David Hevey
Filmmaker, photographer, media professional, Shape CEO

David Hevey is the current CEO of Shape Arts and Project Director of the NDACA. Shape Arts a disability-led arts organisation working to provide opportunities and support for disabled artists, as well as disabled individuals wanting to work in the arts and cultural sector. Shape Arts also works with cultural organisations to encourage greater inclusiveness and better confidence in working with disabled people.

Prior to Shape Arts and NDACA, Hevey worked as a photographer and filmmaker for several decades. Whilst working in the BBC Disability Programs Unit, Hevey produced the ground-breaking BBC disabled history series ‘Disabled Century’, which premiered in 1997.

A selection of Hevey’s photography campaigns can be seen in the 2006 publication ‘Photography: A Cultural History’. These campaigns were often around perception of disability. One example is ‘Creatures That Time Forgot: Photography and the Construction of Disability Imagery’ – a late 1970s exhibition commissioned by ‘Camerawork’ accompanied by a poster campaign, and later, a book of the same title.

Disability Arts Movement highlights

‘Creatures That Time Forgot: Photography and the Construction of Disability Imagery’, Published 1992

Disabled Century, BBC, 1997

Modern Times, BBC, 1999 – 2000

Further reading

There is an interview available with David Hevey entitled ‘The Darkening Skies’ on the Disability Arts Online website: www.disablityarts.online

You can view a selection of David Hevey’s films on his website: www.davidhevey.com
Allan Sutherland has performed stand-up, poetry and written extensively on the subject of disability and disability arts for the past 30 years. He has used stand-up and performance poetry to address his own experiences of living with epilepsy, which led to him once being described as 'the first political stand-up on the disability arts circuit'.

Before NDACA, Allan was very much the Archivist of the Disability Arts Movement; he first published his 'Chronology of Disability Arts' in 2003. With his 1998 discussion paper 'Footprints in the Sand', he was the first person to argue the importance of preserving disability arts for the future.

Through 'Electric Bodies', part of the D4D Project, Allan is currently creating a series of cycles of poems based on interviews with leading disability artists, including Mat Fraser and Tony Heaton OBE. These poems are created through 'found poetry' - the words of the subject of the poem, as well as things like their hospital notes, are combined to form the stanzas of the poem.

Disability Arts Movement highlights

In 1992 Allan created and co-wrote 'Inmates', the first ever sitcom pilot using a disabled cast. It was later adapted into a radio play in 1997, which was broadcast on Radio Four and won a Raspberry Ripple Award.

Allan is the author of many publications, including the award-winning 'Disabled We Stand', 1981. A classic text of the disability movement, the book discusses disabled people's experiences in terms of a personal politics of disability.

He was the regular MC of The Workhouse, the first disability cabaret club, and was heavily involved with the London Disability Arts Forum (LDAF) from 1986 to 2008.

Further reading

A series of blogs written by Allan Sutherland, as well as his Disability Arts Movement Chronology, can be found online at the Disability Arts Online archived website.

Allan has developed the process of transcription poetry as a way of recording the voices of disabled people, with a particular interest in disabled artists. This work includes 'Paddy: A life' from the words of disabled arts activist Paddy Masefield, 'The Explorer', a cycle of poems reflecting the creative journey of visual artist Nancy Willis, and 'Neglected Voices', four cycles of transcription poems based on interviews with disabled people. These poems can also be found via the Disability Arts Online archived website.

Disability Arts Online archived website: www.disabilityartsonline.org.uk