

LIVERPOOL
MENTAL
HEALTH
CONSORTIUM



LUNATIC
FRINGE

Liverpool Mad Pride 2018: Circus of the Absurd

Report



Claire Stevens

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Liverpool Mad Pride 2018: Circus of the Absurd

Mad Pride is a global mass movement of people with lived experience of mental distress, survivors of mental health services and their allies, that began in Toronto. It seeks to reclaim terms such as 'mad' and 'nutter' from misuse. It aims to educate but, most of all, it celebrates and stands in solidarity with those who experience distress. Aligning itself firmly with the movement, Mad Pride: Circus of the Absurd provided a platform for people affected by mental distress to mingle and get creative with other musicians, artists and performers.

The Circus theme proved to be a great platform for celebrating difference, bringing people together and showcasing unique talents. We were thrilled to be working with so many creatively quirky acts and organisations to create this extravaganza, to kick off Liverpool's celebrations of 250 years of Circus in the UK, and to stand up against stigma.

Promotion

The event was promoted widely via a number of channels:

- BBC Radio Merseyside - Sean Styles Show:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p062ctwy>
- Circus Talk Programme: <https://circustalk.com/circus250programme?page=2>
- LMHC Mailout, Social Media, Facebook Event, Press Releases, Logo & Posters
- One Fell Swoop: As our media partner, distributed all Press Releases
- Planet Slop Q&A: <https://planetslop.co.uk/the-scene/interviews/mad-pride-interview-stigma-still-exist-need-keep-chipping-away/>
- Radio City Talk
- The Guide Live: <http://www.theguideliverpool.com/guide-live-kate-rach-talk-through-your-brand-new-week-in-liverpool/>
- The Guide Liverpool <http://www.theguideliverpool.com/whats-on-in-liverpool-this-week-16th-22nd-april-2018/>
- Working Conversations Mailout
- Your Magazine: <http://ymliverpool.com/tag/liverpool-mad-pride-2018>

District

61 Jordan Street
L1 0BP

3-9pm

21st April 2018

Free

All welcome



Chanel and the Circus
Mamatung
The Secret Circus
Loose Moose
The Strumbrellas

Bring the Fire Project
Beat It/Katumba
JollyBoat
Claire De Lunacy
... and MANY more!



This Mad Pride event, our third, was reportedly the best so far! Over 600 people flocked to District for a day of entertainment, live music, cabaret and burlesque. Dozens took part in the hula-hooping workshops from Freefall Aerial Circus and spinning poi workshops from Bring the Fire project, spilling into the sun-drenched streets.



Performers at the event, reflecting this year's 'Circus of the Absurd' theme, included Freefall Circus, The Secret Circus, and headliners Chanel and the Circus - alongside many more great acts. Mamatung, Loose Moose String Band, Beija Flo, The Strumbrellas and Silver Liners raised the roof with their music. Burlesque and cabaret performances from Claire de Lunacy, Cheri Whambam & Zaina Zuzu, Leebo Luby, Jolly Boat, Vendetta Vain, Nana Funk, Teatro Pomodoro's Undercover Ravens & more, entertained the crowd. The day was brilliantly hosted by Andy Kerr.



Volunteers did a great job of welcoming people to the event, stewarding, talking to participants, & asking for their thoughts on the day. Fancy-dress clad attendees were also given the opportunity to add their thoughts about their own mental wellbeing to our Wellbeing Graffiti Wall. 55 people (9%) of attendees added their thoughts. These comments were used by Jodiema to compose a special song for the event on the day, which she performed ahead of the parade and which will contribute to our ongoing research for the year.



The celebrations culminated after dark with a lantern-lit parade, accompanied by drumming from Katumba, attracting yet more participants as it wound its way through the Baltic Triangle. The Mad Pride finale included a thrilling performance with fire dancing from Bring the Fire Project and drumming from Beat It! (a joint drumming for wellbeing project between Liverpool Mental Health Consortium and Katumba), bringing the day to a magical end.



Feedback and Review

We were delighted with the response to the event and proud to be part of a movement celebrating creativity, resilience and survivors' voices.

At least 617 people attended the event; the most we've attracted so far. Of these, 189 people (31%) added a counter to a container to tell us whether the event made them feel happy, neutral or sad. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with 180 people (95%) of those who responded saying they were very happy with the day.



Some of the comments made were:

'I've got face-ache from smiling all day!'

'I've never seen anything as good as this to do with mental health.'

'Had a brilliant time on Saturday, I think it's the most successful Mad Pride we've had, still kind of buzzing from it.'

'I had a fabulous time in the sunshine on Saturday at Mad Pride hosted by the wonderful Liverpool Mental Health Consortium who do so much to promote mental health awareness and erase the stigma surrounding it. Great fun was had by all.'

'I think this is great, speaking about mental health in a funky way! Made me think outside the box about it'

'Fab event yesterday, providing creative platform for those who experience mental distress'

'What a fantastic turnout and what a great day it was.'

'Needs to happen much more'

A post-event Press Release was disseminated by One Fell Swoop and a Review in pictures was published by The Mind Map: <https://themindmap.co.uk/interviews/mad-pride-mad-pride-circus-absurd/>

Our Facebook event had a total event reach of 8,646, with 929 people viewing the event, and 309 responding. In the week leading up to Mad Pride, Facebook Page Views increased by 283%, Page Likes by 140%, Post Engagement by 181%, and Page Followers by 120%. Twitter Profile visits were up by 60%, Mentions by 124%, Tweet Impressions by 223% and we gained 27 new followers. On our website, Mad Pride was the most visited page, with 567 views, and 241 unique page views on 21st April itself. 74% of website visitors in April were new.



Thank You!

Many many thanks to Event Manager, **Nici Konigs Balfry** (Zest Event Management) and Stage Manager, **Nikki Greig**, for their passion, enthusiasm & attention to detail & to **Andy Kerr** for hosting the event with style & panache!

A Big Thank You to all our partners, artists, and performers who helped to make this such a special event; to **District** for the fabulous venue & to **ItalFresh** for providing sustenance to the crowds!

Thank you to **Marc Fraser** & **Elsa McShane** for Filming & Photography

Many thanks to this year's Volunteers: **Aidan Flinn, Anis Akhtar, Helen Wilson, Liz Stokes, Pete Ryan, Rhiannon Corcoran, Richard Adamson, Saad Alshukri, Sean Moore, Ste Knight, Steve Butler-Boycott** and **Sue Troake**

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