Art of Healing / Kalakar Qasbah – Project Report DRAFT
February 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

The *Art of Healing* was an AHRC-funded research project (August 2020 through October 2021).

Our central research question asked: what is the potential for arts activities and art-based therapies to support the mental health and wellbeing of children affected by conflict?

To investigate and answer this question, we partnered with the Dolphin International School in the town of Pulwama (Jammu and Kashmir, India). We worked with 30 students (ages 11 to 15) at the school under a specifically designed programme called *'Kalakar Qasbah'* (artists collective). Through a year of engagement, the students participated in drama, visual arts, puppetry, drawing and many other creative activities.

1a. Strategy and general timeline

The broad strategy we developed is as follows:

> Phase 1 (July and August 2020): project initiation and establishment of draft evaluation mechanisms. Through this phase we: i) established our baseline expectations regarding how we believed art therapies can benefit children at the Dolphin School; ii) agreed the evaluation strategy and iii) finalised travel, risk management, safeguarding and ethics.

> Phase 2 (August 2020 to March 2021): centred on delivering art activities to children in Kashmir and evaluating the impact. These were conducted online (due to covid-19 restrictions) as well as face-to-face (when restrictions were lifted).

> Phase 3 (April 2021 to October 2021): further activities, exhibitions and engagement work, analysis, refinement of outputs, dissemination, and impact.

While the original intent was to conduct this work in the classroom, due to covid-19 restrictions, we started by organising all activities online with delivery of arts activities via email and video links. As the Dolphin International School re-opened its physical sites these activities shifted to the classroom setting. To answer our research questions and objectives, we developed a programme theory and associated evaluation indicators to helping us understand the impact of these arts activities (these are discussed in detail below).

1b. the project team:

University of the West of England, Bristol
Dr Michael Buser, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Sustainable Planning and Environments
Dr Nicola Holt, Senior Lecturer in Psychology
Dr Emma Brannlund, Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Relations.
Professor Julie Mytton, Professor of Child Health

Middlesex University
Dr Loraine Leeson, Senior Lecturer

Bath Spa University
Ms Sara Penrhyn Jones, Senior Lecturer in Media

Dolphin International School
Lopa Shah, Principal
Farooq Fazli, founder of the school
Aizah Islam, teacher
Afeefa Farooq, project researcher

Arts leaders
Vikramjeet Sinha (ABT expert)
Anurupa Roy (Katkatha Puppet Arts Trust).
Mohammad Shameem (Katkatha Puppet Arts Trust)
Sohail Parray (documentation lead and project assistant)

The advisory team and NGO support:
Nicky Lambert, Associate Professor of Teaching and Learning for Mental Health and Social Work, Middlesex University
Neelam Raina, Associate Professor of Design and Development, Middlesex University
Meenakshi Gopinath, WISCOMP
Ashima Kaul, Yakjah

Project website: https://artofhealing.org.uk/

2. SET-UP ACTIVITIES
The project began on the 1st of August 2020. Much of our early work involved project set up and logistics.

2a. Meetings
The team held several (>25) meetings involving various members of the team (several meetings were held in late June, July and August in order to agree project details and set up). We held full team meetings with the advisory group (10 July 2020 and 9 October 2020) and a 'getting to know you' meeting (23 July 2020) where we introduced ourselves and areas of expertise. All of the original set-up work occurred online due to Covid-19 restrictions. Throughout the project, we used online meetings for the bulk of organisation and logistics.

A significant amount of activity has occurred between groups of partners and individual members of the project. For example, the documentation team (Dr Jones, Mr Parray, Dr Leeson and others) regularly discussed filming equipment, video and photography training, documentation strategies and thinking through outputs.

2b. Contracts and logistics
The Art of Healing was a collaboration among many academic and non-academic partners in the UK and India. Contracts and agreements were established between all partners. Each university signed an agreement to participate. In addition, contracts were agreed with Anurupa Roy (Katkatha Puppet Arts Trust) and Vikramjeet Sinha (Art Therapist) to lead on the

arts activities in Pulwama. Separate agreements were established to support Mr Parray (documentation) and the participants at the Dolphin International School (e.g., some research support from the principal and teachers). At the outset of the project, we moved some of our travel funding to 'materials' to help support activities at the school. In addition, we established a larger budget for 'website' (with funds moved from travel), leaving only a very small budget for travel.

