



Made possible with

Heritage  
Fund

# THE ART OF RESiSTANCE

TRINITY:



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Art of Resistance" project, spanning three years, documented over a century of protest movements in Bristol.

The project celebrated the vital role of creativity in activism, through an array of activities, including interviews, workshops, performances, film screenings, and exhibitions.

While originally intended for completion in 2022, the project faced a delay in practical implementation due to COVID-19 lockdown and restrictions. Nonetheless, the full project has been delivered which has left a lasting legacy that continues to evolve thematically across Trinity's creative and cultural programming.

Project outputs created as part of the project include a book, films, a podcast series, as well as an interactive digital archive that will ensure unheard stories are retained for current and future generations.

We give special thanks and acknowledgement to the Heritage Lottery Fund for giving us the tools to uncover the rich research behind this project, volunteers and participants for their generosity.



# ART OF RESISTANCE: AIM

'Art of Resistance' aimed to uncover the role of art and activism through the lived experiences of inner-city Bristolians. The project focused on the rich histories of five key activist movements from the last 100yrs: Women's Equality, Workers Rights, Anti-Racism & Anti-Fascism, Counterculture & Reclaim the Environment.

Through collecting oral histories and retaining mixed art forms (e.g. poetry, textiles, banners, music, photography) from protest movements we wanted to celebrate the rich heritage of Bristol, and its citizens, as a 'city of protest' to educate, inspire and retain this rich history for ours and future generations.



Curate a table book and online archive documenting 100yrs of art and activism in Bristol



Employ professional researches



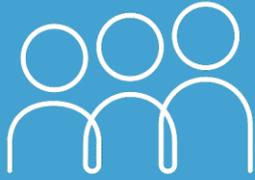
Work with partners to deliver heritage learning activities



Programme heritage activities, including talks, workshops and walks



# HIGHLIGHTS IN NUMBERS



**3858**

people came to our workshops, events, talks and exhibitions



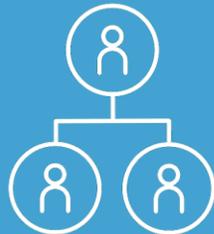
**195**

creative professionals engaged in paid opportunities across the project ranging from the arts activities to project research



**41%**

of audiences/ participants lived within Trinity's locality (BS5/BS2)



**30**

oral testimonies from activists and artists across generations.



"Bristol's historical identity is closely intertwined with radical movements, civil disobedience, riots, and protests, reflecting a city where citizens feel empowered to drive change and express their voices. This legacy is not only a part of Bristol's past but also defines its contemporary identity."

**Dr Edson Burton MBE, Curator, Art of Resistance**

A man with a beard, wearing a straw hat and a high-visibility yellow vest over a dark jacket, is raising his right hand, which is wearing a red glove. He is standing in a crowd of people outdoors. The background shows other people, some in similar vests, and a building with a sign that partially reads "SUIT".

# OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Exploring activism through direct delivery activity

# RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAMME

**We created opportunities that enabled first-step engagement with heritage - providing space for people to explore their heritage and learn new skills in research.**

In response to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, we created a free-to-access online course to learn heritage research skills.

We employed researchers including Dr Madge Dresser and DM Withers, to deliver sessions covering research and documentation skills, specifically how to transform these into heritage stories.

When restrictions allowed, we toured archival centres in Bristol including M-Shed, Bristol Central Library, Bristol Record Office.

