**Cardiff, South Wales** 

**Gravida**

**Gravida Project is the very first project in Wales that looks at creativity through pregnancy, and maternal mental health.**

**2011. Through research projects, Women in Pregnancy Gravida was born, funded by the Arts Council of Wales and supported by Chapter Art Centre. Working with midwives, pregnant community members and pregnant professional dancers we made a proof of concept for CODA Context Oriented Dance Approach In 2018 Gravida Project was showcased as a multimedia dance theatre exploration of pregnancy and maternal issues through body memory and emotional heritage. Using CODA methodologies, developed by Aleksandra Jones (recognized by UNESCO International Dance Council) Gravida enables artists, mothers, mother – artists and all women who have experienced, or are experiencing transformations into motherhood.**

**CODA re-situates their experiences through embodiment and flow. This process allows for the body to reconnect with the mind and vice-versa; where the mother-dancer can reclaim her grounded physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing.**

**Gravida Project works with professional dancers, community dancers and women who may have experienced postnatal depression, trauma through pregnancy and birth and difficulties transitioning from pre-motherhood into the multi-complexities pregnancy and birth demand on the emotional body and mind.**

**Gravida has four identifiable audience-participants: (1) Women who are or have been pregnant- wishing reconnection to their self-hood through embodiment processes.**

**(2) Anyone (male or female parents, who have or have no intention of future pregnancies) with a strong connection to maternity who, by proxy wish to empathize with the pregnant, or pregnancy process.**

**(3) Professional artists affected by pregnancy who have the desire to share their stories through creative means.**

**(4) Professionals who work in health and wellbeing, maternity, mental health and social work who, through their own participatory embodiment of movement, connection and personal reclamation of the body- build an empathetic response to the pregnant Mother.**

To date Gravida has involved community participants and pregnant dancers to explore the dramaturgy of pregnant movement, balance and changes in physical gravity and emotional centering. Partnerships have been with Dance practitioners and therapists, Arts therapists to build partnerships with venues; WAHN to maximize impact beyond living audiences and support from NHS and National Theatre Wales in audience development and understanding.

