



In June 2022 Ragtag Arts were delighted to be awarded £30,000 from Arts Council England to develop and debut 'The Ragtag Roadshow'

The main aims of the project were to:

- Create a pop-up outdoor theatre, art and play space suitable for festivals, events, schools, market places and other unconventional spaces.
- Promote and facilitate Ragtag's mission: To encourage reuse, creativity and play.
- Tour to festivals, schools, isolated communities and unconventional locations across Cumbria and neighbouring counties.
- Deliver high quality arts activities and theatre for children and their families.
- Engage volunteers & the wider Ragtag community in the development and ongoing delivery of the Roadshow.

Character and Consept Development

It started with a couple of sketches,
lots of coffee and long conversations exploring
the kind of world that Rag and Tag might inhabit...

We explored scale, materials, and references to every day objects and then Emily got busy on the sowing machine. The finished costumes and props were made almost entirely out of reclaimed materials from the Scrapstore.

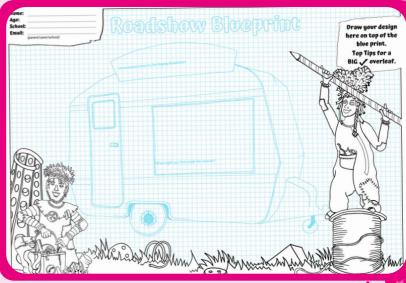
Josh and Jayne then began to work with the characters and created a pilot walkabout show that we took to Solfest 2022.





Design Competition

We asked young designers across the county to help us imagine what the roadshow caravan might look like.
The winning designs were promised a FREE visit from Rag & Tag at their school!



We received over 100 entries from schools all across Cumbria!

Rag & Tag were so impressed with all of the designs that they decided to visit all the schools who submitted entries to the competition!

- Allithwaite Primary School
- Hawkshead Esthwaite Primary School
- Flookburgh C of E School
- Crosby Ravensworth CE School
- St Mark's C of E School
- St Oswald's CE Primary School
- Haverigg Primary School
- Dean Gibson Catholic Primary School
- Morecambe Road School

Congratulations to our competition WINNERS!





The Launch Party

The Ragtag Roadshow was officially launched on Sat 10th June, as part of the Ragtag Family Fun Day.

Julia, the Mayor of Kendal, cut the ribbon alongside our design competition winners.

Tim Farron (our local MP) and CAFS (Cumbria Action for Sustainability) all attended to show their support. The event was also listed as part of the Great Big Green Week.

THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK



The Launch Party was attended by over 100 people including our amazing volunteers, friends and family.

See the launch party video by clicking here!



Developing The Show

From the start we new we wanted to transport young audiences into Rag

and Tag's world of Reuse, Creativity and Play. What we didn't know though, was what that would look like or how we'd get there...



The development process was all about exploration and play. It was also frustrating and hilarious at times. We ended up writing three 20min shows that created a story arc to frame a whole day of activity. 'Wake up with Rag and Tag' introduced the world of Reuse, Creativity and Play and set the theme (and the make) of the day and was an invitation for children to join in. 'Creative Blockbusters' looked at creative block and how to deal with it.

And 'The Big Roadshow Bash' was a celebration of all the children's creativity, all the waste we had reused and the fun we'd had by the end of the day.

During the devising and script writing process it became clear that music and songs would be integral to the shows. So we got together with song writer and street performer Gary Bridgens who helped us write 4 original songs and commissioned a group of musicians to create the sound tracks.

The Lyrics to the songs helped us develop our language which then influenced the language in shows as well as in the workshops.

"Rag and Tag are here to play with things that you might throw away!"



Scrap Art Workshops







The Ragtag Roadshow is a mobile Scrapstore, Studio and Stage...

Scrap Art was always going to be at the heart of the project. Really the roles of 'Scrappy Van' and Rag and Tag were always to help facilitate children's own creativity. The shows were designed as an invitation for children to 'Get making and playing'.

Throughout each day's activity the children would go inside scrappy van to choose their materials and then make their 'Cool Creations' in the Roadshow Studio.