We set up a Microsoft Teams web space for sharing of files. This proved to be a significant challenge due to the limited bandwidth available in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). MS Teams seems to require quite a lot of bandwidth. We have centred on sharing of files through the MS Teams 'Sharepoint' function which tends to be more like a 'dropbox' system. Nevertheless, the file sharing remains a challenge (larger files do not upload sometimes) and the online meeting function does not always work when we have partners participating from J&K.

2c. Ethics

The project received full ethical approval from the UWE, Bristol Faculty Research Ethics Committee on 31 July 2020. The application included a description of the project as well as key working documents such as: participant information and consent forms, privacy statements, data gathering protocols, forms and other project material. The ethics approval allowed the research to go ahead, recognising covid-19 restrictions. Foundational to our ethics approach was concern for the welfare of the young participants. For example, we only take photographs and videos of participants for research purposes only (and students/parents can opt-out of this). We were careful with promotional materials and websites and established a protocol for reviewing any materials that were expected to be released into the public domain.

2d. Initial programme theory

The initial programme theory is one of our early outputs designed to help guide evaluation and impact. This aspect of the project has been led by Professor Mytton who directed a series of meetings and activities to help develop the overall plan. The programme theory is a tool to help us document our theory of change and rationale for what we are about to do and how it will make a difference. This allows us to understand what we have done and engage with others in other settings. It began with a workshop exercise led by Professor Mytton where the team was asked to provide a series of 'if .. then … because' statements. Our initial programme theory was based on statements from the group that described why we think our arts intervention would work. Doing this helped us decide which evaluation measures to collect. As we moved forward with the arts activities, we took time to study impact through project outputs and evaluated those against our programme theory. At the end of the project, we revisited the Programme Theory and updated our theories of 'change'.

2e. Indicators and measurements of wellbeing

Our project set out to investigate the impacts of the arts activities and ABT work being conducted at the Dolphin International School. The evaluation took a mixed-methods approach, drawing upon indirect behavioural measures (quantitative) and arts-based research methods (quantitative and qualitative) to evaluate the impact of arts activities on children's wellbeing. These consisted of measurements of wellbeing taken at key points

across the timeline of the intervention (e.g., pre and post) in addition to observations of the process of art making (children's observable behaviour and indicators in their artwork itself). In addition, video and photography was used to document the process.

Without asking the children to complete measures themselves, changes in their behaviour and indicators of wellbeing in their artwork were examined through the perspectives of their teachers, the artist facilitators, the children, and the wider context (through film making). We decided not to ask children to complete surveys or checklists, but rather to simply enjoy the arts programme. Further, we did not ask about specific traumatic experiences. Again, we let the arts activities be the central focus of our interactions with the children.

The full span of measures is described below. We have included full versions of these in the appendix.

Pre to post measures of wellbeing:
- **Child behaviour Checklist.** This checklist (Achenbach, 1991) was completed by teachers at the beginning and then the end of the project (Point 1: December 2020 and Point 2: May 2021). We used the Teacher Report Form version. It measures the following sub-scales, based on teachers' ratings of their pupils' behaviour:
  - Academic Competence (e.g. How hard is he/she working)
  - Adaptive Functioning:
    - Inattention (e.g. Fidgets)
    - Hyperactivity-Impulsivity (e.g. Disturbs others)
    - Social Problems (e.g. Too dependent)
    - Thought Problems (e.g. Hears things)
    - Anxious/depressed (e.g. Hurt when criticized)

- **Art Therapy Checklist (ATC)** and **Narrative Capability Checklist** (completed by artists at two time points (Point 1: December 2020; Point 2: May 2021). This scale has been used by artist facilitators to note their general opinion of the behaviour of children during the art sessions, according to the following sub-scales:
  - Body (e.g., Is physically alert and agile)
  - Sensory (e.g., Moves freely without inhibition)
  - Mindfulness (e.g., Able to focus on a process until a goal is achieved)
  - Cognitive (e.g., Can tell the 'moral/real meaning' of a story after listening to the story)
  - Expression (e.g., Can express him/herself through artistic media)
  - Communication (e.g., Can disclose emotions through creative writing within a given context)
  - Group interaction (e.g., Contributes in team tasks so that group goals can be achieved)

