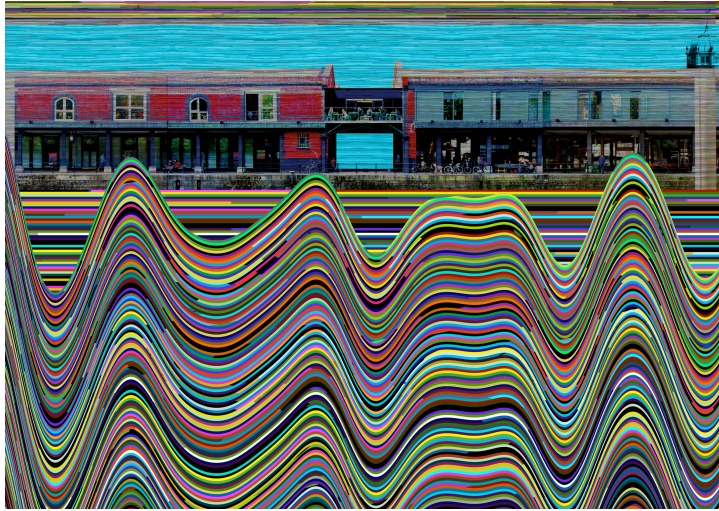


## About Watershed



Waveshed by Joe Magee (periphery.co.uk)

Watershed is a cross-artform venue and producer, sharing, developing and showcasing exemplary cultural ideas and talent. We are based in Bristol, but place no boundaries on our desire to connect with artists and audiences in the wider world.

We curate ideas, spaces and talent to enable artistic visions and creative collaborations to flourish. We produce work that cuts across film, music, theatre, design, visual art, and the creative and technology sectors. Recent examples include *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, *Theatre Sandbox*, and the Pervasive Media Studio artist residencies.

Watershed is the UK's first media centre and today has two distinct physical spaces on Bristol's historic harbourside, complemented by an extensive online presence. The public facing Watershed opened in 1982 in a Grade II\* listed building, it has three cinemas, a large, light and airy Café/Bar and flexible conference and events spaces. The second building, the Pervasive Media Studio, opened in 2008 as a collaborative research and development space where creativity and technology meet.

With audiences and participation at the heart of the organisation, Watershed delivers a diverse cultural programme of digital media, films, events, festivals, artist commissions, tours and conferences. In all of its work Watershed seeks to produce open collaborations and create opportunities which bridge expertise, imaginations and boundaries to promote new ideas and enjoyable cultural experiences.

Bristol has a growing Creative Economy and is a leading creative technologies innovation centre with the Cultural Sector operating as catalyst and connector.

***"New technology, the arts and a vibrant youth culture have helped to make this one of Britain's most cutting edge cities."***

The Rough Guide

The range of assets is world class but it is the spirit of open collaboration which really marks out Bristol as a unique centre for innovation at the intersection of arts, media and technology sectors.

***"Bristol is unique in combining excellence in new technologies and creative content. It is this cross over which marks it out."***

Lord Sainsbury at the launch of S-Park Bristol

By playing the 'connector' role Watershed has developed to be a public facing cultural and creative economy hub for Bristol city region with strong networks amplified through the cultural programme. It is the open cultural approach combined with wide public engagement and a strong showcasing ethos which has enabled Watershed to leverage its arts profile to become a trusted connector for the Bristol city region.

***“Watershed is a prime example of a highly connected, flexible, porous piece of cultural and creative infrastructure, of which there are too few examples. Watershed is more than just an arts cinema. It is at once a cultural centre, a business broker, a social networker, a research and innovation facility, a café/bar, and a cultural tourist attraction.”***

UK Creative Economy Programme

Further information on Watershed’s role in the cultural and creative economy, including recent IFF publication *Producing the Future*, can be downloaded at [watershed.co.uk/reports/](http://watershed.co.uk/reports/)

### **Watershed structure**

Watershed is a group of three companies; Watershed Arts Trust, Watershed Trading and iShed Community Interest Company, operating within a common values-led brand. Each company has specialist expertise and responsibility and presents a distinct offer to target communities of interest creating a range of routes into engagement with Watershed. Working as a group means that we can bring these diverse communities together through the generation of cultural ideas and emergent practice. The overall value of the work created by the group is configured through a networked approach working in collaboration with a wide range of cultural, commercial and academic partners.

<p><b>Watershed</b> Cultural and Creative Economy Centre Bristol hub – international connections</p>		
<p><b>Watershed Trading Co</b> Visitor experience Bristol</p> <p>Welcoming city meeting place with open and inclusive catering and events offer;</p> <p>Revenue generator for the Group.</p>	<p><b>Watershed Arts Trust</b> Audience engagement Region &amp; Global</p> <p>Curated public facing exhibition, publishing and producing - venue,</p> <p>DShed.net and touring;</p> <p>The open door into Watershed for most people.</p>	<p><b>iShed CIC</b> Talent development National</p> <p>Cross-artform digital production to explore new genre and experience;</p> <p>Open innovation and collaborative r&amp;d;</p> <p>Manages the Pervasive Media Studio.</p>

## Audience Engagement

Watershed places the audience at the heart of its programming. We curate cultural connections between artists and audiences in a context where diversity of people, experience and culture is an asset. Quality of experience is at the heart of our audience development strategy. A key strength is the mutually reinforcing ambience and the diverse mix of people who engage.



watershed.co.uk/herrmann/

The world of cinema is largely dominated by Hollywood and what are termed 'mainstream' commercial films. However there are films made all over the world. Watershed's role is to promote and profile world cinema and non-mainstream English language films, to provide a space for alternative and emerging cinematic visions. We also want to engage the audience in a richer dialogue that we do through a range of methods from providing programme notes to filmmaker talks and publishing online. A key part of delivering the programme is through partnership/collaboration with other individuals or organisations eg Afrika Eye festival and Encounters Film Festival.

Our approach is to do things 'with' people not 'for' people. We have developed this approach over a decade and the digital revolution is enabling more and more people to engage more deeply through participation in our programmes. Through DShed.net we publish extensively to extend engagement and increasingly offer opportunities for audiences to become active participants through interactive events, seminars and creative projects.

We work with people of all ages through projects such as BristolStories.org, work with European partners to develop wider cultural communication, and deliver dedicated programmes for young people to develop and realise their creative and social potential. We offer a range of projects to create pathways to engage young people and to develop the producers, artists and audiences of the future. Our primary engagement is with young people in the Bristol City Region in school and out of school. Funding is raised from local, national and European sources. We document process and outcome to disseminate good practice. Content produced by young people is published in Young Watershed on DShed.net.

## DShed.net

DShed is Watershed's online showcase and archive. DShed embodies the creativity seeded at the very heart of Watershed and demonstrates our mission to continuously create opportunities for people to come together to make, view and discuss new work and emergent practice. Most of the content you will find on or through DShed has been made in partnership with artists, creative companies, schools, universities and passionate individuals. Set up in 2001 as a virtual exhibition space for Watershed's digital development and practice visitors to DShed can watch short films, listen to podcasts, read artists' and commentators' diaries and catch up on events and talks.

## iShed CIC and the Pervasive Media Studio



Media Sandbox 2010 participants Mutant Labs – mediasandbox.co.uk

iShed was set up in 2007, it is a Community Interest Company (CIC) and a wholly owned subsidiary of Watershed Arts Trust. The aim of iShed activities is to develop talent, share knowledge and produce sustainable collaborations between arts, media and technology partners. iShed manages the Pervasive Media Studio which was set up in January 2008 by Watershed in association with HP Labs and the South West Regional Development Agency. It is a multi-disciplinary lab, the leading UK centre for rapid innovation in creative technologies with an active community of over 100 researchers – artists, creatives, academics and technologists.

## **A social enterprise and a registered charity.**



A social enterprise can be defined as a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community. Watershed is the first arts organisation in the South West to be awarded the 'Social Enterprise Mark', a label that lets people know that Watershed is creating social benefit for Bristol and beyond. Watershed Arts Trust is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity (charity number 284188). It was initiated to advance education and increase appreciation, understanding and application of the arts (with particular reference to communications and the media) amongst members of the public. Since 1982 Watershed has accomplished these aims in response to changing cultures, audience expectations and developing technologies.

### **Watershed Finances**

Watershed is a mixed economy organisation with a diverse range of income streams. Annual Reports with audited accounts can be downloaded from <http://www.watershed.co.uk/reports/> While self generated income makes up the largest portion of income our diverse public programme would not be possible without the support and generosity of our funders and partners, in particular Arts Council England and Bristol City Council. Total income last year was circa £4m and Watershed employs a full-time equivalent of 72 staff.