



FROZEN LIGHT

Impact Report 2023

Welcome

It has been such a privilege to run Frozen Light for the last ten years, growing it from a collaboration that happened in a small village in West Norfolk to having just been made a National Portfolio Organisation. We're proud that we have always had our roots firmly in Norfolk whilst being able to reach out to audiences and freelancers across the country.

It has been incredible to provide paid work to more than 45 people over the past ten years and become a part of the arts employment ecology of this country.

But our biggest joy has been found in the audiences we've met over the years.

Audiences that have shown us great openness and honesty, many of whom have grown up or aged with Frozen Light. Our greatest pleasure is opening the door to a theatre and greeting old friends, who are excited to experience our latest offering. It has been an honour to spend time working with and learning from our audiences who have taught us so much, not just about theatre but about ways of existing in this often-messy world.

We are incredibly excited about what the next ten years of Frozen Light will bring and can not wait to share the journey with many more people.

Lucy Garland & Amber Onat Gregory
Co-Artistic Directors, Frozen Light.

As an Audience Advocate on Frozen Light's board of trustees, I aim to give a voice to our audience, most of whom are non verbal. I bring my insight of living in the profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) world for 20 years. I understand the extraordinary experience of a Frozen Light performance in the moment and how it leaves my daughter, Lauren, feeling afterwards. And how much support audience members need just to get somewhere, and why some people therefore don't come to our shows.

Apart from the shows, the PMLD Advisory Panel I belong to is one of the best things Frozen Light has ever put together. The Panel brings together teachers, support workers, parents and sibling carers. As an organisation we can never have enough feedback from our audience. Every audience member is unique and therefore every carer and family member has a unique perspective too.

I never stop learning from Lauren, she continually surprises us all and is involved in Frozen Light wherever possible. She came to a recent board meeting and brought an understanding of what it is like to live in Lauren and Sharon's world into our discussions. This matters as it is her life we're impacting and, I believe, bringing such a positive impact too. If Tesco hasn't got any bread you'd simply go elsewhere... but our audience rarely have anywhere else to go. We are absolutely making a difference.

If our audiences are enjoying something - or not - they'll tell you. It's how our audiences live. There are no grey areas. This applies to the people who support audience members. We have to fight for everything and therefore you have to tell anyone who listens how it is. If audiences with PMLD are enjoying something it is pure joy... there is no hesitation. For actors this response must be a real privilege.

Sharon Stoker
Audience Advocate & Trustee,
Frozen Light

Our Story



2012

We receive our first Arts Council England project grant for Tunnels, a collaboration between Amber's company Tell Me A Tale and Lucy's company Seeing Beyond. Tunnels is toured to schools across East Anglia, London and Devon.

2013

Tunnels has its theatre venue premiere at The Garage Norwich in February 2013 and Frozen Light is born, becoming an associate company of the New Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich.

2014

For the first ever Frozen Light tour, Tunnels is presented at 12 venues across the South East with the support of the HOUSE network and tours independently to another 6 venues across the UK reaching 948 audience members with 79 performances.

2015

Frozen Light creates its second show The Forest, touring this to 26 venues across the UK throughout the autumn.



2016

The Forest becomes the first piece of multi-sensory theatre for audiences with PMLD to perform at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, making the fringe accessible to audiences with PMLD for the first time.

Frozen Light creates HOME, a dystopian story of friendship. HOME tours 16 venues on its initial Autumn tour.

Frozen Light makes genuinely remarkable theatre that has a deeper impact on their audience than almost anything else we ever do.

**Steve Cowton,
Head of Theatre Operations,
The Lowry**

2017

HOME tours until May 2017, visiting a further 32 venues across the UK, as demand for the work grows.

HOME has a sell-out run at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe as part of the British Council Showcase, doubling the number of performances from 2016.

To see the profound impact Frozen Light shows have on audiences that are otherwise marginalised is extraordinary. Thanks to the pioneering work of Frozen Light we are now able to welcome other companies touring work for audiences with PMLD and will continue to look at ways of involving these audiences throughout the year.

**Mark Tattersall,
Artistic Director,
Dorchester Arts**

2018

Frozen Light creates The Isle of Brimsker, premiering it at The Garage, Norwich in September, and subsequently presenting 222 shows, a record for Frozen Light.

The company receives support from StartEast, an East of England initiative to support creative entrepreneurs, to help shape and steer the development of the company.