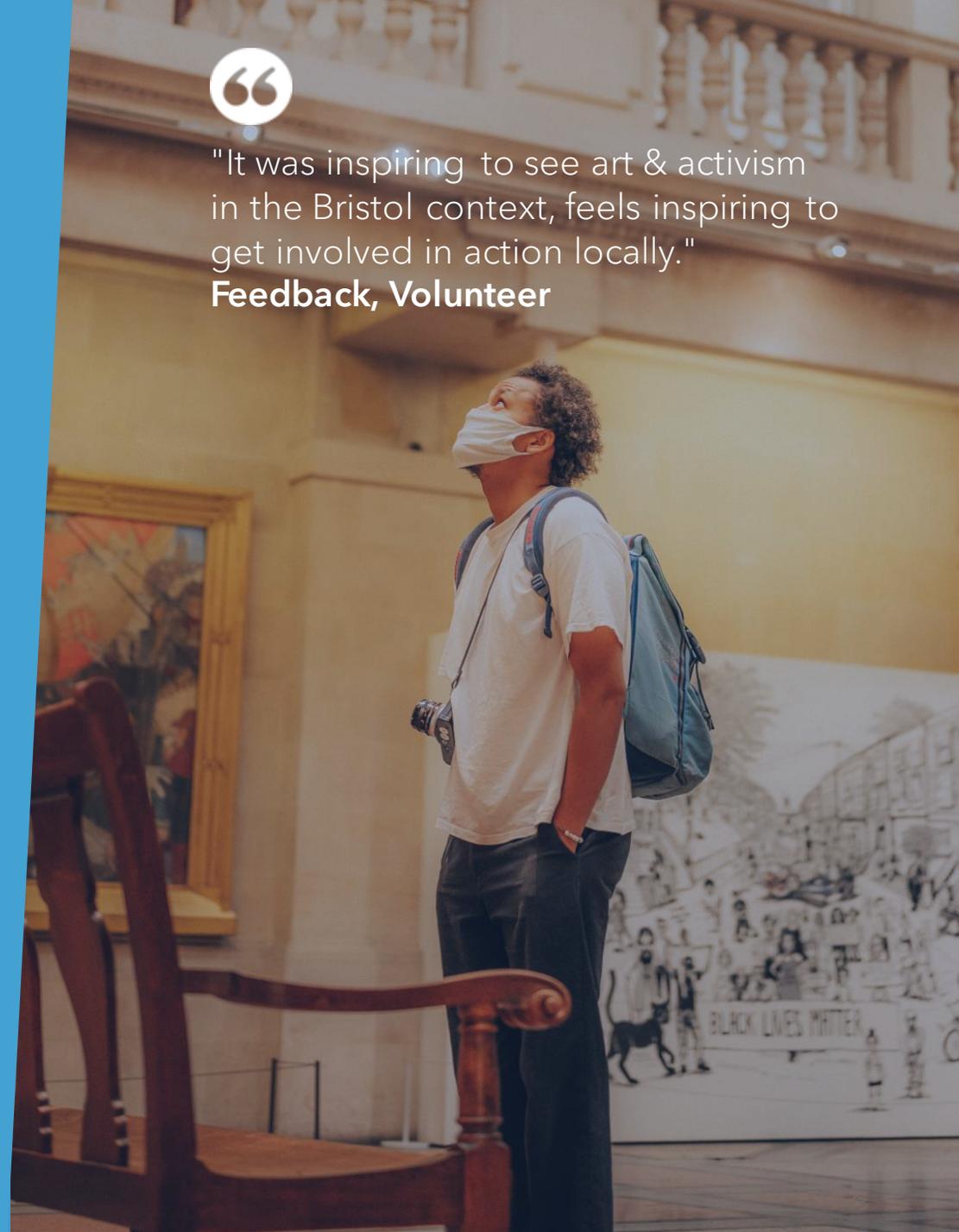
Throughout the project volunteers supported the delivery of the project, helping us discover stories, images and artefacts.

**83** volunteers took part in **69** hours of training delivered by **11** professionals.



"It was inspiring to see art & activism in the Bristol context, feels inspiring to get involved in action locally."

**Feedback, Volunteer**



## GUIDED WALKS

We explored the hidden history of Bristol's protest movements through 'Rebel Walks'

Chris Chalkley, founder of PRSC, led a walk exploring the inner-city suburb of Stokes Croft and its complex story of citizen-solutions to social problems through exploring.

Writer and historian Mike Manson led a walk sharing the story of the 1932 Old Market Riot where a protest led by the Unemployed Workers Union was attacked by the police. He later covered the Bristol Bridge massacre of 1793.