- **Human Figure Test (HFT)** Was completed by children participants at the start and then again at the finish of the project. The HFT (Koppitz, 1968) has been used in numerous ways, typically to assess the cognitive development of children under the age of twelve (Goodenough & Harris, 1963), but also to look for indicators of affective

disorder (e.g. Koppitz, 1968; Packman et al., 2003). It was used in the latter context by Save the Children (2016). The Koppitz (1968) rates drawings on 30 emotional indicators, the presence of two or more of which is thought to be indicative of emotional disturbance:

- o Quality signs (drawing quality, e.g. poor integration of parts of the figure)
- o Special features (e.g., under or over-sized head)
- o Omissions (e.g., absence of nose, eyes, legs, etc.)

- **Six-part story method (6PSM)** (Lahad, 2012). This tool uses story-telling to examine the language used in the stories and assess narratives about:
  - o Ways of coping
  - o Central theme of the story (or problem)
  - o How the story relates to the here and now
  - o Conflicts (e.g. avoidance or fear of success)
  - o Developmental stage
  - o Quest of the hero (symbols of actualisation)

Observational measures (process):

- **Observational checklist** to observe key indicators of change in the children's behaviour while making art (based on recordings of the art sessions). The majority of this work focuses on the activities that took place online. Recordings of videos were analysed by the research team, looking at levels of anxiety, mood, engagement, and interaction.

- **Thematic analysis** of symbols indicative of change in children's artwork. Our key effort here centres on a visual thematic analysis of the artwork produced from the participants' performances and exhibition work on the theme of the hero's journey, which is a powerful metaphor in relation to the children's own potential transformation.

- **Session record sheet**. This records the aims and focus of individual session and general outcomes and observations of the artist facilitator. The Session Record Sheet is for the artist facilitator to note the aims of each session and events of notes and outcomes of the session in general.

- **Team reflections** on the process. Dr Brannlund led on our reflective work. Many of the group kept reflective notes on thoughts and experiences of the evaluation and intervention processes. This included some reflection on challenges as well as what worked well and what was less effective. We also conducted a series of internal interviews as the project progresses. Finally, the team has presented the work in various seminar and workshop settings. These presentations and discussions have been recorded and provide further reflective analysis.

Filming and photography:

- Throughout the project we documented the process, context of the intervention, activities, and outcomes beginning with children receiving their art boxes at home.

We have collected a rich collection of visual material that narrates the project and the experiences of the participants.

- Children uploaded images of their art and other activities to the school-run *Kalakar Kasbah* website which serves as a local resource for art dialogue. In addition, participants maintained a project scrapbook as a visual diary.
- Mr Parray participated in film and documentation training, led by Co-Is Sara Jones.

2f. Website

Our web programming delivered two key objectives. First, we built an outward-facing site intended primarily for academic and NGO audiences – www.artofhealing.org.uk. This includes details about the project, funding, timeline, team members, outputs, images and documentation, and other general information. This is a simple, clear and visually attractive site intended to reach wide audiences. The second objective was to create an 'internal' site, primarily for use by the school. The site is found here: www.kalakarqasbah.com and allows students, teachers and artists to create small blogs, magazines, and other student-led resources. This site is managed by the school who have taken on ownership of the resource (the site will continue to be updated and run by the Dolphin International School).

3. KALAKAR QASBAH THEMATIC JOURNEY

3.a The student participants

We worked with 30 children from years 6, 7, and 9 (ages 11 to 15). Kalakar Qasbah was built on an existing well-being in action programme. The well-being programme is an elective option for students and run by the Dolphin International School, intended to support their mental and emotional health through the arts and sports. Students who signed up to the well-being programme were invited to join Kalakar Qasbah. Subsequently, Kalakar Qasbah was opened up to all others who wished to join. The school also reached out to some students who were considered at-risk, based on observed behaviour over the last two years. Overall, involvement in Kalakar Qasbah was a mix of volunteering and strategic induction. Part of the final decision for inclusion was based on the school's assessment of need and opportunity through the arts. The students were organised into six total groups with five students in each group (total of six groups). The groups meet with both facilitators each week for two sessions each week (one with Anurupa and Shmeem from Katkatha and another with Vikram).

3.b Themes:

The arts activities were initially developed over a series of themes related to eight colours; four elements and four seasons. The emphasis of this work was on transformation and journeys – The first metaphor was the butterfly and its journey. Activities supported the exploration of inner journeys and emotions, places and spaces in the inner world and perspectives of outer reality and identity.