At Frozen Light Lydia and her friends are accepted for the amazing women that they are with their own way of expressing themselves and exploring the world around them. Frozen Light has a real talent for creating work which makes theatre completely accessible.

**Louisa van Melsen,
parent of Sensory Studio
artist, Lydia van Melsen**

2019

The first independent evaluation of multi-sensory theatre for PMLD audiences using the 'PMLD Standards' is conducted, culminating in the widely cited publication of 'Raising the Bar Through Inclusive Theatre: An Evaluation of The Isle of Brimsker'.

Frozen Light co-present the 'Sensory Performance Symposium: Making, touring and programming sensory theatre for and with audiences with complex needs' in Edinburgh.

Lucy and Amber spend two weeks in Auckland, New Zealand in collaboration with Touch Compass Dance, developing a piece of sensory theatre, Masina Returning Home.

Masina Returning Home tours New Zealand's North Island in Autumn 2019.

Frozen Light begins the development of a new type of production, Fire Songs, collaborating with composer Tom Johnson, to create an immersive choral show for music festivals.



2020

Frozen Light receives new core funding from The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, The Foyle Foundation and Arts Council England's Elevate Fund, for the first time achieving long-term financial security.

Frozen Light runs its first University residency at The University of Plymouth training 60 students in sensory theatre.

Development begins on new show 2065 in collaboration with composer Sam Halmarack.

The Covid pandemic halts all face-to-face work. In response Frozen Light establishes a virtual PMLD Advisory Panel of experts by experience who provide guidance on how to reach vulnerable audiences during lockdown.

Unable to tour 2065 Frozen Light creates 2065: The Multi Sensory Movie.

The Frozen Light Podcast is created and aired, with the aim of capturing the stories of people with PMLD and their families during the pandemic.

Expands charity board with appointment of three new trustees, bringing lived experience of disability into our decision making.

2021

2065: The Multi-Sensory Movie goes on sale and tickets sell out in 30 hours. To accompany the screenings, 200 'Sensory Rebel' multi-sensory packs are sent to homes across the UK making the movie accessible for PMLD audiences.

Frozen Light is commissioned by the Norfolk and Norwich Festival to make Something for Your Shelter, a self-guided sensory nature experience.

Night Out In Nature, an outdoor installation promenade production, is subsequently developed in response to the pandemic and becomes Frozen Light's first outdoor show.

As part of Night Out in Nature 9 artists with an interest in sensory theatre join a training week and become the show's rotating cast.

Night Out in Nature premieres at bOing! International Festival in August. In response, carers describe their profound sense of connection and their increased confidence to accompany people they support to other live arts events.

2065 premieres at Garage and tours to 55 venues reaching 2587 audience members with 263 performances.

Receive Paul Hamlyn Foundation Funding to start the development of the Sensory Studio - a new and innovative mobile sensory collaboration space.



The way the show is so carefully tailored to the audience's needs provides a vital reminder that theatre can accommodate everyone.

The Stage ****



Frozen Light Theatre's radically inclusive ethos shines through every aspect of their work.

This is a trailblazing approach to sincere co-creation with artists who may not communicate with words but sure do have a lot to say.

Johanna Roehr, PhD
Researcher at the
University of Dundee

2023

Amber is made an ISPA global fellow for a second time and Lucy and Amber visit the New York Conference.

Frozen Light are invited back to the University of Plymouth to run a residency for 40 students. They take the Sensory Studio with them for its first outing outside of Norwich.

Work from the Sensory Studio is fed into the development of the new show, The Bar at the Edge of Time which will premiere in September 2023. This show features a live gig and cocktail bar. Within a growing multi-sensory theatre sector, Frozen Light remains the only company making work exclusively for adults.

We continue to tour, enjoying longer runs at major venues, including 6-days at the Lowry with The Bar at The Edge of Time

After many years of in-person venue training, we premier our first digital venue staff training to build capacity to warmly and safely welcome PMLD audiences.

Frozen Light celebrates 10 years of creating groundbreaking work for PMLD audiences, with their first Sensory Symposium, at the Norfolk and Norwich Festival.

Frozen Light invited to pitch Fire Songs at the Manchester 2023 ISPA Congress.

In the last ten years...

Number of shows: **829**
Number of audiences: **6800**
Number of venues toured to: **82**

What's next?