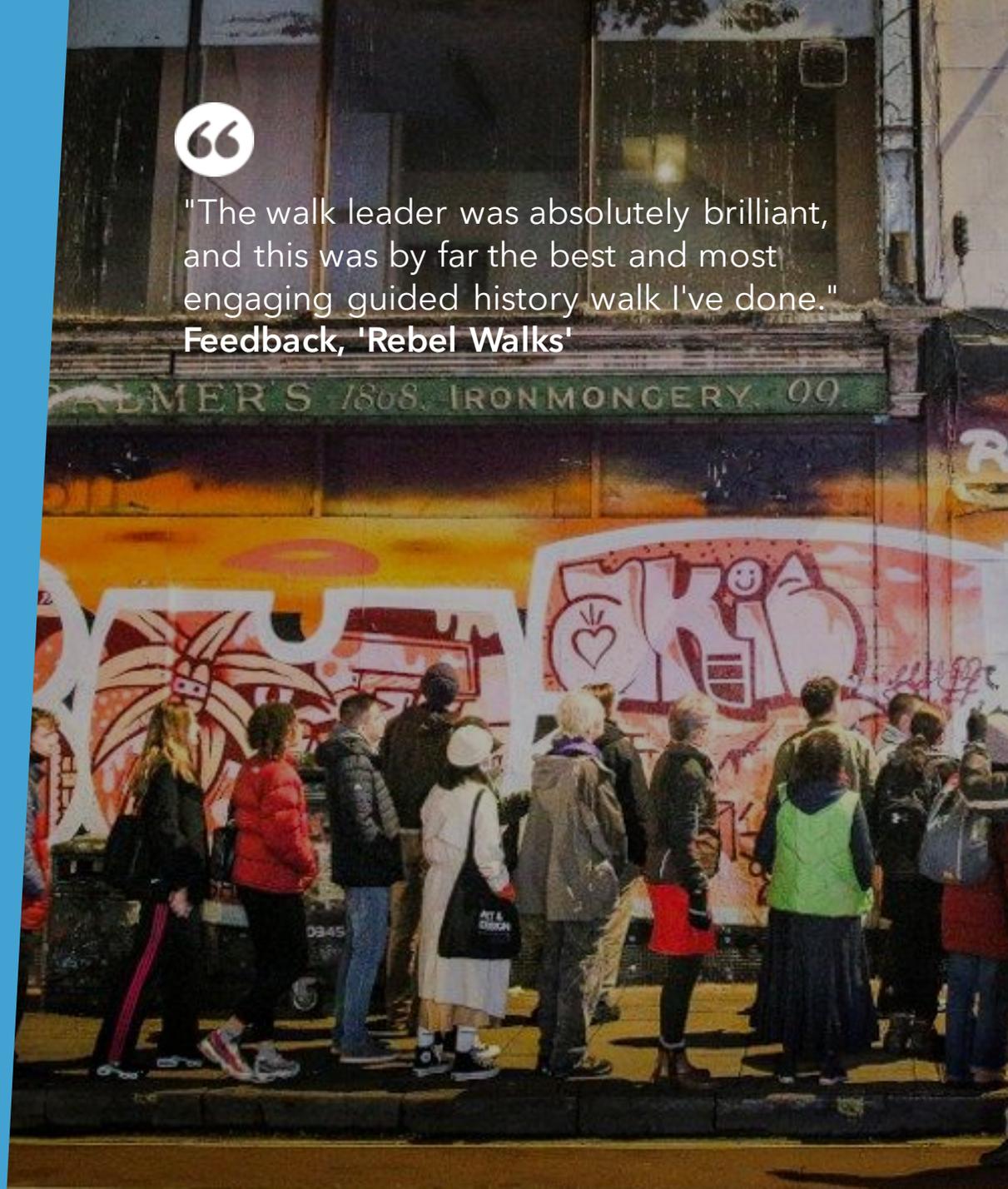
Community activist Simbarashe Tongogara shared his firsthand experience of the 1980's Stoke Croft Riots and the social and economic factors leading up to them.

**91** people took part in 4 'Rebel Walks' and **10** professionals were employed

“

"The walk leader was absolutely brilliant, and this was by far the best and most engaging guided history walk I've done."

**Feedback, 'Rebel Walks'**



## SHARING EVENTS

We preserved local testimonies of activism across generations through 'I Remember When'.

'I Remember When' was a series of focus groups to share and collect personal stories from Womens Rights, Anti Racism and Environmental movements.

During these sessions we collected memories and artefacts that contributed to our end of project exhibition, book publication and online archive.

Participants included Laura Corballis, Deasy Bamford, Gill Haugh, Ros Beauhill, Lilieth Morrison and Colin Moody.



"I hope that younger generations can learn from the activism of older people and become more resistant and creative themselves"

**Participant, I Remember When**



## PROGRAMMED ACTIVITY

**We explored and celebrated the rich history of art and activism in Bristol through a series of accessible heritage events.**

Our programme of activity spanned talks, exhibitions and events for people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with, connect through and be inspired by stories of our shared past.

We programmed 'The Final Frontier' a creative conference of artists and activists and commentators. We also hosted pioneering artist Lowkey for an 'In Conversation' event. Connecting with our live-music programme, we welcomed Soundsystem pioneers DJ Stryda, Lioness, Big D and Vibronics for a 'Desert Island Discs' style event in our outdoor venue.

We curated three exhibitions' exploring protest through various artforms. 'Snapshots of Resistance' (online & in person) showcased a selection of photographs documenting women protestors & pioneering artists. 'The Final Frontier' exhibition featured Jamie Gilman's famous Ursula bear and 'After the Fire' - an audiovisual odyssey into the sights and sounds of protest action.

**3226** audience members across  
**45** events and activities



"...This project has reminded me of the power of using creativity to effect cultural change."

**Feedback, Participant**



## IN FOCUS: ARTS ENGAGEMENT

Bristol-based artist Tanith Gould co-created a mural exploring radical history.

Tanith hosted three workshops at Trinity where people were invited to come together to discuss their role and the city's role in social, political and environmental injustice.

Alongside this, attendees explored these themes using mixed-media including collage, paint and printmaking.

Tanith used these as the inspiration for the mural 'Bristol Resists' which was unveiled at our community Garden Party before being featured at the PRSC gallery in Stokes Croft.

50 participants took part across 3 workshops



"This project has given people a platform to discuss issues they care about whilst also connecting them more deeply to their own beliefs and morals"

**Tanith Gould**



## IN FOCUS – RUTH

**Mother, Activist and PhD student Ruth Northey took part 'Stories of Resistance' a free podcast making workshop offered as part of Art of Resistance.**

In making the podcast, Ruth reflected that she learned a lot - from how to build a story and how to make content interesting to the public. Ruth shared that she was supported to put her ideas together -from running through each process of the podcast to working on the build and design.

Due to her visual impairment, Ruth shared found it quite tricky to edit and know "how to put the different pieces of the podcast together" however, she reflects that she overcame this due to "lots of one-to-one support from the team".

On taking part in the project, Ruth reflected that "as a disabled person, I think it's really important that we have that space where we feel comfortable in coming to, where we can get the additional support that we need, and I felt that I got that support through this project which was great".



"What I noticed was by taking part in this project, people discovered that there are so many people battling injustices and fighting against social injustices and yet so often don't see themselves as an activist."