We made all sorts of things this summer from Cardboard 'Rockstar' Guitars, wands made from unwanted plastic pipes, festival wings, badges, carnival headbands and loads of puppets...

Loose Parts

Loose Parts Play is about creating space for children to play, create and learn with found objects.

We worked with Rachel our Loose Parts Play co-ordinator to develop a Loose Parts kit specifically for the roadshow and we explored different ways of creating themed spaces (eg. pirate ships, rockets and play houses).

We incorporated the use of Loose Parts Play into the show with Rag and Tag playing their own games turning things like records into steering wheels, plastic pipes into light-sabres and cotton reels into ice-cream cones. The children loved playing in the loose parts garden at the Roadshow. Burnley Canal Festival commented:

"It's great for getting boys and dads involved."

Re-Make Volunteers

Re-Make is an enterprise run by adults with disabilities, who create craft kits out of waste materials from our Scrapstore. The group is supported and guided by Ragtag, teaching them new skills and techniques, tailoring the activity to individual's needs and nurturing their creativity.

The Roadshow created loads of work for the Re-Make team. We literally couldn't have done it without their help and willingness to complete strange requests! Things like...

"I need 400 cardboard guitars please!"

"We're making 800 monster masks so that's 1600 bottle-tops for eyes, please!"

By the end of 2024 Re-Make will have prepared materials for over 3000 Roadshow crafts!

Event Volunteers

This summer the Ragtag Roadshow has enabled us to engage 20 members of the community as event volunteers and many of these volunteers have helped at more than one event.

Event volunteers help with setting up & packing down the Roadshow, delivering craft workshops and engaging with children through Loose Parts Play.

The Roadshow is a brilliant opportunity for volunteers looking to gain skills in events & festivals, outdoor arts, arts workshops, and working with children. It's also loads of fun, and enabled volunteers to experience big festivals like Kendal Calling.

Touring





We've toured the Roadshow to 12 festivals & events this summer - from big festivals like Kendal Calling and Highest Point, to smaller community events like Kendal Pride and Kendal Torchlight. We've travelled all around Cumbria to super remote locations like Eskfest and Stealing Thunder Storytelling Festival and hopped over to Lancashire for The Harris Summer Programme and Burnley Canal Festival.

2022:

Solfest (Walkabout)

2023:

- Highest Point (Walkabout)
- Medieval Muncaster
- Stealing Thunder Storytelling Festival
- Roadshow Launch Event
- Eskfest
- Kendal Pride/ Unity Fest
- Kendal Calling

Still to Come:

- Kendal Christmas Light Switch-on
- Kirkby Lonsdale Christmas Fair
- Highest Point Big Christmas Day Out



What's Next?

We've had a brilliant year developing and touring the Roadshow. But it's not over yet!

We will continue developing and touring the Roadshow in 2024. We've got some great ideas for new adventures for Rag and Tag and we're also looking to explore how the Roadshow might work in schools.

We are now taking bookings for 2024 and looking for partnerships.

Contact us at: events@ragtagarts.co.uk

Thank You!

The Ragtag Roadshow was created and sent out on its debut tour with the help of an amazing team of creative practitioners and volunteers.

We'd like to say a massive THANK YOU to everyone that helped make it happen!

Joshua Simpson Concept and Set Designer

Jayne Davies Concept and Theatrical Director

Emily Dewhurst Concept and Costume Designer

Rachel Sainsbury Loose Parts Play Co-ordinator

Gary Bridgens Song Writer

Dan Cropper, Jack Rennie

Music Composition James Duckworth

Jane & Ken Blackburn Site Decor

Emily Dewhurst, Joshua Simpson

Phoebe Rodway Bookings & Volunteer Co-ordinator

Lizzie Dorney Roadshow Studio Chief

Clare Jepson Re-make Co-ordinator

Jayne Davies, Tamsin Doyle

Joshua Simpson

Rag and Tag

Special Thanks to all of the volunteers who helped paint, build, cut, sort and stick, and all those who joined us out on the road, we really couldn't have pulled it off without you! Thank you also to all of the amazing events that booked us this summer with little more than a sketch to go off!

Here's to next season!



ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND