

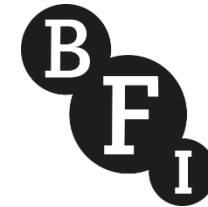
I'VE HAD
a PERFECTLY
WONDERFUL



EVENING
BUT
THIS
WASN'T IT

FAN Major Programmes Monitoring & Evaluation

Initial findings



**COMEDY
GENIUS**



**THE
NATIONAL
LOTTERY®**



FAN
BFI FILM AUDIENCE NETWORK

BFI Major Programmes

Since 2018 Film Hub Midlands has led on BFI Major Programmes, UK-wide programming open to all FAN members, including an annual BFI 'Blockbuster' and National programming generated from within the Network. The UK-wide programme is project managed by Annabel Grundy for Film Hub Midlands who worked collaboratively with all stakeholders and partners to achieve the final results.

The aims of the BFI Major Programmes initiative are to:

- increase audience engagement with film and deepen the quality of cultural experience
- increase the confidence of FAN members to screen a wider range of films
- boost the engagement of audiences aged 16- 30
- increase the diversity of FAN audiences
- raise the profile of film as an art form and create a dialogue about its place in our cultural life

Comedy Genius

Since 2014, BFI Southbank and BFI FAN have collaborated to deliver annual Nationwide thematic film seasons to engage and delight audiences UK-wide. Celebrating genre, representation and craft in film, BFI 'Blockbuster' combines a high profile National campaign with a sustained (3-4 month) period of film programming at both BFI Southbank and in venues nationwide. Comedy Genius is the BFI's fifth 'Blockbuster' season delivered in partnership with the Film Audience Network (FAN) and the Independent Cinema Office (ICO) delivering a National Tour. This is the first 'Blockbuster' managed by Film Hub Midlands.

Comedy Genius presented the UK's greatest ever celebration of film and TV comedy. From boundary-pushing writers and performers who say the unsayable, to silent slapstick heroes of the past and disreputable and anarchic voices of the present, this season celebrated comic genius with an array of screenings and events throughout the UK. BFI, ICO and FAN worked with today's most talented practitioners to spotlight the brightest stars of their craft, inviting audiences to discover classic works, and rescuing overlooked talents from obscurity. Covering everything from pioneer pratfallers, and celebrated satirists to TV trailblazers and online superstars, there was something here for everyone.

Report overview

This reports summarises the initial findings of Comedy Genius and forms the first part of a 2-year evaluation of the BFI Major Programmes initiative including two other seasons: Film Feels Obsession (June – July 2019) and BFI Musicals! (Oct 2019 – Jan 2020).

The report presents the main output data for FAN member projects funded via Major Programmes, demonstrating the scope and scale of delivery, alongside some headline evidence of key outcomes. A more comprehensive assessment of the season will feature in the final report on Major Programmes due for delivery in April 2020.

The evidence presented here is drawn from the following sources:

- Existing documentary records (including project logs, booking lists and funding/ budget information)
- Audience surveys and delivery partner feedback
- Observations are drawn from qualitative interviews with delivery partners (FAN member) and strategic partners (including FAN Hub executives, BFI and ICO)

Summary

Audiences

- Comedy Genius compared well against other Blockbusters, especially given smaller investment
- High numbers of new audiences were achieved with a strong desire to return to similar events in the future
- Higher number of audience identifying as disadvantaged was achieved within the BAME audience
- Diversity focused activity succeeded in attracting larger BAME and disabled audiences

Members

- Consistent number of members engaged overall, similar to previous Blockbusters, but with considerably less investment in individual projects
- Some Hub areas achieved more engagement from members and audience than others
- High level of satisfaction amongst members for Project Management process and support
- Blockbusters provide a clear sense of National Moment engagement and profile raising for members
- Members commented on improved lead in and preparation time but noted that for events starting early in the season the funding decisions were too close leading to reduced time for comprehensive marketing and promotion, impacting on ticket sales.

FAN / Strategic Partners

- There is a general sense of disconnect among Film Hub Managers. Introduction of Cross-FAN specialisms has caused some confusion around roles and responsibilities within the Hubs regarding Major Programmes and engagement of members, support, delivery and marketing. Clarity is required for Hub Managers, especially where engagement is low or has reduced
- There could be enhanced support from Film Hubs to better support members activity during delivery
- There were some initial challenges (perceived as a result of FAN restructure) and a noticeable lack of FAN programming leadership and absence of some cultural leaders
- Communication channels between Stakeholders could improve for future seasons, particularly around PR and who (if anyone) is leading on PR for FAN
- It is clear the Project Manager role achieves a great deal with limited time and resources.

