

HANDSTAND ARTS CIO

ANNUAL REPORT

02/04/2022 - 01/04/2023

CHARITY NO. 1181762

REG. ADDRESS - 19 GREENBANK
AVE. WEST, BRISTOL
BS56EP

IMAGE:
THESE THINGS
AREN'T MINE

(FILM STILL)
GABRIELLE COOK &
BARNEY WHITE



CHAIR OF THE BOARD'S STATEMENT

As chair of the board of trustees, I am extremely proud of the work that Handstand Arts have delivered from 2022-23 that places the CIO as a key player in the UK circus sector.

Handstand Arts are dedicated to the growth of the sector both at a strategic level with their work with Circus Change Up and at an artistic and relational level, supporting artists and emerging work. As an organisation they continue to build trust by supporting artists, producers and programmers contributing to the UK Circus ecology and infrastructure. Their work developing audiences has prompted a collaboration with Bristol City Council to present world class circus company Ockham's Razor in Bristol's City Centre in the Summer of 2023, a project which will engage local young people in its creation. Handstand Arts are also involved at an international level building and maintaining relationships with international artists through networks and exchange.

This year we saw Kate Hartoch step back from her role as Artistic Director and as a board we would like to thank her for the hard work and dedication she contributed to Handstand Arts and wish her well with her new ventures. Following Kate's departure we looked at refining the structure to a co-director model. As a board we supported the recruitment process and feel that the new team will be able to build Handstand Arts to deliver year round activity, further developing audiences as well as to continue to contribute to UK circus.

Despite being an 'off year' as far as the biennial festival is concerned, 2022-23 has been a busy year ensuring that Handstand Arts are in a strong position to deliver the festival in Autumn 2023. This has been achieved structurally but also financially in the successful fundraising from the Arts Council, Bristol City Council and the Foyle Foundation.

As a board we whole heartedly believe in the artistic direction of the Circus City festival, its ability to be ambitious, international and also local. We look forward to hear the plans that the team have for the festival, the programming and opportunities to engage with new audiences across Bristol and the South West.



KATE WEBB

CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES



OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The object of the CIO is to advance the arts through the presentation of circus performances and other performance arts for the public benefit, in particular but not exclusively for those people living in Bristol and the surrounding areas. The trustees are aware of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit

Following the successful delivery of Circus City 2021, 2022-23 was an off year for our biennial festival programme therefore the majority of our work was focussed on business planning and fundraising for our 2023 programme and beyond.

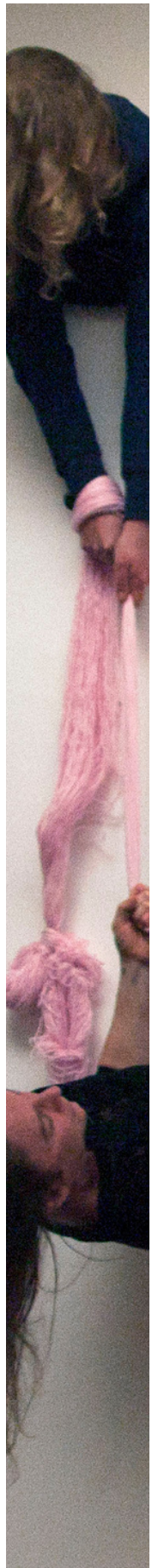
We delivered one public facing project, mentoring an emerging producer, Nicole Pretlove, to develop her skills and programme a new circus venue at Shambala Festival, reaching 5500 people with three contemporary circus productions. This included two companies led by Bristol artists, Many Hands and Transitions. These were valuable engagements for these large ensemble companies, who have been disproportionately effected by the pandemic. This project developed capacity in the sector to produce circus performances and provided a low risk opportunity for audiences to try out the artform, developing future engagement.

Director Kate Hartoch raised our profile, presenting for the Diverse Artists Network in Bristol and as a delegate to the Circostrada General Meeting in Kaunas Lithuania. CPD activity was also planned for Spring '23 through the Circostrada Switch programme, with incoming Director Nicole A'Court-Stuart & Anke Politz, Director of Chameleon Berlin learning from each others contexts with a focus on diversity and commissioning.

The rest of our activity focussed on developing our strategy for a move towards year round activity, in addition to programming research and partnership development for our biennial festival. In 2023 we want to focus on accessibility and growing audiences 18-30. With the support of Bristol City Council we are planning a free outdoor circus performance for a Bristol high street in summer 2023 to reach audiences of 1000. The show will have audio description and include young performers from local Bristol community groups.