4. PROJECT FIELDWORK

The following sections detail the major activities undertaken as part of Kalakar Qasbah. Key activities began with the delivery of an art box filled with materials to be used by the participants over the year.

4a. Art Box design and delivery:

Sohail Parray (based in Srinagar) gathered and organised the materials and boxes we are providing to student participants. The boxes are a type of gift and mystery, filled with resources for creative activities and fun. Here is a list of what is included:

- Poster colour = 1 box
- Ivory coloured sheets = 6, each in different colour.
- Pastel colours = 1 box
- Sketch pen = 1 packet
- Kabab sticks = 10 in each box
- Scissors = 1 pack (2 in each pack)
- Brown tape = 1 in each box
- Masking tape = 1 in each box
- Stapler = 1 piece
- Stapler pins = 1 box
- Scale = 1 in each box
- Pencil = 1 in each box
- Brushes = no 5, no 6 and no 7 in each box
- Eraser = 1 in each
- Sharpener = 1 in each
- Coloured chalks = 5 in different colours
- A4 Coloured sheets = 10, 2 of each colour
- A4 plain sheets = 20 in each box
- Cellophane papers = 3 different coloured in each box
- Butterfly = 1 in each
- Glitter foam stickers = 1 in each
- Scrap book = 1 in each
- Fevicol = 1 in each
- Fevibond tube = 1 in each box
- White fabric = half meters in each box
- Plastic cup = 1 in each box
- A3 plain sheets = 10 in each
- Needle and thread = 1 in each box

4b. Parents' Orientation

An orientation meeting to help introduce the project to parents was held on 6 September 2020. These were conducted online through the school's facilities. The arts team leaders – Vikram Sinha and Anurupa Roy – introduced the overall vision and philosophy of the project and discussed how the arts and art therapy might contribute to student wellbeing (e.g., to overcome mental stress, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, etc). The team presented

the main programme processes and expected activities. Parents were given an insight into the tools and techniques to be used, time frame, expected and hoped for outcomes, the role of 'academic research', and the wider research team. This was followed by a question-and-answer session and a review of ethical considerations.

4.c Children's Orientation

Two orientation and ice-breaker sessions were organised for the student participants and held on 11 September 2020. These online sessions were the first time the artists 'officially' met the students. The orientation included an introductory session, where an overview of the program was given to the students. Artists introduced some of the arts approaches that would be used such as painting and puppetry.

"The session was absolutely astonishing. We got to know about the journey of Kalakar Kasbah. We are excited for the activities that we are going to do through this journey." (student participant)

"The session was full of inspiration and fun. We got to know about the main aim of our project which is healing through the magic of art." (student participant)
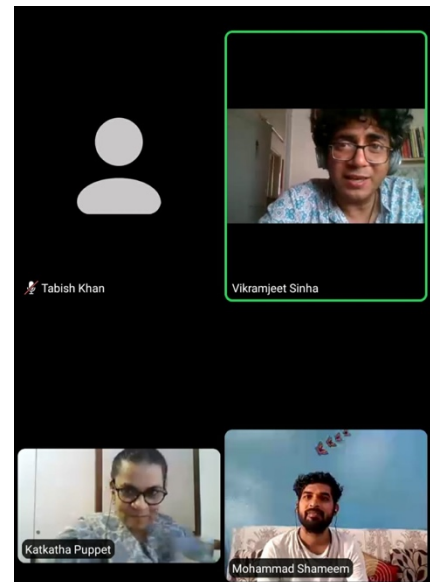
4.d Stage 1 sessions (all online) – September 2020 through October 2020

During the first part of the project, the arts team delivered group sessions to the students through online meeting sessions. These ran about an hour and involved a range of activities intended to get to know the children and begin exploring specific therapeutic domains. The artists recorded the activities which have been uploaded to the MS Teams site. We also have a record of activities, participation and outcomes through 'Session Record Sheets' (SRS).

