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The Met

Annual Report

2022 / 2023



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The Met Annual Report 2022/23

The Met demonstrated sustained recovery in 2022/2023 as we returned to a full programme. Despite challenges posed by the cost-of-living crisis, fuel poverty, and post-COVID audience hesitancy, clear messaging, accessible pricing, and a diverse, enticing programme facilitated increasing audience numbers.

We were delighted to secure continued Arts Council England National Portfolio status from April 2023, receiving an uplifted annual funding of £187,431 until 2026. Additionally, we gained a place in the GMCA Culture portfolio until 2026. This added security enables confident planning and development of an exciting, engaging programme.

Focused task groups across EDI, environmental impact, dynamism, and accessibility were formed, comprising staff and board members. This has prompted a diversity audit across programming to further support underrepresented characteristics.

Continued support from Bury Council, Arts Council England, and GMCA, with a fifth of income derived from public funding, remains invaluable. We extend gratitude to corporate and private funders whose contributions allowed resilience during this challenging period.

Our Vision

The Met will be a nationally recognised cultural organisation, accessible to all, combining our international reach with our local economic and social impact to make Bury a cultural leader within Greater Manchester.

Our Mission

The Met inspires excellence in music and creativity, it is about quality, openness, and passion. We improve lives by enabling access to high quality stimulating performance and participation opportunities which celebrate diversity, wellbeing, and local pride.

Our Values

To be **Inclusive** and to stay **Relevant**: A 'safe space,' with strong values, a culture of transparency, collaboration, and openness to make space for everyone supporting the wellbeing of staff, artists, audiences, participants, and our local communities.

To be **Ambitious** and deliver **Quality** experiences: We aim to inspire, aiming for excellence in everything we do from presentation to the overall experience and engagement of community. Aiding artists to discover and develop their talent, providing experiences and opportunities to learn, network and perform. We develop staff, partners, artists, and collaborators.

To embrace **Dynamism**: Innovative, sustainable, quality approaches in all our work that is responsive to opportunity and collaboration.

To conduct our work in consideration of our **Environmental Responsibility**: Conducting our business practices and events sustainably, respecting the environment, reducing the environmental impact of The Met, our audiences, and associated partners.

What we have achieved

500

individuals participated in our workshop programme over the year, spanning over 446 individual workshops.

We generated
£560,675
of income through ticket sales

Sold a total of
42,478
tickets

We hosted
10 regular workshops
&
6 community projects

Audiences

22/23 saw a return to a full programme and an end to socially distanced seating, allowing us greater capacities and an increase in audiences across the year. Whilst we did not reach figures seen pre-pandemic and a full recovery, we saw significant growth during the 12 months and were confident we were well on our way to a full recovery and figures last seen in 2019.

The introduction of our yearly pantomime attracted a large family audience to the venue which further built audiences for family programme across the year.

We continued to engage digital audiences through our programme of pre-recorded shorts including behind the scenes footage and artist interviews.

Our digital engagement

Total YouTube views:

6,768

Watch time (hours):

275.3

Total livestream views:

1,600

Most watched video:

The cast of Dick Whittington take over The Met (862)

Audiences for 22/23

Total bookers:

9852 (+52.27%)

Total Tickets:

42,478 (+82.79%)

Total ticket income:

£560,675 (+63.21%)

“Fantastic Venue”

- Audience member

“Best night out in ages”

- Audience member

Environment and Sustainability

This year we launched our Environmental and Sustainability policy. As well as a responsibility to our artists and our audiences, we also have a responsibility to the planet and our local environment. Like everything in this world, The Met has a carbon footprint and creates a negative impact upon the planet. The arts industry is a resource intensive industry both in terms of energy but also resources and materials. We must change this and become more sustainable. As such we have defined our 6 commitments which we will evaluate on a yearly basis.

These commitments are:

1. To achieve carbon neutrality by 2038 in line with Bury's wider objectives.
2. To reduce carbon emissions by 50% by 2030.
3. To embed environmental sustainability at the heart of The Met's operations.
4. To set year-on-year energy use reduction targets.
5. To actively monitor our consumption and waste levels and set relevant reduction targets.
6. To lead through demonstration and encourage everyone who interacts with The Met to take action and demand a more sustainable society.

Programme Highlights

The 22/23 season saw a full programme resume across the year.

We began the new year at The Met hosting Joshua Radin, the first US-based artist since March 2020, followed by Texas' Hot Club of Cowtown and Charm of Finches. We also launched Emerging Showcase, a strand of work to support and showcase local music talent.

April included a commissioned project with The Sunday Boys and Greater Manchester LGBTQ+ Arts Network featuring new Katy Rose Bennett writing performed at Bury Parish Church.

We introduced a 3-week pantomime in December produced by The Big Tiny for the first time which saw a sharp uplift in engagement from family audiences.

4596

tickets sold

55%

first-time Met attendees
engaging 6 schools.

The programme underwent a diversity audit for the same time, ensuring we're showcasing and supporting, underrepresented artists, local communities and audiences.

Support for Hawkseed Theatre Company facilitated funding and development of their "A Very Odd Birthday" national tour. They said: "(The Met) pretty much taught us how to be a theatre company." venue to an audience of 22. A modest audience, but new to the venue.

Our backing for Bury's Oliver Bishop enabled his Goofus collaboration Moonsmile to tour Bury libraries/communities in December before an Arts Council-funded run at The Met.

In February, we partnered with The Lunatraktors, to deliver a series of inclusive dancing and vocal workshops. While enjoying a relatively small audience, the digital content created continues to attract engagement through our online channels.



Education and Learning

Igniting Creativity and Community Connections

The Met ignited the creative spark across generations this year. Bury Youth Theatre productions showcased young talent, while Meet Me at The Met offered artistic exploration for the over 50s. The new Movers and Shakers program fostered early years creativity through dance and movement.

We partnered with the Holiday Activity and Food program, introducing multi-disciplinary arts to under-served youth. As leaders in Bury's Cultural Education Partnership, we inspired future creative careers and enhanced SEND arts provision.

Championing Diversity and Inclusion

Our Creative Case for Diversity Steering Group drove impactful projects, while the expanded Hate Crime events explored this critical issue through artistic expression.

Nurturing Future Leaders

We expanded work experience opportunities, supporting local students and forging new partnerships. Notably, Blueprint provided five young adults with paid placements, training, and the chance to produce their own gig, developing skills for the music industry. The Met remains dedicated to empowering communities through the arts, fostering creativity, and cultivating cultural leaders.



The Recording Studio at The Met

During 22/23 The Studio at The Met delivered over 80 recording sessions ranging from conventional band recording, solo artist support and choral works, along with more esoteric material.

Contributing to The Met's audience development strategy, the studio also recorded a variety of performances by touring artists as a means of producing long-lasting digital content for a wider audience. The performances were captured for broadcast and publication as part of The Met's new 'Front Row' series: designed to highlight and support emerging quality talent.

The No Barriers programme was also launched which sees neurodivergent participants learning music industry skills and utilising recording time over a range of sessions in the studio.

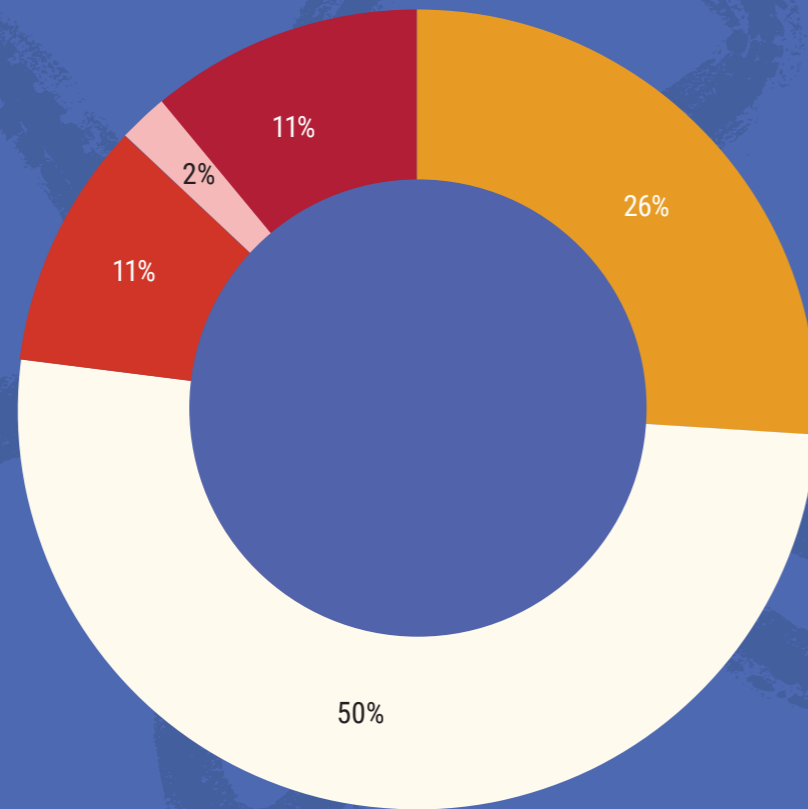
The studio has also developed its commercial offer, including establishing new strands of work around AV production, exploiting previously underutilized investments and skills already present within the organisation.