**Miranda Rae, Facilitator 'Stories of Resistance'**

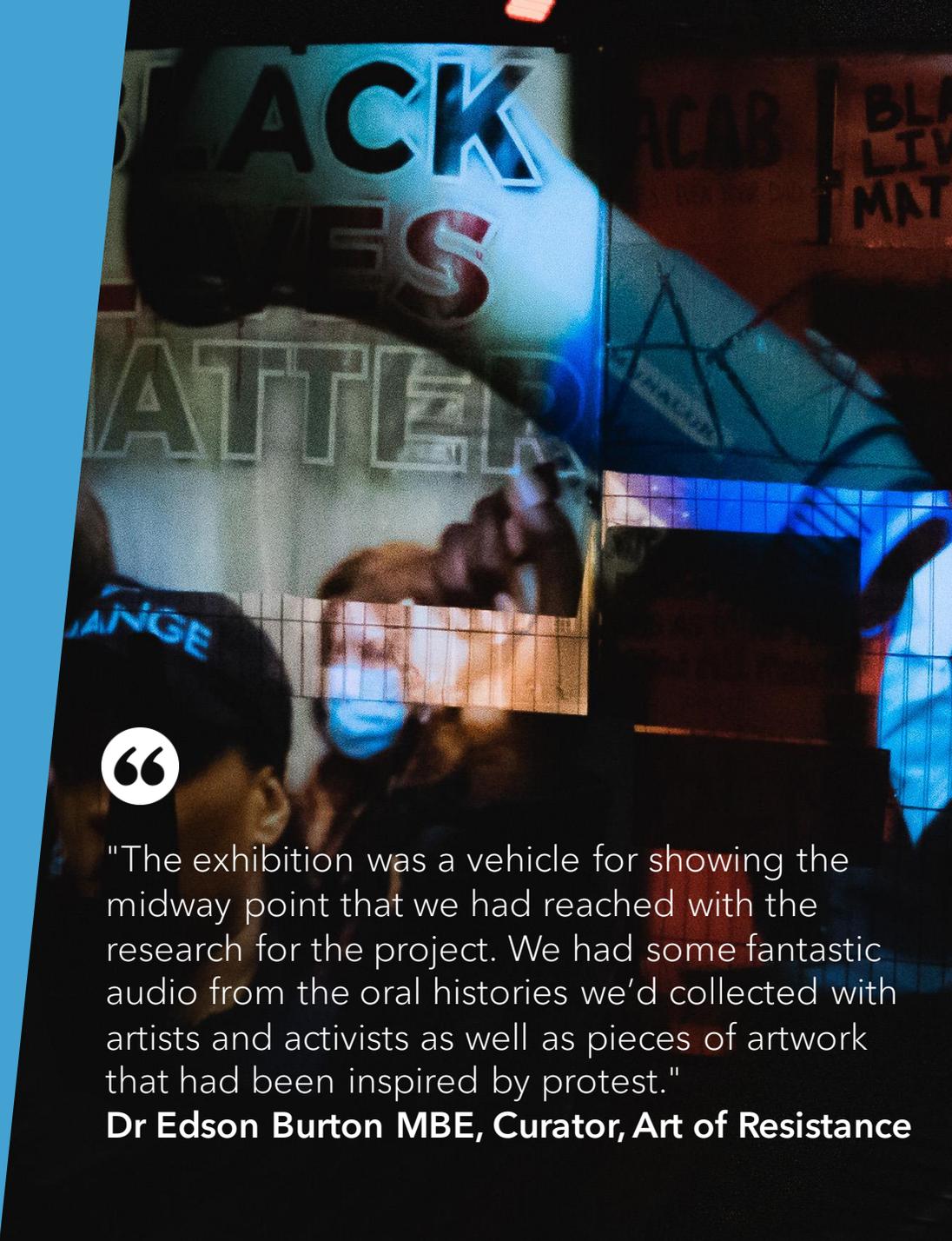
## IN FOCUS: AFTER THE FIRE

We offered a paid commission for an artist/collective to create a piece of work in response to the archive content

Local artist Iman Sultan West designed 'After The Fire', an immersive exhibition that explored 'the sounds and sights of resistance' by using projection mapping and installation. Iman projected images of activist spaces around Bristol onto the walls, highlighting the unappreciated moments of activism using 'place' and 'image' as a reminder of change and persistence to the cause.

Following this commission, in March 2023, Iman was one of three selected artists invited to exhibit their work as part of Creators in Residence at Rising Arts Agency's exhibition 'BeLoved' at Arnolfini Galley, sharing their radical reimaginings for the world we live in.

Approximately **350** audience members viewed the After The Fire exhibition



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"The exhibition was a vehicle for showing the midway point that we had reached with the research for the project. We had some fantastic audio from the oral histories we'd collected with artists and activists as well as pieces of artwork that had been inspired by protest."

**Dr Edson Burton MBE, Curator, Art of Resistance**



**RESEARCH, ARCHIVE & BOOK**  
Documenting 100yrs of creative activism

## IN FOCUS: THE FINAL FRONTIER

In March 2022, we programmed a two-day festival that explored how creative outputs have been integral to protest movements.

We invited contemporary artists and activists who use creativity as a form of protest to take part in keynote addresses, panel discussions and lead workshops. Guests included environmental activist Mikaela Loach, Bristol 'artists and activists' Doug Francis (Invisible Circus) Chris Chalkley (PRSC) and Michelle Curtis, plus comedian, programmer and tutor Angie Belcher (AfterMirth) whose recent calls for 'comedy on prescription' made headlines, and many, many more.

Additional highlights included a second day exploring reclamation of the body as part of our Women's Rights strand, featuring artist Tamatha Ann Harris, Katie Grant, & dancer/life model Itzel Technicolor with a keynote from Rommi Smith.

The Final Frontier welcomed **110** audience members and **24** artists/activists.