New programming relationships with international artists Andrea Salustri, Collective Malunes and Marina Cherry have been established through Circus City research trips to Edinburgh Fringe, UP festival Belgium and Cologne Circus Dance Festival. We have also continued to offer producer support to Gabrielle Cook and Barney White as they developed their Circus City commissioned film These Things Aren't Mine, which explores PTSD and will premiere at our 2023 festival. New partnerships are being developed with Bristol Libraries, Access Creative College and Screenology.

We have continued to offer producer advice to freelance artists and have contributed to Circus Change Up, a research project developing a framework for a sector support organisation for circus. This body will advocate for the wellbeing of freelance artists and support the sustainability of the artform in the UK. Handstand Arts was identified by the sector as a suitable and responsible lead organisation for this initiative, however an EOI to Arts Council we submitted was rejected & we are now developing a consortium approach.



ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

We set objectives against our festival but do not yet have enough year-round activity to evaluate during off years. However, we made progress towards our charity's work with our objectives in the categories of:

- **Artform and sector development**

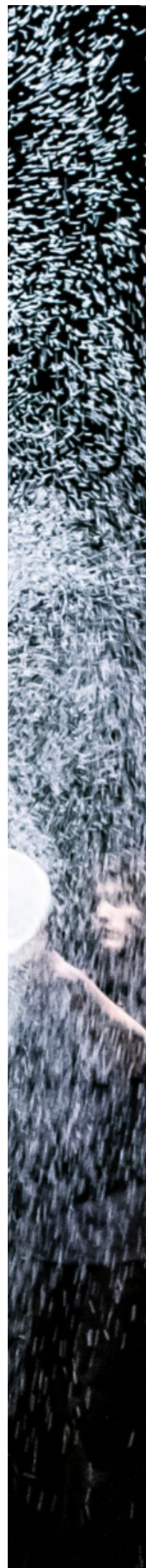
By supporting the sector and the artists within it, we support the creation of work that the public experiences.

- **Organisational impact.**

By keeping our organisation strong we ensure the resilience and future of its operation.

We have achieved this through:

- Reaching 70% of our fundraising target for 2023-25. In addition to Box office income expected from our 2023 festival, we ended the year with a fundraising target of £56,000 or 30% and have made approaches to trusts and foundations totalling £180,000.
- Up-skilling and mentoring 2 producers
- Mentoring and advocating for 1 commissioned film project with potential charity partners and film festivals
- Programming 1 outdoor show with a company of 10 freelance artists for Summer 2023
- Fundraising for 1 sector development project Circus Change-Up
- Supporting producer and incoming Artistic Director Nicole A'Court-Stuart to undertake a Relational Dynamics coaching course to develop her leadership skills.
- Participating actively in networks across Europe attending festivals and conferences Circostrada, MICC, circusnext, UP!, Cologne Circus Dance Festival.

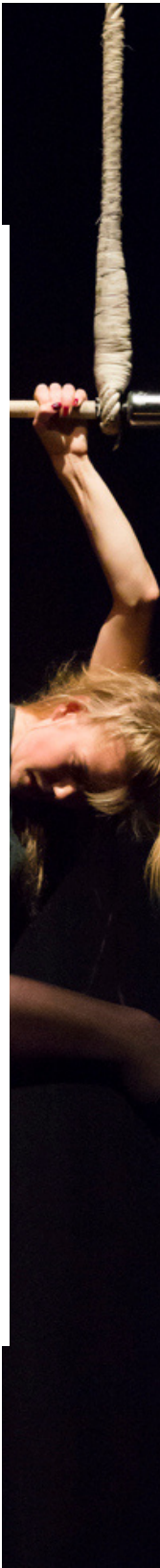


PROFIT AND LOSS

Profit and Loss

Handstand Arts
For the year ended 31 March 2023

	2023
Cost of Sales	
Artist Accommodation	482.63
Director Circus City Festival	6,500.00
Marketing Manager	560.00
Other Green Room Hospitality	97.75
Producer	4,000.00
Total Cost of Sales	11,640.38
Gross Profit	(11,640.38)
Administrative Costs	
Audit & Accountancy fees	813.20
BSL Translators	150.00
Fees	50.00
Logistics - Travel etc.	(58.36)
Marketing - Social Media	212.24
Training	280.00
Travel - Bus, Tram & Tube	641.47
Travel - Taxis	10.20
Total Administrative Costs	2,098.75
Operating Profit	(13,739.13)
Other Income	
ACE	8,086.00
Bristol City Council	20,713.50
Local Authority Income	3,000.00
Trusts and Foundations	20,000.00
Total Other Income	51,799.50
Profit on Ordinary Activities Before Taxation	38,060.37
Profit after Taxation	38,060.37



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Our principle source of funding for this years activity was our second year of a 2 year grant from Bristol city Council Imagination fund, which enabled us to continue baseline operations, planning and fundraising for 2023.

We successfully secured £129,290 of funding towards activity for our 2023-24 year, from Bristol City Council City Centre Culture & Events Grant, Foyle Foundation and Arts Council England.

We had to resubmit to Arts Council England after a rejection in September 22, receiving a positive outcome in January 23. Foyle foundation is a new relationship. They offered less than the cost of the audience development project we proposed, but contributed £20k to the general work of the charity, laying foundations for future investment.

At the end of this financial year we held £11,000 in unrestricted reserves. These reserves are held in a savings account at Unity Trust bank and can be used for unexpected drops in income or costs, beginning new projects or activities, responding to an unexpected opportunity that will allow the charity to deliver its aims or to meet any obligations and liabilities as part of a managed exit.

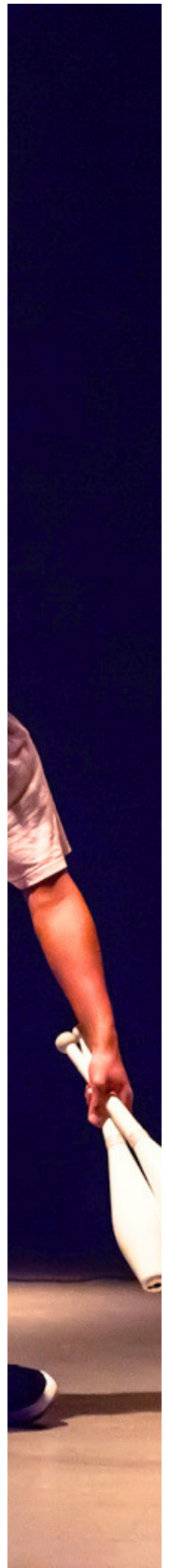
Unrestricted reserves are set at 10% of the average income of a festival in order to be able to manage the closure of the CIO at the most expensive time which would be mid festival while contracted with companies/ artists re. cancellation.

The board assesses risk at each meeting. During this year the main risks identified were:

- retention of staff
- retention of knowledge and relationships through change in leadership
- Fundraising in an increasingly competitive environment.

Key staff were able to obtain short term freelance projects to sustain their careers through this period of low activity for the charity, retaining them in the arts sector and the charity.

Organisational development created a new staffing structure that would increase capacity through delegation of artistic, financial and fundraising responsibilities, preventing reliance on one Director for management of all operations.



STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Our CIO has a constitution document that outlines its structure.

Trustees are selected by identifying skills gaps in the board and working towards a diverse, representative board. New trustees are appointed by the board who meet 4 times a year with a template agenda with finance, director's report and risk management as standing items.

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity at the close of 22-2023:

Claire Teasdale - Chair

Tabitha Moyle - Treasurer

Sascha Goslin - Trustee

Kate Webb - Chair

This year we have worked to develop the board to include an early career artist from Bristol with interest and experience in accessibility. Amy Nichols will be attending her first meeting in June 2023. Claire Teasedale will be retiring from the board as chair at this time after 5 years of service and Kate Webb will become chair.

During 2022-23 year the charity employed 2 key freelance staff - one festival director and one festival producer.

Over the last quarter, we began succession planning as Director Kate Hartoch prepared to leave the organisation. Nicole A'Court-Stuart was appointed Artistic Director and in collaboration with Kate and mentor Mel Scaffold a new staffing structure was developed to support the strength and growth of the charity and its activity.



STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Handstand Arts has adopted the following staffing structure:

Nicole A'Court Stuart – Artistic Director

Nicole has worked with HSA as Circus City producer since 2018. In 2022 Nicole qualified from the RD1st coaching and leadership programme and underwent training in accessibility during her role with Disabled-led performance makers Extraordinary Bodies. She is committed to developing the accessibility of Handstand Arts activities for all and to support UK artists to do the same. As a freelance producer active in the circus and performing arts sector locally and internationally, Nicole is uniquely placed to develop our creative vision and networks.

Rhiannon Jones – Executive Director

Rhiannon has over 20 years of experience of working in cultural charities, including 13 years of experience of programming, project management and overseeing annual budgets for Trinity Community Arts. Rhiannon holds an MA in Arts Policy and Management and recently completed the Clore Social – Experienced Leaders programme (2023) and Designing for Inclusion – Fearless Futures (2022).

Thea Woodrow – General Manager

Thea brings experience as a Producer, Finance and Project Manager over the last 7 years of working in the arts and voluntary sectors, including 5 years with international show makers Cirque Bijou. Drawing on roots in classical music, she is passionate about working creatively and collaboratively to make socially engaged, inclusive, accessible live performances, events, and experiences. Thea is excited to take on the new General Manager role for Handstand Arts, and work with Nicole and Rhiannon to grow the organisation and Circus City festival.