Increased audiences

- Total audience 17,932
- Combined audience 34,269
(ICO Tour 6,827 / BFI South Bank 9,510)
- Total of 447 screenings / events
- 66 projects across the UK
- 98% good or very good rating
- 97% would attend again
- 46% new audiences

Hub	No of Projects	Audience	% of total audience	Screenings / Events
London	10	4,841	27%	171
Midlands	11	3,216	18%	46
South West	9	2,772	15%	43
North	12	2,454	14%	69
Scotland	9	2,502	14%	57
South East	8	1,126	6%	29
Northern Ireland	4	528	3%	14
Wales	2	120	1%	5
Cross Hub	1	373	2%	13
TOTAL	66	17,932	100%	447

	Investment***	Projects	Admissions	New Visitors	Very Good & Good rating	BAME	Female	Disability
Comedy Genius*	£179,655	66	17,932	46%	98%	17%	55%	10%
Black Star*	£293,335	37	16,394	26%	98%	21%	62%	9%
LOVE	£421,231	62	31,473	44%	91%	16%	66%	8%
Sci-fi**	£567,688	59	65,210	29%	88%	10%	47%	6%

* both Comedy Genius and Black Star figures omit Film Menu activity delivered by ICO

** Sci-Fi consisted of individual PDF applications from 9 Film Hubs - all other Blockbusters had combined centralised project management

*** Comedy Genius investment does not include any project management costs - only direct investment in audience development activity

Audience Profile

		FOCUSED ACTIVITY **		
	ALL	16 – 30 yo	BAME	ACCESS
<i>Survey sample*</i>	2,602	358	393	83
Female	55%	41%	48%	60%
Male	41%	43%	46%	37%
Age 16-30	26%	56%	45%	13%
Age 30+	70%	43%	48%	86%
Bisexual	5%	14%	9%	2%
Gay / Lesbian	6%	13%	12%	3%
Prefer to self-describe	3%	3%	6%	6%
Heterosexual / Straight	74%	63%	69%	83%
Yes - disability	10%	9%	9%	36%
No disability	84%	85%	88%	57%
Yes - disadvantaged	8%	7%	24%	9%
No - disadvantaged	81%	86%	68%	12%
White: British/Irish/Travelling Community/Other	76%	87%	39%	71%
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean/African/Asian/other	5%	7%	16%	12%
Asian or Asian British: Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi/Chinese/other	2%	1%	9%	10%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African/Caribbean/Other Black background	10%	2%	33%	13%
Arab	0%	1%	1%	0%

- Activity aimed at younger audiences successfully achieved higher number of audiences between 16-30 age range.
- BAME activity successfully attracted BAME audiences, but also engaged an increased number of young audiences, 16-30 years old.
- BAME aimed activity also increased audiences identifying as disadvantaged.
- Activity aimed at addressing access needs successfully increased audiences where participants identified as having a disability. Much of the access activity was dementia screenings, thus also resulting in a larger demographic of older audiences.

* Surveys from FAN activity only

** Focused Activity denotes activity identified by MP Project Manager to be aimed at specific audience target groups. Further breakdown on each activity on following slides.

Survey does not include those who preferred not to answer

Engagement of 16-30 year old audiences

6 Specific projects / 20 specific screenings / 26% of audience surveys*

Value of Cultural Experience

- 100% rate the additional activity as very good or good
- 99% rate their experience as very good or good
- 71% were encouraged to attend similar events
- 67% agreed the event provided a worthwhile cultural experience
- 50% were new attendees / 100% would attend again
- 27% were introduced to new types of film
- 18% have increase awareness of film heritage

Observations

- Enhanced activity supports the development and engagement of younger audiences
- Major Programmes provides members with the flexibility to take creative risks around specifically developing activity with these audiences in mind.
- The majority of activity is aimed at all audiences, rather than specifically targeting 16-30 year olds.
- There is a general feeling that this is a very wide audience group that requires different methods to address age range within it.
- There are clear challenges around engaging the younger end of this range.
- Even those partners with direct access to students still struggle.