Statistics

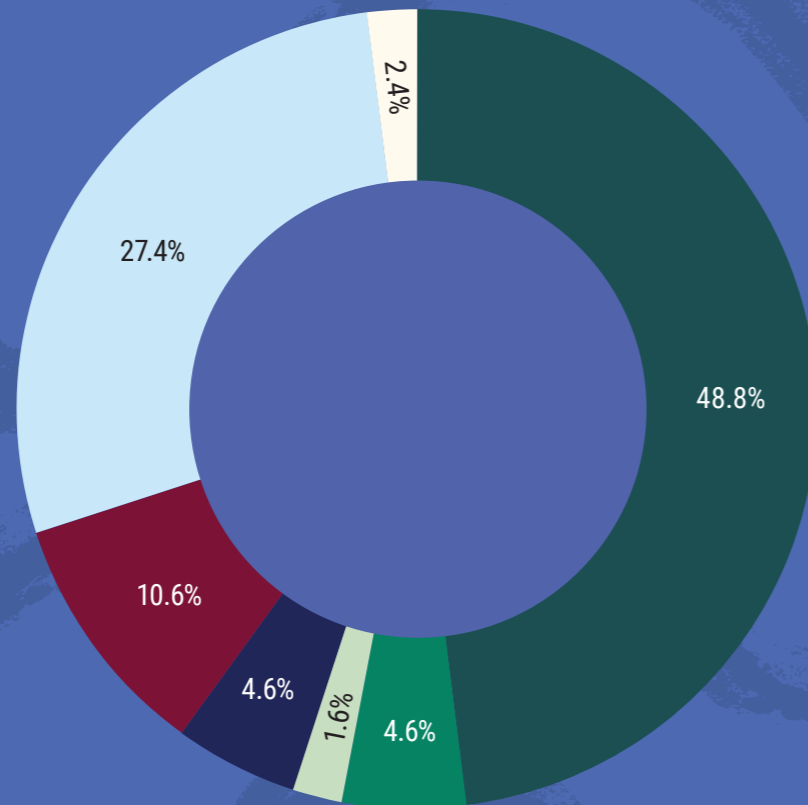
Expenditure Sources

- Artist costs
- Staff costs
- Outreach and Education
- Infrastructure
- Other



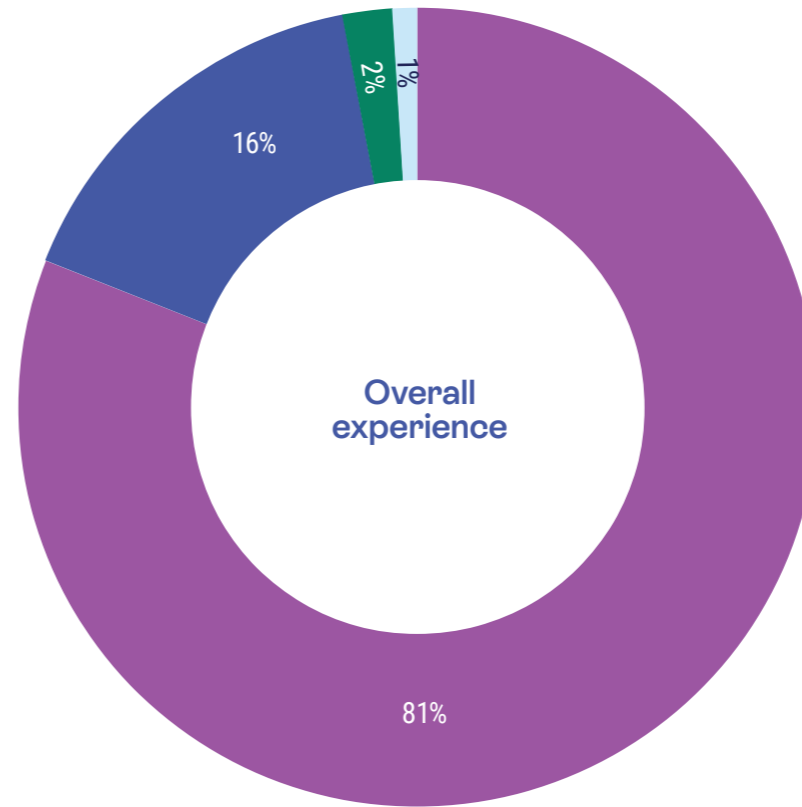
Income Sources

- Ticket income
- Donations
- Sponsorship
- Catering
- Outreach and education
- Grants
- Other