"It reminded me to think about different methods to take action and affect change..."  
**Audience Feedback, The Final Frontier**

## RESEARCH, ARCHIVE AND BOOK

Across the project we explored and documented five areas of activism: Working Class Rights, Anti-Racism & Anti-Fascism Counterculture & Civil Disobedience and Reclaiming the Environment to capture the city's history of grassroots artistic, community and cultural movements.

We collected **30 oral history testimonies** with creative activists including Mark Cosgrove, Cleo Lake and Rita Lynch. Through a public call-out, Bristol residents submitted photos, banners and posters via our digital platform - capturing the stories of creative activism at a grassroots level.

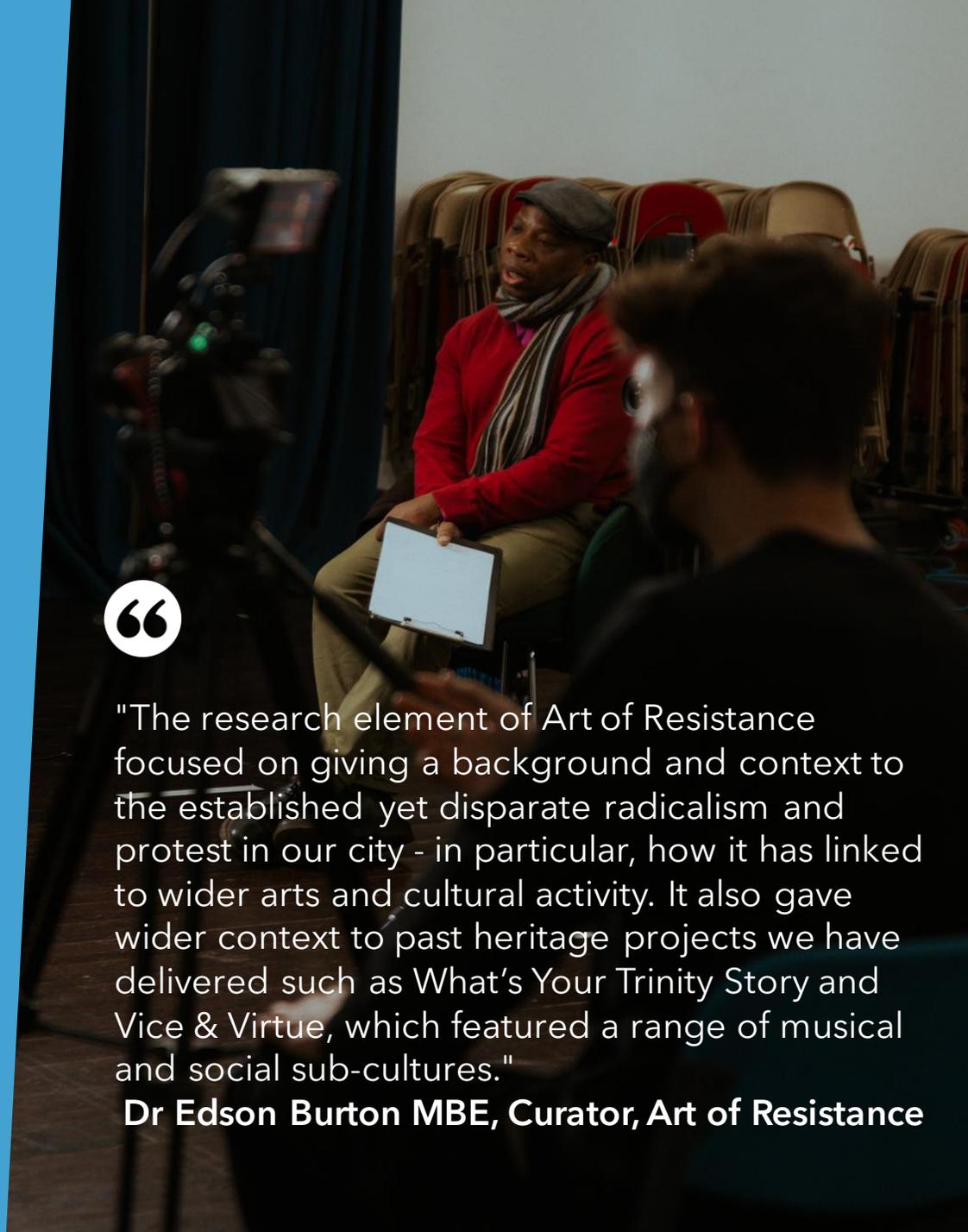
These stories and artefacts formed the research for our Heritage Book 'Art & Activism' curated and edited by Dr Edson Burton.