** based on 2,602 audience survey responses*

Increased Diversity of FAN audiences

11 Specific projects / 167 specific screenings / 18% of audience surveys *

Value of Cultural Experience

- 96% rate their experience as very good or good (both at the venue and the event/film)
- 96% rate the additional activity as very good or good
- 64% were new attendees / 95% would attend again (5% not sure)
- 63% were encouraged to attend similar events
- 63% agreed the event provided a worthwhile cultural experience
- 27% were taught something new about film

Diverse-led organisation involvement: Come the Revolution, Queer Film Network, Women Over Fifty Festival, The New Black Film Collective, Victoria Park, We Are Parable & Medicinema

Observations;

- The BAME led organisations felt there was a lack of diversity within the ICO Menu choices and challenges around early versions of potential themes.
- Diverse audiences are more challenging to attract outside of urban areas.
- Being a diverse led organisation appears to support the ability to reach out and attract diverse audiences.

“The programme exposed the challenge of engaging diverse audiences. More work and more support is needed if we are to make significant and sustained inroads into engaging diverse audiences.” **Diverse led member organisation**

* based on 2,602 audience survey responses

Providing a deeper cultural experience

Enhanced screenings: 202 / 47.5%

Type of enhancements include:

- comedy performances
- workshops
- musical accompaniment
- introductions and special guests
- Q&A's
- projection mapping

- Financial support enables members to provide enhanced activity that wouldn't otherwise happen
- 99% of new audiences rate enhanced activity good or very good
- New audiences claim enhanced activity provides a worthwhile cultural experience that will encourage future attendance
- Repeat audiences are primarily attracted to the venue and film title

Quality of cultural experience;
Venue 99%
Film/Event 96%
Additional activity 95%

Cultural achievements, ranked by audience survey responses	
Encouraged you to attend similar events	65%
Provided a worthwhile cultural experience	57%
Increased your appetite for independent British & international films	38%
Increased your awareness of film heritage	32%
Introduced you to new types of films	28%
Taught you something new about film	24%
Not sure	3%
None of these	3%

Achieving a higher profile of film as art form & a greater dialogue about films place in cultural life

Observations

- There was a general feeling that the Comedy genre was challenging to raise debate and dialogue about film and it's cultural place
- The reported lack of a tight creative brief left the genre too wide and therefore unfocused
- A more joined up approach with the programme could have had a bigger impact
- There was a sense that delivery partners found it challenging to programme traditional comedy as this is not standard in their programming choices
- The aim to raise the profile of film as art and encourage dialogue was reportedly challenged by the traditionally 'low-brow' genre.

Social Media

It hasn't been possible to measure social media impact as monitoring information was not received. However, there was reportedly great anecdotal response to the social media campaign. In order to effectively measure to this outcome in future seasons monitoring needs to be put in place and central reports shared.

National Press

Delivery partners often felt excluded from national press strategies, which is at odds with one view that there wasn't enough activity that would gather national press.

Measurements to track regional and national press are challenged by the lack of proactive centrally managed PR support, the scale and reach of activity within the season, late notification of potential PR/press opportunities, complex process of sign off from BFI regarding regional and local press releases.

Press coverage was collated by the BFI Press team and the tone of coverage largely focused on the closing of LFF and Jane Fonda at South Bank and London centric listings. Individual Delivery Partners managed their own local/regional press in most cases except some additional support from limited National Major Programmes budget to support Black Comedy Legends (We are Parable).

- **658** pieces of press coverage noted (including; Broadcast, National & Regional print, online, magazine, trade)
- Estimated reach; **107,337,168**
- **64** pieces of National print coverage / Reach **62,990,242**
- **81** pieces of Regional print coverage / Reach **1,547,153**
- **29** items in magazine, consumer, trade etc / Reach **2,392,149**
- **479** internet mentions / Reach **39,540,299**

Members valued the opportunity

Benefits

- Comedy Genius provided a well packaged opportunity with a defined creative remit
- Benefit of National Campaign and association with the BFI brand
- Raised the profile of activity and provided a sense of National celebration
- Members were inspired by the theme and branding
- Enabled creative risk taking
- Clear and simple process of application with clear points of access and support available
- Support suited smaller, less urban cinemas to deliver enhanced activity

Barriers to participation

- Time frame. Although the feedback received on previous blockbusters regarding timing of the Autumn season has reduced there were still comments from members regarding tight schedules and lack of time between award confirmation and delivery.
- For some FAN members there is a strong sense of loyalty to their Hub and the Hub Manager and a lack of clarity around the role of other cross-fan leads in national activity. This is evident in the reduction of engagement in Wales and Northern Ireland. There were discussions with Film Hub Managers around the options to develop regional bids for Major Programmes, led by the Film Hub, enabling the Hub Manager to get more involved in project development and selection and for members to feel supported by their Hub and the Manager they have an established relationship with.
- Opportunity overwhelm was cited as a possible cause for lack of engagement, there are many funding opportunities coming out of the Hubs, potentially causing members to disengage. Hub Managers tend to prioritise Hub led opportunities over cross-fan opportunities.
- Lack of experience in funding applications. This could be addressed via the Advice and Experience sessions, being paired with a more experienced organisation to work collaboratively.
- Time and resource poor. Some members are one-man bands and staff have limited time or energy to develop ideas and funding proposals. This could also be addressed by encouraging and enabling collaborative approaches with support from larger, more resourced organisations.