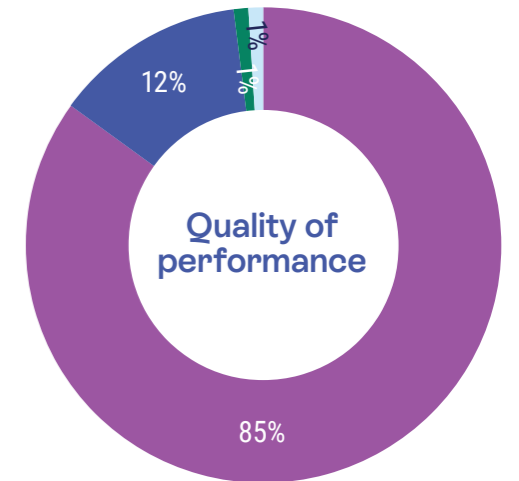
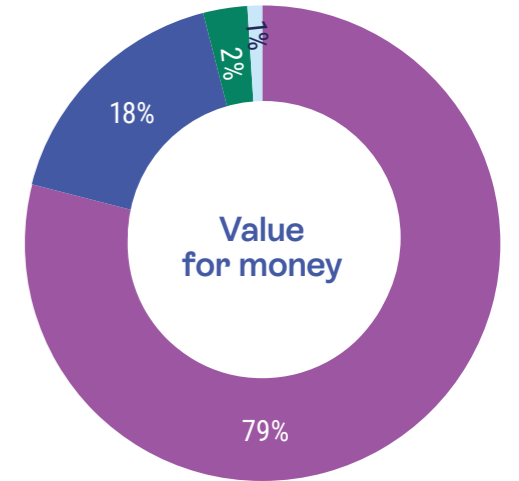


All percentages are approximate.
Source: Audience Finder Survey report, The Met Box Office data.

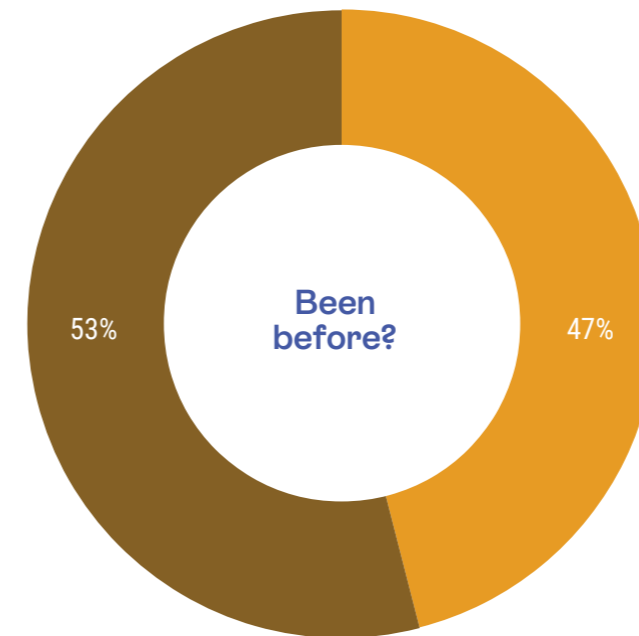
Audience Experience



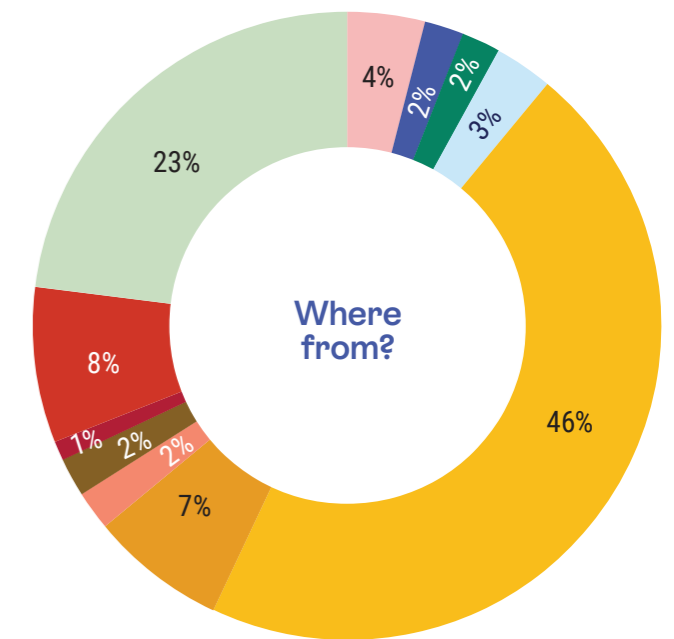
- Very Good
- Good
- Neither good nor poor
- Poor
- Very poor



Who booked tickets?



- First time booker
- Previous booker



- Bolton
- Manchester
- Wigan
- Oldham
- Trafford
- Stockport
- Salford
- Tameside
- Other

With thanks to our key funders, Bury Council, Arts Council England and GMCA for their core funding support.

Major Donors:

Ian Warburton, Nick Halstead

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Noreen Kershaw, Mark Potter, Ian Warburton, Sasha Lord, Tony Walsh, John Banbury, Craig Potter

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