Additionally, we created an interactive timeline 'Radicalism' where people can further explore Bristol's rich history of activism and the heritage stories collected as part of the 'Art of Resistance'.



"The research element of Art of Resistance focused on giving a background and context to the established yet disparate radicalism and protest in our city - in particular, how it has linked to wider arts and cultural activity. It also gave wider context to past heritage projects we have delivered such as What's Your Trinity Story and Vice & Virtue, which featured a range of musical and social sub-cultures."

**Dr Edson Burton MBE, Curator, Art of Resistance**



## IN FOCUS: ONLINE ARCHIVE

We invested in our digital platforms to document and conserve heritage through our interactive online archive.

The online archive allowed us to upload the oral history and material gathered by the research team to Trinity's website.

The interactive timeline named 'Radicalism' allows users to explore hidden radical histories and first-hand testimonies uncovered by the Art of Resistance project.

Designed using Open-Source CRM Plone, this digital platform has created a solid foundation for future timelines.

Further to this, our development team created a bespoke tool allowing us to export over 10 years of content collected during previous heritage content to the platform, ensuring a continued legacy for all our Heritage Lottery Funded Projects.



## IN FOCUS: TELLING UNTOLD STORIES

**Dr Edson Burton reflects on the importance of uncovering unheard stories**

Diversity does not belong to the 'woke', it is merely a recognition of our past. But what we mean by 'knowledge', 'experts' and 'research' has been diluted to the point of meaninglessness. Identity has once again become a national football, a distraction used by all sides of the political spectrum.

The role of the heritage sector is uniquely vital at this point in time. Either through initiating or co-producing projects with community partners, our sector has the opportunity to spread research skills where it is arguably most needed and most impactful.

Art of Resistance needed to involve lots of Bristol's voices. The People's Republic of Stokes Croft gave unprecedented access to a network of activist artists and audiences - each with their own unique stories. Activist poet Deasy Bamford recounted Bristol's green activism over the past three decades and artist Rosa Truelove helped us to understand the innate creativity of squat culture. All have helped to build up the stories of inner-city Bristolians and the past 100 years of social activism, protest and civil disobedience.



"We are, then, still on the cusp of uncovering the richness of British history. Only by recognising the importance to our communities - local, UK-wide, and international, present and future - can we tell a deeper, wider story of the UK."

**Dr Edson Burton MBE, Curator, Art of Resistance**

## IN FOCUS: ART & ACTIVISM VOL 1

Art & Activism Vol 1: A Portrait is a book, curated by writer and historian Dr Edson Burton, featuring extracts from 25 interviews with Bristol activists spanning generations and movements.

Featuring stories including the Rock Against Racism Movement to Black Lives Matter 2020, Art & Activism captures transformative moments in the lives of an eclectic mix of Bristol artists and activists in their own words. Profound and inspiring, they are united by a commitment to social change. At the heart of the story is the city of Bristol, noted for its radicalism.

We are working with independent books shops, our publishers have agreed a distribution plan. We also have a staggered marketing plan that is being managed by our Communications Manager and are in the process of having a point of sale option on our website to process/manage orders.



"The contributors to this book do not fit neatly into sociological categories...No two journeys are the same yet underlying the differences, there are some recurring themes. Isolation from the mainstream has often led our contributors to identify with alternative cultures."

**Extract from Foreword, Art & Activism Vol 1**



# FUNDERS & THANKS

Art of Resistance was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, thanks to National Lottery players.

Bristol Central Library

Bristol Record Office

MSHED

Off the Record

PRSC (People's Republic of Stokes Croft)

Queer Vision

Rosa Truelove

Squatters Tights

Ted Fowler

UJIMA Radio

University of Bristol Law Society

Raise the Bar

Paul Hassan

Former Lord Lieutenant David John

And. everyone who contributed their stories,  
art and memories as part of the project.

## Image credits

Mark Simmons, Khali Ackford, Zack Henry, Marley Small, Ruth Nortey, Sophia Stefelle, Warwick University Records, Claudio Alhers.



# TRINITY:



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## #GetInvolved

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