“An excellent opportunity to screen a unique event that brought fresh audiences and raised the quality of our overall film programme.”

FAN Member

“Being able to connect our service to the BFI and the wider Comedy Genius season brought a connection outside the [locations] and gave gravitas to the events.”

FAN Member

“Support and encouragement from the Film Hub for this project has been exemplary”

FAN Member

“The rise in FAN and BFI ambitions and expectations does not match the capacity of members”

Film Hub Manager

More adventurous & creative programming

137 Titles (12 ICO National Tour)

8 TV Series (15 episodes)

7 short films (4 short film compilations)

- Blockbuster seasons provide members with a moment to break from general programming and take greater risks with film selections within a fixed brief allowing them to reach broader audiences
- New participating members reported growth in confidence for developing and delivering enhanced activity as part of a funded national programme
- Comedy Genius highlighted the importance of TV for British comedy and gave programmers the opportunity to celebrate TV on the big screen to new audiences

34% British films

17% non-US international

49% US films

44% Specialised film*

Increased confidence **	
88%	claim increased confidence in applying for funding
85%	enabled programming a wider range of cultural film
81%	claim increased confidence in delivering events
76%	claim increased confidence in general programming
61%	claim increased confidence in attracting more diverse audiences
58%	claim increased confidence in archive programming
25%	worked with the BFI National Archive or another major film archive

* Based on [BFI Definition of Specialised Film](#)

** based on 60 (92%) members narrative report responses

Funding and leverage

Total FHM investment: £179,655 / 59.42% total FAN National activity spend

Overall SPH: £10.02

Overall total FAN National activity spend: £302,353.75 (includes BC, other funding, Inkind, other income)

Additional funding leveraged*

£69,298.75 generated from Box Office / 22% of overall programme spend

£7,934 other cash funding / 3% of overall programme spend

Total: £77,232.75 / 26% of overall programme spend

Average (mean) value of additional funding leveraged by projects: £1,170.19

£45,466 inkind support / 15% of overall programme spend

Average (mean) value of inkind support leveraged by projects: £699

Observations

- Additional funding and developing new inkind partnerships is not a requirement of the funding and therefore there is less focus on this from members.
- In year one of Major Programmes it has been impossible to focus on attracting and generating alternative revenue to support the programme. Specialist sponsorship and partnerships support has been factored in to future planning.
- Attracting additional cash support for Major Programmes is challenging due the legal set up of Film Hub Midlands. Being a project of Broadway rather than an independent organisation means any investment is bound by the needs/and priorities of the organisation.

* Source: Delivery partners financial reporting

FAN Members participation

- Highest number of events/activity seen in London, the North, Midlands and South West. Also, attracting the highest audience figures. This is fairly typical of other BFI Blockbuster activity, although not possible to compare 'like for like' due to the changes to the configurations of the Film Hubs. There could be a natural increase in participation from FH Midlands members due to the familiarity of processes and location of Project Manager.
- Lower level engagement in Northern Ireland (4 projects / 528 total audience) and Wales (2 projects / 120 total audience).
- There is a high level of satisfaction from members regarding the process and support received. This was evident in both narrative reports and qualitative investigation. Members speak very highly of their experience with Film Hub Midlands.
- 71% participate for the first time. 3% of members engaged participate in all Blockbusters (Includes; Broadway, HOME, MAC Birmingham, NBFC, QFT, Picturehouse)

- Total of 66 projects
- 60 unique members
- 51% new members
- 95% members were either very satisfied or satisfied with project management approach and processes
- Mixed engagement across the 8 hubs (see table on page 4)
- 148 venues / additional 18 venues through the ICO tour

	Comedy	Black Star	LOVE	Sci-Fi	Total
Number of Projects	66	41	62	13	182
Unique Members*	60	33	72	59	155
% of new members	51%	33%	52%	45%	

*Some members have multiple projects within a season

Participation	Returned 4x	Returned 3x	Returned 2x	First time
% Members returned	3%	7%	19%	71%