Students participated in two sessions per week over the first several weeks. This included one session with Anurupa and Shameem (Katkatha) and one session with Vikram. Activities were designed to build connections with the participants and start to explore the idea of transformation. The butterfly (and the butterfly's journey) was a key organising metaphor for arts activities.   Over these weeks, participants created videos, paintings, sculptures, poems which were developed through during online sessions as well as offline. A few of the key outputs from this work included: Butterfly in flight travelling through the homes of the children (videos); land Land of the butterfly sculpture (where is the egg kept? Photos of sculptures and story of the butterfly (written in the scrapbook); the caterpillar puppet. Where does the caterpillar go and what are its challenges? (written in the scrapbook); and the cocoon box (inner world and outer world). The inside of the box has the dreams of the worm, its favourite food and what gives it strength (written in the scrapbook). It also has 5 scrolls with the secrets of the worm. Outer world- is painted on the box

4.e stage 2 sessions: November 2020

During this stage, Vikram conducted face to face activities in Pulwama over 3 weeks in November and December. Meanwhile, Anurupa and Shameem developed DIY tutorial videos showing how to make shadow puppet scenery and characters. Vikram's work at the school took the colours and thematic approach of the online sessions to the land of purple and 'rainbow'. Activities also focused on the body and movement. New groups were created through which the participants would bring together their stories and work towards shadow puppet performances. The groups were named by the participants themselves – Power Rangers; Change Makers; Mind Masters; Euphoria; and Delta Force. Anurupa and Shameem spent this time developing new videos to demonstrate some of the techniques used to work with shadow puppets. These are easy to follow instructional videos (now on YouTube and available through our [website](#)) that look at making shadow puppet stages, characters, backdrops and props

4.f stage 3 sessions: December through February 2021

This period time included a mix of online and face-to-face work with the participants. Anurupa worked online with the new groups while Vikram continued the face-to-face work in Pulwama. Vikram's work with the participants explored the 'movement of the butterfly' and dramatisations of the landscapes they had created. The creation of stories was based on Mooli Lahad's Basic PH model and six-piece storytelling method where students explored the 'hero's journey'. Individual stories were made into single narratives – the result was four stories, each with a distinct theme. During this time, participants performed the story to each other verbally (each group tells the story to each other). Later, they began building their shadow boxes, their characters and start rehearsing.

Group stories were developed by each group. The groups went on to develop specific performance ideas.
- Delta Force- Paper Theatre Performance (the Prince of Egypt)
- Euphoria- Performance (Sibling Rivalry)
- Mind Masters Peep Show Boxes for each scene (the Lonely Man)
- Change Makers-Wall Mural (the Princess).

Subsequently, the groups began planning and building the projects. Delta Force and Euphoria built their backdrops and settings and paper cut out characters. Change Makers started to design their wall mural individually. Mind Masters built cardboard peep boxes. Then they performed shadow puppetry show in front of the school and parents.

4.g stage 4 sessions:

During this stage, the arts team worked in person in Pulwama at the Dolphin International School. Activities took place over 12 days in March 2021. Anurupa and Vikram led on advancing the performances while Vikram continued working with participants on the 'land of colours', reflection, and advancing their stories.

The students worked on their sets and puppets and carefully wrote and re-wrote their performance scripts. One of the groups (Change Makers) worked with Shameem on a mural

that took up an entire room – telling the story of 'the Princess'. Mind Masters built a peep show 6 boxes set into a background mural to link the story and create a landscape.

Vikram spent time with the students exploring their stories and outlining the key themes. The 'Lonely Man' explored masculinity, 'The Princess' examined patriarchy, 'Sibling Rivalry' discussed familial relations and a family feud, and 'the Prince of Egypt' told the story of betrayal which could be seen as a metaphor for on-going political betrayals in the state. The process of exploring and unpacking these themes was a reflective process intended to connect the narratives to real life issues and daily life. It also helped identify how the arts can represent the surrounding social structures and what it means when the arts help in mirroring this daily reality.   The activities culminated in a performance for classmates at the school.

4.h stage 5 sessions: April 2021 (10 days)

Face to face sessions in Pulwama at the Dolphin International School. Took place over 10 days in April 2021. During this time, the arts team supported the students in rehearsals and finalising their performances. This included activities such as landscape painting, mounting objects on the wall, decorations, mural painting, and other prop development. Each group planned how to present the stories, what to tell the audience, and how deliver the message. For example, Delta Force chose to perform the play with more rehearsals while Euphoria decided to present the film and then invite the audience to see the miniature sets. Mind Masters decided to call the group into the room through an enactment and then each one narrated a part of the story while lighting the box. Change Makers decided to tell the story as narrators pointing at different drawings. All of the work finished with a performance for the school community and parents.

