



Getting more mileage from your artistic ideas

(without travelling an inch)

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If you own a creative work (for example, a script, devised performance or participation model) you might be able to achieve more with the idea by reimagining it in a different form; for example, as a podcast, online event or by licensing the work to someone else to produce.

This resource is not intended to be a definitive 'how to' guide. Rather we hope it will spark new ideas and confidence by offering some things to consider, case studies and further reading.

why reimagine an artistic idea?

There are many reasons why artists and producers might want to reimagine an existing artistic idea into a new form. Here are some common reasons, but remember to firstly consider your personal or company objectives and ambitions:

Income generation

Creating a new 'product' means you could distribute it in new ways and earn income from new sources. While podcasts, films or books have set-up costs, they can be reproduced and distributed at relatively low-cost.

When licensing, the creator usually receives a fee from the local producer to use their work for a limited period. If the original creatives are needed as part of the new creative team (e.g. to direct, choreograph or light the production) then the local producer would pay additional fees for that work. All production costs (e.g. paying actors, building set, etc.) would be covered by the local producer.

Environmental impact

There is an ongoing ambition within the arts industry to reduce and take more responsibility for environmental impact. Reimagining work in forms that do not require physical travel could make a positive contribution to this.

Audience development

Some forms of work have the potential to reach wider audiences in the UK and internationally, as well as raise the profile of the company.

Travel restrictions

For example, the quarantines, entry bans, and other travel restrictions imposed by governments during the global COVID-19 pandemic.

who is your target audience?

Thinking about who you want to reach is a big part of deciding the form for your idea. You could start by asking yourself these questions:

- Is the work intended for your existing audience or a different audience?
- What forms would best suit their needs and resources?
- Are there any barriers to them accessing the work? (e.g. cost, technology, resources)
- Are you partnering with the best people to reach your target audience?

Remember, you might not be the only creative with ownership of the work, so it is important to be clear about copyright before you start. This can be a tricky area so make sure you do your research or seek professional advice. We have included some links for further reading at the end of this document.

case studies

The following examples illustrate how artists and companies have reimaged or adapted their work in different ways.

Translating to other media

- Francesca Millican Slater's [*Stories to Tell at Home*](#), started life as an Edinburgh show in 2017 and then became a podcast, a series of BSL videos and a book.
- In 2020, SK Shlomo adapted their [*Beatbox Adventures for Kids*](#) into an online event called [*Homeskool Beatbox Adventures with Schlomo*](#). Each episode mixed entertainment and education, including vocal techniques, interactive polls, challenges and performances from Shlomo and special guests.
- In 2011, Canadian playwright and director Robert Lepage worked with an artist to reimagine his show [*Blue Dragon*](#) as a graphic novel.
- In 2020, Javaad Alipoor adapted his award-winning play [*The Believers Are But Brothers*](#) for BBC 4, commissioned by The Space.

Licensing

- Chris Thorpe and Hannah Jane Walker licensed their 2011 Edinburgh hit [*The Oh Fuck Moment*](#) to Bios Festival in Greece to be produced with a local cast and director.
- Devised hip-hop theatre production [*Fhip Flhop*](#), co-created and performed by Joey D & DJ Baila, was a personal show as the production drew upon the individual skills of both performers. The piece was franchised to a German theatre production company and the creators re-produced the show with two German hip-hop performers. The show then toured extensively throughout Germany. Joey and DJ Baila received fees for casting and directing, plus an ongoing royalty for the tour.
- German-based theatre company Rimini Protokoll's show [*100% City - A Statistical Chain Reaction*](#) is participation-based performance that has been transformed into a model that can be replicated in any city. The show is created using a set method, from the way the participants are recruited, to the way the show is staged, and even how the printed programme is designed. This made it simple to license to local producers while maintaining artistic consistency across all performances. Rimini offered two options.
- Iranian playwright Nassim Soleimanpour's original play [*White Rabbit Red Rabbit*](#) was written to travel the world when he couldn't. Since its joint premiere in 2011 in Edinburgh it has been translated into more than 25 different languages and been performed over 2000 times by some of the biggest names in theatre and film. He has since produced work with a similar format, for example [*October 2020*](#).
- Lorna Rees' work [*CLOUDSCAPES*](#), initially written and performed as a live outdoor piece has evolved do to be presented digitally with festivals and licensed for stage.

Live stage performances remade for digital distribution

- Following their hit show, *Anansi the Spider*, in 2021 Unicorn Theatre adapted the classic West African and Caribbean tales into an online experience, [*Anansi the Spider: Re-spun*](#).
- Adapted from previous year's performance of *The Tempest*, in 2020, site-specific and digital theatre specialists, Creation Theatre, re-worked the piece as a live, interactive, digital stage version, [*The Tempest LIVE*](#).
- [*In Praise of Forgetting: Part 2*](#) is the standalone sequel to a stage piece by Oliver Zahn that premiered in December 2019. Continuing the line of inquiry started then, it shifts the action from a space of physical co-presence to the digital sphere, and in this way raising new questions for the work about memory and forgetting.

Participatory online works involving the audience

- [*Palm Reading*](#) by Daniel Bye is a live online performance encounter where two audience members meet for the first time in the virtual space to perform a script that they download in advance.
- [*Fly High Stories*](#)

Other examples

- [*Stories from Home*](#) by The Spark Arts for Children are a series of short stories performed by actors in their homes and presented as films with additional storytelling tools such as animations, puppetry, and props
- [*Everyday Moments*](#) audio drama podcast series from Fuel, 12 artists and The Guardian in 2011, designed to be listened to in a specific place, at a specific time of day.
- Andy Fields and Beckie Darlington worked with young people from different countries to produce works such as [*News News News*](#), which involves both a live studio audience and online broadcast including, and an interactive audio piece, [*Rain Walk*](#).
- [*كأعم ان / I'm Here With You*](#) is an immersive audio drama in Arabic and English produced remotely between the UK and Egypt by Angham Mardi and Lauren Pepperell as part of caravan and Orient Productions' New Conversations UK-Egypt creative partnerships programme.

further resources

[Watch our online session on the topic](#) from Downtown Contemporary Arts Festival (D-CAF) 2021 with guest speakers: artist and curator, Andy Field; director of Gateshead International Festival of Theatre, Kate Craddock; Mia Habis of Maqamat, Citerne, and BIPOD; and writer, Nassim Soleimanpour

[Watch our online session on the topic](#) from Edinburgh Festival Fringe on Fringe Connect, featuring Gabriella Triantafyllis who produced *The Oh Fuck Moment*, and artists' Javaad Alipoor and Lorna Rees.

You can find resources about using digital platforms and translating work to digital spaces, including rights and contracts, on [The Space website](#).

Independent Theatre Council (ITC) have written an [introduction to copyright](#) (available to members).