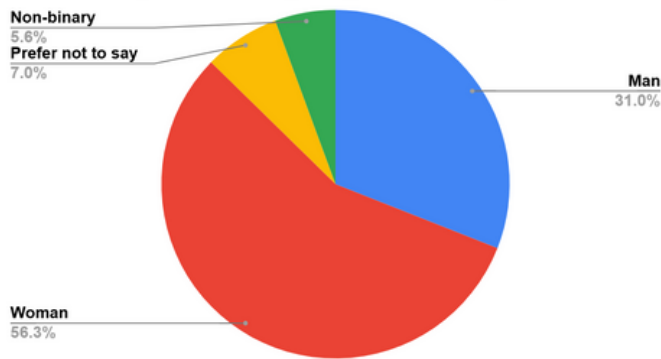
1

What is your sex?



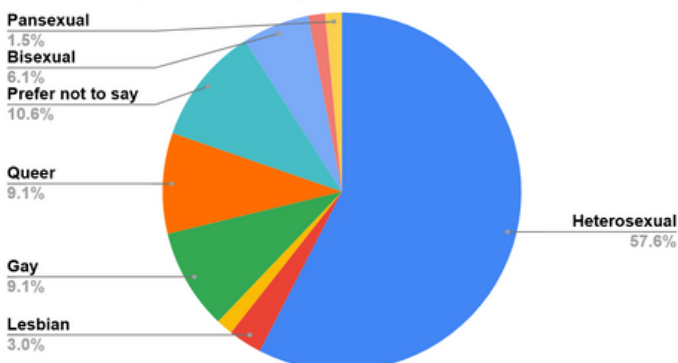
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How would you describe your gender identity?

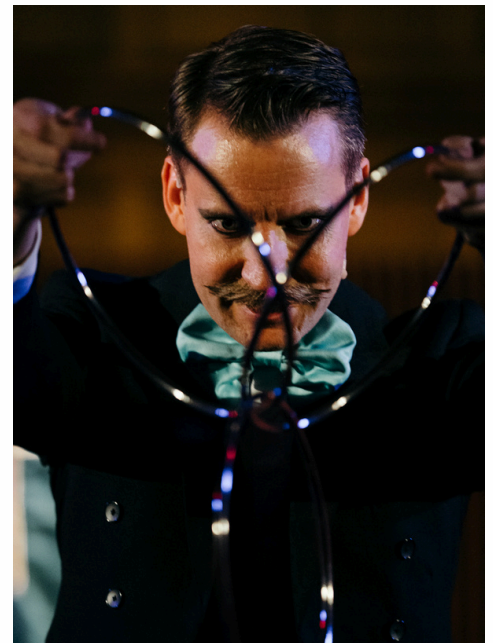


3

How would you describe your sexual orientation?



Above: Dino Desica / Four Rehearsals  
On/One Stage - The Front Room.  
Below: Christopher Howell, 'Magic Show'  
- The Braitewaite Hall.



# Artists and participant demographics



Anita Wadsworth, 'Sex and Other Stories' -  
The Front Room

## Artists

- 70% of artists programmed were from or have strong connections with Croydon
- Ages ranged between 30 - 62 years old
- 36% of artists were D/deaf and or D/disabled or have a long term health condition
- 29% were from global majority backgrounds
- 64% were women, 36% were men
- 16% described themselves as heterosexual, 15% bi sexual, 38% queer, 31% gay

## Participants (Croydonrites)

- 75% were from Croydon
- Ages 22- 30 years old
- 50% were D/deaf and or D/disabled or have a long term health condition
- 75% were from global majority backgrounds
- 50% described themselves as women and 50% as non binary
- 50% described themselves as heterosexual and 25% as queer, 25 % lesbian