We're looking forward to the next decade and meeting our ambition to make the mainstream sensory and the sensory mainstream.

2022

Amber is accepted to become a global fellow of the International Society for the Performing Arts (ISPA) and Lucy and Amber visit the New York Conference.

2065 continues to tour until October, making it Frozen Light's longest tour to date.

The Sensory Studio opens its doors and welcomes new artist collaborations to explore pioneering working with adults with PMLD and what meaningful evaluation and consent means in the context of multi-sensory theatre.

Immersive choral show, Fire Songs, finally premieres at Norfolk and Norwich Festival working with the Thetford Singers and singers from throughout Norfolk.

Night Out in Nature is programmed at Blickling Estate, beginning our first partnership with the National Trust. As a result

of this collaboration, Blickling successfully bids for a Changing Places Toilet, increasing the venue's accessibility.

Frozen Light begins development of their sixth touring show The Bar at The Edge of Time.

Become Associate Artists at Cambridge Junction, who commission The Bar at The Edge of Time.

Mentor 11 UK and international artists and companies in 2022.

In November, we're awarded major core funding from Arts Council England, and invited to become a National Portfolio Organisation in recognition of Frozen Light's leadership role in multi-sensory arts.



Brilliant, inclusive and accessible entertainment... for an audience often neglected in the more traditional arts.

Northern Arts Review

The performance blended all five senses, we didn't just watch we felt it, we heard it, we could smell it and we could touch it. To Zack that is conversation, that is interaction and that is bringing the world to him.

**The boy with five names blog.
Mother, disability blogger,
attending a performance
at The Lowry, Manchester**

I cried, the feelings of making my daughter one of the V. I. P s of the show overwhelmed me. I loved that I didn't need to explain her abilities/disabilities, the cast just worked with what my daughter could do. The whole experience was so fantastic it made me glow with happiness.

**Audience member,
The Garage**

Fellow Travellers:

The last 10-years has been an incredible journey and we wouldn't be where we are now without the collaboration of our fellow travellers, each of whom has had an impact on the development of multi-sensory theatre in the UK and beyond.

Our sincere thanks to: Al Watts, Alfie Carpenter, Amanda Clarke, Anna Rathbone, Annie Fergusson, Anthony Roberts, Arts Council England, Aysegul Onat, Becky Barry, Burhan Kathawala, Cambridge Junction, Cath Irvine, Catherine Gough, Cathy Walker, Charlotte Lund, Charlotte Nightingale, Chelsea Pettitt, Dan Walker, Dave Sherman, Dhugal Harrison, Diane Eagelsome, Emma Clarke, Emma Venier, Erin Rydal, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Ethan Pascal Peters, Fiona Mason, Gareth Tomlinson, Gil Fergusson, Gill Brigg, Hannah Linsdell, Hannah Sharp, Heather Allinson, Heather Rose, Helen Mian, Helm Films, Iona Johnson, Jackie Gibbins, Jacqui Mackay, Jade Cook, James Rudd, Jane Hibbs, Jasmine Thompson, Johanna Roehr, Jonnie Riordan, Kat Heath, Kate O'Connor, Kate Sarley, Katie Miller, Katrina George, Kimberley Moore, Kirsteen Wythe, Lauren Slade, Les Miller, Lil Davis, Lorna Owen, Louisa van Melsen, Louise Cole, Lucy Allinson, Lucy Enskat, Lucy Gibbins, Lucy Hayward, Lusi Faiva, Lydia van Melsen, Maira Vazeou, Malcolm Gregory, Marie Richards, Mark Makin, Matt Heslop, Michelle Kelly, Mike Eagelsome, Natasha Kricheski, New Wolsey Theatre, Nic Carter, Oily Cart, Olivia Clarke, Pandora Giles, Paul Garland, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Pete Wright, Phoebe Kemp, Rachel Barnes, Rachel Hart, Rhodora Perkins, Rosey Clements, Rosslyn Trewin Marshall, Ruby Soho, Sarah Bellamy, Sam Halmarack, Sam Jarrett, Sam Jones, Sarah Walker, Sascha Goslin, Sensorium, Sharon Stoker, Sophie Coward, Stephanie Williams, Sue Garland, The Garage, Thomas Blake, Thomas Johnson, Tom Benjamin, Yvette Clements, Zoe Fletcher.

FROZEN LIGHT

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 **Paul Hamlyn
Foundation**



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