<https://www.facebook.com/gravidaproject/?ref=bookmarks>

**Gravida Project**

**Creation and Creativity: Pregnancy and Dance**

**Fact File**

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| **Purpose**  (25 words) | **Why did you deliver the project?**  **What health or wellbeing needs does the project address?**  To raise awareness of the issues surrounding maternity. Gravida addresses postnatal depression, PTSD, mental and emotional health and wellbeing, low confidence and self-esteem. |
| **Aims**  (25 words) | **What are the aims of the project?**  To enable women to articulate pregnancy and postpartum experiences through movement. Movement transcends the need for verbal exchange and can articulate complex emotions. |
| **Artforms used**  (20 words) | **What art forms were used within the project?**  The Gravida team have many years’ experience in ‘embodiment through movement’- developing a method that is recognized by UNESCO International Dance Council called CODA (Context Oriented Dance Arts)- has been proven to enable a reclamation of physicality. |
| **Project partners**  (20 words) | **Who was involved in delivering the project? Include organizational names and website links**  Partners: Chapter Arts Centre <https://www.chapter.org/>  Theatrau Sir Gar <https://www.theatrausirgar.co.uk/en>  Creu Cymru <http://www.creucymru.com/> Ty Cerdd <https://www.tycerdd.org/> NTW <https://www.nationaltheatrewales.org/> Wales Arts in Health Network <https://wahwn.cymru/>  Artis Community <https://artiscommunity.org.uk/> Blackwood Miners Institute Arts Development Team <http://your.caerphilly.gov.uk/bmi/arts-development/arts-development> |
| **Funders** | Arts Council Wales ACW, CHAPTER, TY CERDD |
| **Artists** | Who are the artists? Include names and artists’ website links:  Core Team: Author and Director - Aleksandra Nikolajev Jones, Dramaturg - Jelena Vuksanovic, Producer - Emrys Barnes, Performers: Lara Ward, Tanja Raman, Mary-Anne Roberts, Carrie Westwater, Deborah Light, Jessie Brett.  Gravida Production Team:  Slavica Tucakov (Marketing); Hardish Virk (Audience Development); Cyrus Mirzashafa (Video Projection); Siôn Orgon (Music/sound); Viktoria Knezic (Costumes and Set); Hristo Takov (Lighting); Lynette Margerison (Visual Artist); Ruslan Films (Videography); Jorge Lizalde (Technical Support/Projection); Yvonne Wong (Graphic Designer); Megan Winstone (Photography); Frances Williams (Evaluation) |
| **Participants** | 500 Direct participants: Pregnant Professional artists/dancers, Pregnant Communities: mothers, fathers, partners, children, families.  40 000 Indirectly via BBC Wales highlighting the Gravida project <https://facebook.com/BBCCymruWales/videos/710311076009526/> |
| **Location** | Where did the project take place? Including venue, town or region.  The project has taken place between 2012-2018 at various locations in South Wales - Cardiff, Blackwood, Pontypridd. And will be touring across the UK in the next few years. |
| **Dates** | When did the project take place and over what duration?  Gravida is in its next phase but has already achieved its original outcomes between 2012-2018. |
| **Outcomes**  (40 words) | * Awareness raising through the engagement of over 40.000 people online. * Engagement of media outlets such as BBC Wales see the link below * 4 professional dancers (inc Artistic Director), who were all mothers (one pregnant) created a dance-theatre performance sharing (x 2) * New project website * Online survey of women’s experiences and perceptions of maternity, identity and womanhood, informing the team’s work. * Multimedia R&D sharing with audience of 53, with Q&A. This high level of attendance reflected the strong level of engagement * Prototype multimedia installation exploring external, political and environmental threats to wellbeing, and the nurturing of new life. * University South Wales: Dr. Underwood Lee and Dr. Simic plan to include Gravida in a new book around Performing Arts and Maternity, published 2019/2020. * “Diary of a Pregnant Artist” – participatory blog Social Media analysis * One x original commission for new Welsh music “Lullaby for Mother” Ty Cerdd * An original installation Birth Chanell * Increased confidence found in the artists mothers * Increased connection to the themes by audiences * A demand for more workshop-based community participant performers, artist engagement and multimedia platforms. |
| **Evaluation**  (25 words) | Evaluation will be led by Frances Williams, an academic and policy maker with a track record working on projects specifically involving mothers. |
| **Cost**  (25 words) | We offer workshops for communities and trainings for professionals from different fields. We would like to work with NHS staff to refine the best practise and to refresh and re - energise the sector. Workshop per day £350 per trainer, training packages 2 to 3 days - £1000 per trainer, depends on demand and participants in the room. |
| **Outputs**  (25 words) | **What outputs were delivered?**  Maternal Mental Health, workshops in the community with a professional dancers and mothers to combat prenatal and postnatal depression and anxiety using dance/movement and mindfulness and career advice and development.  Workshops with professionals/NHS staff refreshing and re-energising.  Through Gravida Project using CODA methodology we can see the effect through a reframing of the relationship between mind and body, mother and fetus that can impact positively empathy, attention, resilience, outlook and generosity. Factors identified by Richard Davidson as key to wellbeing.  RnD <https://vimeo.com/277905235> [Evidence] <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=710311076009526> [ BBC]  **BBC Wales 2018**  <https://facebook.com/BBCCymruWales/videos/710311076009526/>  <https://twitter.com/BBCWales/status/1057905879461310465>  **Get the Chance Interview 2018**  <http://getthechance.wales/2018/05/26/an-interview-with-aleksandra-nikolajev-jones/>  **BBC Wales Polly March 2015**  <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/wales/entries/504bd131-f5f3-308d-af8e-64de2f4379ea>  **Gravida Project R&D trailer 2018**  <https://vimeo.com/277905235>  **What it means to be a woman? – soundscape from Gravida R&D 2018.**  <https://soundcloud.com/user-423827268/what-it-means-to-be-a-woman>  **Trees – soundscape from Gravida R&D 2018.**  <https://soundcloud.com/user-423827268/trees>  **Mother knows the best – Research interview with Aleksandra Jones**  <https://soundcloud.com/user-423827268/mother-knows-the-best>  **Gravida - staging pregnant body + short film nominated for Wales Dance Platform** <http://aleksandrajones.com/new/?portfolio=gravida>  **Pregnant Tango**  <https://www.facebook.com/gravidaproject/videos/2122020324478735/>  **Gravida trailer**  <http://youtu.be/TQMtg4bKTPs>  **Women In Pregnancy Project - Pregnant Bolero 2011/2012**  **Pregnant Community members, Professional Dancers and Midwives**  <https://vimeo.com/219652530>  Password:womeninpregnancy(small letters) |
| **Quality Indicators**  (40 words) | ‘Gravida’ recruitment highly experienced performers who have transferable skills in community participation and the therapeutic benefits of Arts for Health. To ensure the accessibility and appropriateness of the project a series of consultations with arts and health practitioners were secured. |
| **Keywords** | **Tick the boxes that apply:**  Children and Young People Older Adults **Adults**  **Mental Health Loneliness and Isolation Social prescribing** Dementia  **Healthcare environments** COPD Parkinson’s **Healthcare workforce**  **Social Care Diabetes Obesity Physical Health** Falls Prevention  Care Homes **Primary Care** **Perinatal mental health etc** |