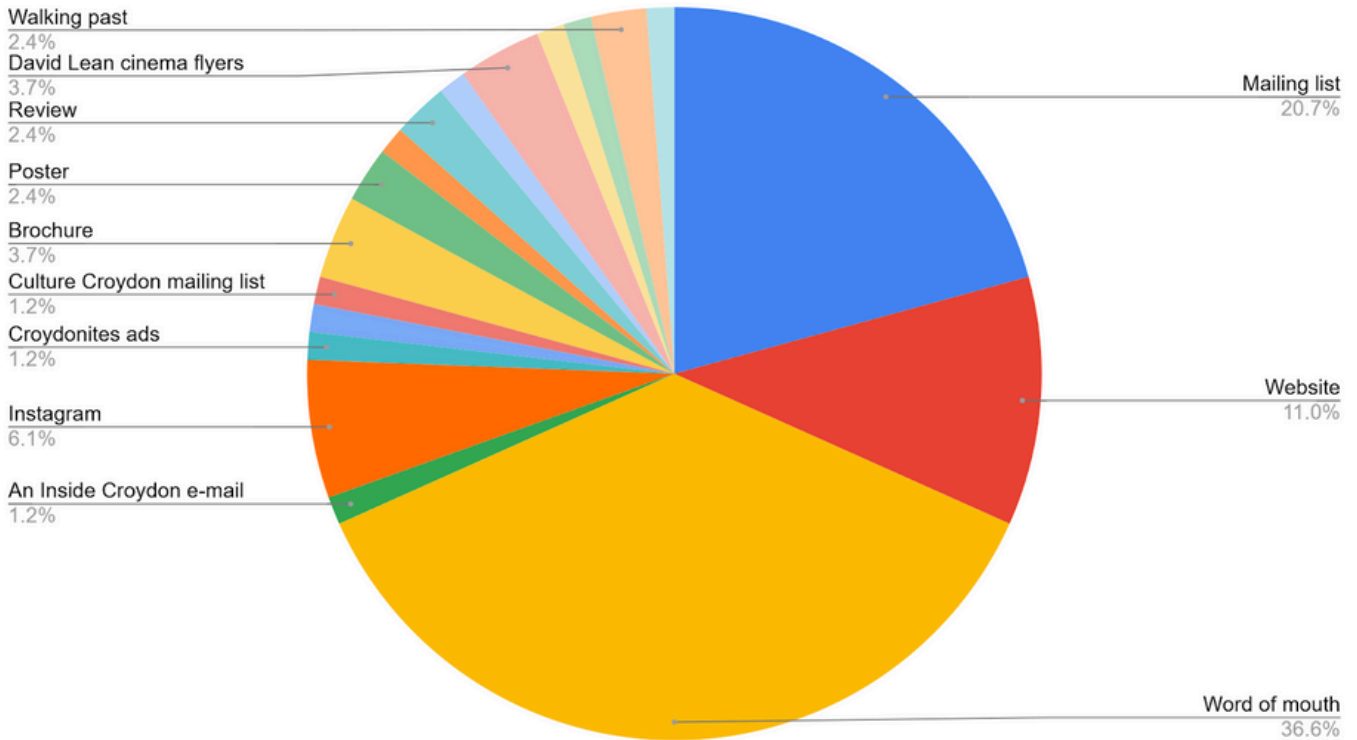


Mitra Djalili, 'Wife Support' - The Front Room

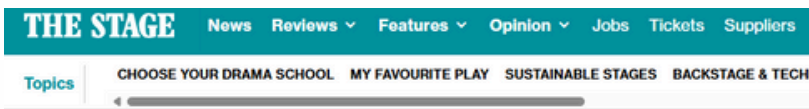
**Croydonites celebrates Croydon and  
the fantastic performance makers who live here.'**  
- Audience Quote

# Marketing impact

How did you hear about the show?



Word of mouth is significant in drawing people to the festival with 37% of people answering our survey telling us that they had booked on the recommendation of someone else



## Croydonites festival proves the need for bold theatre, not cheap punchlines

OPINION OCT 21, 2025 BY NATASHA TRIPNEY



Sign at West Croydon station promoting Croydon as a London Borough of Culture for 2023. Photo: Shutterstock



Fatiha El-Ghorri, 'Dicks Pick's' - The Oval Tavern

Feature in The Stage on 21 Oct 2025 with circulation of 30k weekly paper readers and 400k monthly online.



# Feedback on the Venues

## What did you think of the performance venue?

“Love it, even dogs are welcome!”

“The Kitkat cabaret hidden on the cusp of our Bladerunner Future.”

“Never been before and it’s great. Really welcoming.”

“It’s a great building and ideal for an intimate show.”

“Excellent..friendly, comfortable, intimate..a joy!”

“Loved it nicely decorated and a hidden gem.”

“Perfect - unpretentious, versatile, great location for transport, lovely staff - always a brilliant atmosphere.”

“Absolutely stunning! A new part of Croydon I had never seen.”

“Really cute space - sad I hadn't heard of it sooner!”

“Lovely. I've been often and always feel relaxed and welcome.”

“I fell in love with it. It's a last chance saloon of post-Victorian municipal self-improvement and community. An act of punk theatre in that space felt somehow both profane and fitting.”

“David Lean Cinema - intimate and run well by the volunteers.”



Jack & Antonia, ‘All Mixed Up’ - The Front Room



Simple Cypher, ‘Roll Play’ - North End

# Impact on Croydon

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

"Croydonites feels like a family. Lots of the same people keep coming back. Even if you don't know them personally we feel like a group. And I don't like musicals and the usual West End Theatre. I like theatre that makes you think. Croydonites ticks all the boxes. Everytime I see an email from Croydonites come into my inbox I can't wait to book tickets."