The Final Presentations
- Delta Force- Paper Theatre Performance (the Prince of Egypt)
  The Prince of Egypt is a story of betrayal. It centres on a happy family, the emperor, his wife and a young prince. The villain is Ballu, the Emperor's brother who desires the throne. The father is poisoned and tells the son to claim power by finding a locket hidden in a pyramid. Uncle Ballu promises to help but betrays the prince and puts him in Jail. The prince escapes with help from his mother and Halbali (a dragon) and goes on to destroy Ballu. He finds the locket and takes his place on the throne. Harmony returns and the family is happy.

- Euphoria- Performance (Sibling Rivalry) 'the Two Sisters'
  This story narrates a family relationship. The performance starts with a warning: while the family starts happy, their life will take a horrible turn, explaining, 'in this world, joy and sadness go hand in hand'. As it turns out, the wife is pregnant but dies giving birth to twins Ufak and Shafak. Over the years, the daughters compete and grow angry with each other. One is blamed for the death of the mother, and they continually argue. The father visits a ghost to try and find happiness between the sisters. The ghost tells him he must sacrifice himself for their happiness. He accepts and is transformed into a tree. The sisters realise the father is gone and while quarrelling, set off to find him. In the jungle, they find the ghost who says the father has sacrificed himself for their

happiness. They are told to go to his grave and recite a mantra which brings him back, reuniting the family.

- Mind Masters Peep Show Boxes for each scene (the Lonely Man)
  The hero of this story is a lonely boy, in constant sorrow, who longs for a companionship. He sets out on a journey to find a friend but comes across danger – a witch who means to do him harm – and a scary world. He decides to try and befriend the moon which laughs at him but encourages him to work hard, face his challenges and friends will follow. Later he rests under a tree which asks him why he is sad. The boy responds that he is lonely, unliked, and unworthy – a 'burden on the world'. The tree replies that he is loved, particularly by his family and encourages the boy to return home. The story leaves the audience with a question – does the boy return home, or continue his adventure in search of new friends?

- Change Makers-Wall Mural (the Princess).
  The presentation takes the audience around a mural which tells the story of a princess. We are told the story is about women empowerment and gender equality, facing hardship and standing against sexism. The story is set in a mythical kingdom where the king will hand power over to his greedy nephew, rather than his daughter. The daughter, he suspects, is not capable of handling such a responsibility. She is disheartened and expresses her desire and ability. In response, she is told to stay home and make food. She travels to the forest and meets a wizard who agrees to help her. Yet, the wizard betrays her and makes all the girls in the kingdom disappear. The girl's mother comes to her in a dream and says don't despair, defeat the wizard by splitting his heart in two. Seeing the nephews greed, the king begins to lament his decision as the princess sets off on her journey.

The Butterfly Finale
The project was officially closed through a presentation of the 'butterfly'. During the last two sessions, a Giant Butterfly was constructed. Participants painted it together whenever they had time off from their projects or wanted a change. At the end, the groups got together in a circle and closed the project with words from everyone and then breathing life into the butterfly. The butterfly was then mounted in the central lobby of the school.

The team held some closure interviews with participants to reflect on Kalakar Kasbah and what the ending of the project meant to them. What did the butterfly transform within themselves and with this change where would they travel?

5. Exhibition

As a part of the outreach of the Art of Healing Project, we conducted a school exchange program between Dolphin International School, Pulwama and Shiv Nadar School in New Delhi. The original plan was to set up an exhibition of the arts projects by the Kalakar Qasbah group at the Shiv Nadar school premises. However, the COVID-19 situation in India and the consequent lockdown in Delhi has changed the circumstances. As a result, the exhibition was conducted digitally. This included three components:

- The first was digital recordings of the four performances shared on the Kalakar Qasbah site.
- The second were digital scans of the paintings along with a voice over of the land of colours principals and some photos of the sculptures along with the stories written by the group.
- The third was videos created of the school and the surrounding by the children and teachers of Dolphin International School.

Our team collaborated with students from Shiv Nadar School (children from grades 8-10). Twenty participants viewed and discussed the exhibition, participated in the workshops and interacted with Kalakar Qasbah participants from the Dolphin International School in Pulwama.

The exhibition and sharing activities were conducted in August-September 2021. The students from Shiv Nadar School worked closely with student colleagues from Pulwama across several arts-based workshops including:

1. The Virtual Exhibition. (August 6th 2021). This event was streamed for Shiv Nadar School. Attended by 20 children from Kalaqar Qasbah and 20 children from Shiv Nadar School. This included the digital recordings of the four performances namely The Lonely Boy, The Two Sisters, The Prince of Egypt and the Land of Choice.

   In addition, the paintings made by the children in Kalakar Qasbah were scanned and edited as a slideshow with a voiceover of the land of colours principals and poems written by the group. All of these videos were created by the children in the month of July and August and edited by an external editor. Henry Iles designed the exhibition page as an addition to the website. The children of Dolphin School presented the videos of their work along with their experiences of being a part of the Kalakar Qasbah to the Shiv Nadar School group. This presentation was held on Zoom and live streamed to the rest of the school.

2. The Orientation. (August 7th and 8th 2021). Online event attended by 20 children from Shiv Nadar School and 20 children from Dolphin International School in Pulwama (10.00 am to 1.00 p.m. on both days). We began with the two schools sharing photos and videos of their school and cities. They then introduced themselves and the program was introduced to them. We then divided into five workshops groups, each group was headed by one of the children. Three children from Dolphin School conducted workshops and two from Shiv Nadar School. The three children from Dolphin School were Ridakshi, Udaisa and Nadia. Ridakshi's workshop was painting

stones and telling stories through paint. Nadia taught the group how to make puppets and Udaisa worked with paper cuttings and storytelling.

On the 8th, we had two workshops in two break out groups. Shameem taught the children how to build table top puppet and I worked with paper theater. We did a short sharing at the end. We also introduced them to the two artists they could opt to work with. The first one was Samina Mishra, children's book author, film maker and creative educator and the second was Vidyun Sabawney, comic book artist and illustrator. One World First Meeting 7 August 2021

3. Artist Workshops: a total of three sessions of creative writing with Samina and seven sessions with Vidyun. Each session had nine children from each school. Vidyun's lesson plan is also added below. The workshops are nearly done. A body of work in the form of paintings, artwork, collages, poetry and prose writing has been created during the process. The artists have focused on a few "buddy" activities where children from the two schools have been paired together.

4. Finale: (5th September 2021). This event included two sessions of workshops, one of dancing and one of music. Workshops were led by two sets of teachers from Shiv Nadar School with the two school groups. Participants shared their dance and music with the others and we closed the session with a group sharing of their artwork and a conversation about the process.

6. Analysis and Findings Discussions

As noted above, we conducted a series of tests and evaluation measures to understand the impact of the arts activities and art therapy. Over the course of the art intervention, we found the following impacts related to child wellbeing as well as programme design and delivery.

6.a findings related to child wellbeing

The children generally **exhibited significantly fewer signs of affective disturbance** in their human figure drawings. The Human Figure Test asks children to draw a person. The drawing is later analysed by the researcher who looks for indices of emotional disturbance. We conducted this test twice during the project (October 2021; June 2021) and found significant improvements (i.e., fewer signs of disturbance).

Had behaviour rated by school staff as being **less aggressive and rule breaking**. We conducted the 'Child Behaviour Test twice during the project (October 2020; June 2021). Surveys were completed by school staff (unfortunately, different staff members completed the surveys at time 1 and 2). The data showed a decrease in 'rule breaking behaviour' and 'aggressive behaviour' categories amongst the children. Unfortunately, we also found increases in area of 'anxious/depression' and 'withdrawn'. We suspect that the increase in anxiety and depression might indicate a process of understanding and expressing emotions and coming to terms with traumatic experiences. It is possible that as the project went on, it facilitated a sense of safety and belonging and a space children could feel confident to express their feelings and emotions without fear of being singled out or embarrassed.

The artists conducted the Art Therapy Checklist twice during the project (October 2020; June 2021) and described the children as being better able to **focus mindfully** on art activities, and to use the arts to **communicate and express emotions**. The Art Therapy checklist allows the facilitator to categorise and not their opinion of participants' behaviour during sessions and includes topics such as body, sensory, mindfulness, expression, and group interaction. Our findings showed statistically significant improvements in the areas of sensory, mindfulness, cognitive, expression and communication.

Measurement tools are important to demonstrate the value of the arts for therapeutic benefits. **However, it is important to understand the limits of evaluation.** In the Art of Healing, we tested several tools for tracking transformation and wellbeing. We found that to be effective, most of these needed a dedicated monitoring and evaluation leader (not the artists). However, because of the precarious nature of the working environment (staff changes, closed schools, lockdowns, pandemic, etc), it was difficult to be consistent across the entire year. Further, participation in the project shifted over time and both before/after points of some tests were not completed by all children.

Some of our data suggests that as children work through traumatic experiences, they may become more aware or more able to communicate their emotions. This might look like a deterioration or worsening of conditions. Yet, it is also evidence that the arts interventions can provide an outlet for expression. This suggests that there is likely a need to include ongoing care to help children process anxiety and depression which they are beginning to articulate through artistic practices and activities.

Finally, while our research (along with a substantial pre-existing literature) shows that involvement in the arts provides therapeutic benefit. We also know that this kind of transformation is not always linear and the impacts of involvement may take many years to come to the surface. As such, delivery organisations should take care when conducting evaluation and measuring change so as not to focus exclusively on short-term impacts.

6.b findings related to programme design and delivery

Support organisations such as schools and other protective environments must make personal wellbeing and mental health a priority. The Art of Healing was embedded into an existing framework at the Dolphin International School – the 'wellbeing in action' programme. Involvement in the arts activities occurred during school hours, as part of the normal school day. Overall, it was presented as an important part of children's regular participation at school and not simply an 'extra-curricular activity'.

Art activities can be more than leisure and recreation. Rather, they can provide creative outlets and lead to therapeutic effects (as noted above). Further, art activities and art therapy can help support organisations better understand their children's needs, hopes, dreams and concerns. The process of making art can serve as a safe space for children to express themselves and explore their emotional wellbeing.

Art activities for wellbeing benefit from student 'ownership' and their partnership with teachers and staff. The Art of Healing enabled a series of student-led activities and decision-making that supported agency and collaboration. For example, students created their own

stories and decided on the appropriate artistic methods and approaches to express their narratives. AoH students also worked as ambassadors during virtual exchange events with students from the Shivanadar School in Delhi, where they discussed their art and some of the impacts of their involvement.

A variety of spaces are needed to facilitate involvement and ownership. In the Art of Healing, students had access to a variety of physical spaces such as the 'makers lab' and other parts of the school that were used for performances and displays. In addition, a dedicated online project journal was established (https://kalakarqasbah.com/) that provides a space for students to display activities and outputs and communicate with audiences outside of the school and Kashmir.

Teacher and staff involvement is critical. In the Art of Healing, teachers became key partners with children via the arts. They encouraged participation, supported delivery of activities, and contributed to impact monitoring. Teachers who were closely involved understood the project objectives and the role of the arts in wellbeing. Teacher and staff involvement helped convince children and parents that involvement in the Art of Healing was not superfluous to more conventional educational activities. Further, we believe that with support and training, teachers can lead in the delivery of art therapy.

Ethical concerns should be identified and discussed. Working with children in conflict areas means ensuring their safety and wellbeing and taking special care that the research process does no harm. Critically, this means ensuring that the art activities to not put participants in danger of reprisals (e.g., for politically sensitive statements or imagery) and that the proper safeguards and support facilities are in place in the case of emotional trauma from reflection activities.

Furthermore, the Art of Healing was a collaborative, international programme. This means there was no single set of ethical standards or processes. Rather, these needed to be negotiated. The end result was a bespoke approach to ethics that respected the local culture and school's existing ways of working while adhering to university and academic ethical standards. Primarily, this meant taking care to inform all children and parents about the nature of the project and how the research was being used. Importantly, many of the ethical protocols typical of UK funded research are not universally accepted. Flexibility is required while ensuring the fundamental principles around child welfare and rights. Of course, this is a conversation that must be had between researchers, research partners and university ethics committees. Further, in the Art of Healing, we spent significant time discussing the safety and welfare of children, outlining issues and designing the project to ensure their wellbeing.

7. Important Links

Academic facing project website: https://artofhealing.org.uk/

Dolphin International School Site – Kalakar Qasbah: https://kalakarqasbah.com/