"It's a model for being bold with where and how performance and theatre is programmed and building relationships with a local community as audiences and creators."

"It is so important to have things that draw people in and bring them together. It's so joyful."

"People can't afford to do things so this is really needed."

"Well done Croydonites - Croydon is richer for you."

"Croydonites has brilliant class acts in the BEST venues."

"Croydon is lucky this is happening, we need more on our streets that is positive."

"We need Croydon to gentrify to feel more artistic, cultured and safe, and this festival does that."

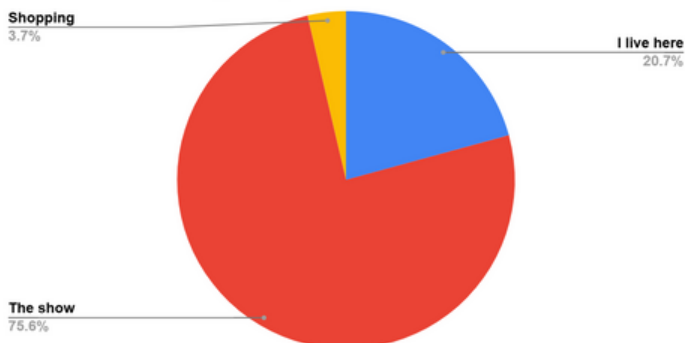
"Croydonites is a glimmering light in a Croydon shank!"

"It's absolutely great. It reminds us that there is talent in Croydon. Vital support for local people, its a whole mix of people in the audience and on stage (ethnicity, age, type of work)"

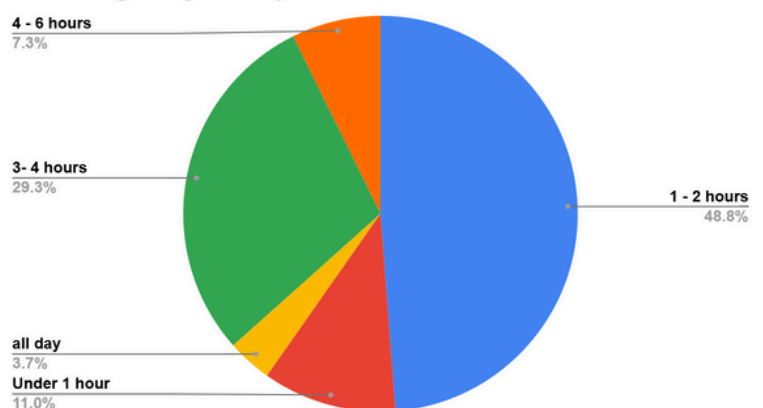
## Impact on local economy

The festival was successful in bringing over 3,600 people into the town centre to one of our venues and over 40% of people stayed longer than the show time to either shop, have a drink, food or meet up with others.

### What was your main reason for coming into Croydon (the show or something else)?



### How long did you stay in the area ?



# Feedback from Artists

“Croydonites is beacon of light in a theatre landscape that feels like it is being drained of money and belief in new work. It gives artists the space to experiment and normalises work being in progress! It's given me the confidence to share my work even when its not at it's final form, because, contrary to what the commercialisation of art makes you feel, good work takes time.”

**“The event sold out well in advance to a diverse range of local audience members. I perform at a wide variety of events both in the UK and internationally, in big venues like the Comedy Store and Hackney Empire as well as more intimate settings, and this was one of the best organised comedy nights I've had the pleasure to work at.”**

“The audience was made up largely of local people and many of them said they don't often go to comedy nights. Clearly having this event at a well-loved venue in the heart of their neighbourhood brought them out in their numbers, and fostered a sense of strong community and cohesion among what otherwise might be considered a diverse group - with varying age ranges, ethnicities and demographic backgrounds.”

**“Everyone has been brilliant, going out of their way to make a group who have come together via MIND feel very welcome and safe.”**

“It's so hard to find reliable outlets to present theatre at every step of development and I think Croydonites fills that gap in an important way.”

**“Croydon is very beleaguered and the NPOs don't do that much outside their own contacts and programmes. Croydonites really reaches out to and develops both the more and the less young and trendy and this is a real gem of a project as a result with wide support and valued across our community so greatly.”**

“I had a wonderful experience performing as part of the festival as per. All tech team very engaged and helpful. Marketing support solid and prompt invoice payment always appreciated.”

**“It was amazing!! I felt extremely supported in many ways. The whole Team has provided me with a safe space that allowed me to get out of my comfort zone to develop and test new ideas. I am so grateful for the whole experience.”**

“Wonderful support to develop an earlier work from Croydon bites. It is a new creative practice for me and I would never have been able to do it without the Croydonites festival support.”

**“In the current climate politically, small scale art is in many ways not a priority, you and your colleagues efforts in making your festival happen is a rare and precious thing in a hostile landscape.”**



TomYumSim (Simone French), 'TrainWreck' – CYTO



Hannah Maxwell, 'Babyfleareindeerbag' – The Front Room

# Feedback from Partners

**“Having the first London performance Edinburgh smash hit 'Philosophy of The World' was great for us and it drew a really mixed audience, many new to the venue. Thank you Croydonites for bringing us such stellar work and building our reputation for bold, thought provoking shows. This one literally had the walls shaking.”**

**Stanley Arts**

**“So many new people came to The Front Room for the first time and the feedback has been so encouraging. The range of different shows this year was amazing. We can't wait for next year as our collaboration goes from strength to strength.”** The Front Room

**“It was a complete sell out and we had to turn people away at the door! We loved hosting this Croydonites event as they brought a crowd of locals and as well as many who travel into Croydon. The comedy acts were first class and the atmosphere was electric.”** Oval Tavern

**“Croydonites residency with immersive show TrainWreck at CVTO was a brilliant way to share local resources with really interesting artists, share this practice with our young people and share our community space with professional experimental theatre goers. The way the building was used was very inventive and audiences had such a good time. We'd love to work together again.”** CVTO

**“We were delighted to partner with Croydonites for the first time this year to present Salt: Dispersed, a film version of the award-winning show by Selina Thompson. The powerful and intimate work exploring grief, Black British identity and colonialism brought a diverse audience to the David Lean. Alongside other National Theatre Live filmed theatre shows, it provided a rich addition to our autumn programme helping us to reach local black communities. We hope to work with the Croydonites team again to bring high quality work like this to CRO.”** David Lean Cinema



**In Bed With My Brother, 'Philosophy of the World' - Stanley Arts**

# Feedback from Croydonwrites

“It is very important to give people the opportunity to try out and explore their skills in review writing in a real context for an audience that will see their work.”

**“It's so important that the people of Croydon get the opportunity to participate in all types of theatre that Croydonites platforms. There aren't many other opportunities like this around Croydon and especially none that make it a point to bring people to spaces in central Croydon.”**

“It was a joy to see friendly faces at each event. I felt very welcomed by Katie and Anna.”

**“I've learned that reviewing is an art form, it's about perspective not opinion, that amazing stories don't need a big budget to be amazing.”**

“I really enjoyed the session with Frank and Sanjoy, getting to hear about their experiences as professional reviewers as well as writing down their tips for improving my own writing.”



Peace of MIND & Good Wolf People, 'The North Croydon Community Centre FUNdraiser and Memorial Service' – The Front Room

# Social Media and Press

## Stats

**Instagram:** 3012 followers - 13% increase  
79,783 views during the festival reaching 10k accounts

**Facebook:** 1000 followers  
6,805 views in the run up to and during the festival

**Mailing list:** 1522 members - 16 % increase

## Links to articles

<https://www.broadsheet.com/london/articles/croydonites-festival-2025>

<https://www.thestage.co.uk/opinion/opinion/croydonites-festival-proves-the-need-for-bold-theatre-not-cheap-punchlines-natasha-tripney>



TomYumSim (Sven Ironside), 'TrainWreck' - CVTO

## How the data was gathered?

- 71 audience surveys
- 4 participant surveys (Croydonwrites)
- 14 artists surveys
- 18 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

- Audience growth: We achieved the highest box office takings to date (96% of capacity) which included new audiences and loyal regulars from across London and beyond.
- Artist development: Our long-term relationships with high-quality artists are flourishing; as their profiles rise, so does the festival's visibility. Artists confirm our festival is essential in a particularly challenging climate for fringe theatre where artists are paid for their time and local artists can take risks and develop their practise in their home borough.
- Cultural impact: our 10th festival was a turning point in terms of increased profile generating significant press coverage in The Stage and cementing our place in London's cultural ecology.
- Venue strategy & partnerships:
- We missed running our own venue (Studio 55 in 2024) and remain in desperate need of a black box studio theatre with raked seating.
- Our relationships with presenting venues are mutually valued and provide a range of experiences for audiences.
- The new collaboration with The David Lean Cinema enabled us to share an award-winning theatre show via film and brought a new GM audience to the cinema.
- Presenting work on North End remains essential for reaching audiences who don't usually engage in arts and culture and helps animate the town centre.
- Programming highlights: Comedy and immersive theatre remain standout features, attracting significant audience interest. Shows by Shit Theatre, Hannah Maxwell and In Bed With My Brother also sold out.

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**FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT**