

Handstand Arts CIO
Charity No. 1181762
Trustees Report
Year Ending 1st April 2024

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 2023-24 that continues the CIO's role as a key player in the UK circus sector. This year has been about established our new team including Co-Directors, Nicole A'Court-Stuart & Rhiannon Jones, joined by General Manager - Thea Woodrow and delivering an ambitious public programme.

They have continued Handstand Arts dedication 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. We delivered our 5th biennial festival programme - The Outsider Edition reaching 3791 as audience and beneficiaries, 532 participants, employed 67 artists, 90 freelancers and 27 volunteers. We invested in access for performers, audiences and participants. 13 performances included additional access provision including embedded creative access meaning we achieved our goal of 50% of our programme.

We continued to build trust by supporting artists, producers and programmers contributing to the UK Circus ecology and infrastructure. Our work developing audiences prompted a collaboration with Bristol City Council to present world class circus company Ockham's Razor in Bristol's City Centre in the July 2023, engaging local young people as performers and reaching an audience of 600.

We launched a new co-commission model - New Authors with partners The Lowry, Jacksons Lan, Deda and Worthing Theatres and Museums

Beyond the festival we began R&D into exploring what a Deaf friendly festival could look like and a new project - Circus Routes - working in Filwood to develop a programme to activate an underserved area of our city. Handstand Arts continue to be involved at an international level building and maintaining relationships with international artists through networks and exchange. We initiated a new international circus exchange Network with Circusful, Summerhall and Circus Syd.

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 working with the team to develop their beyond this year's festival, the wider programming and opportunities to engage with new audiences across Bristol, the South West and beyond.



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

The key focus for 2023/24 was the delivery of our 5th biennial festival: Circus City 2023 - *The Outsider Edition*. Across the month of October (1st - 23rd) we presented a constellation of shows exploring a common thread of human-object relations, transformation and interventions into the way people, bodies and situations can be seen and navigated. Each presented an opportunity for a reimagining of the familiar, human, scientific, physical, seen in a new light, as if with the eyes of an outsider.

Our festival programme was as varied as ever with everything from research-driven performance-making (Darragh McCloughlin's Stickman, Tom Cassani's A Show of Hands & Iterations) and striking queer and neurodiverse and black led solo shows (Laura Murphy's A Spectacle of Herself, Livia Kojo Alour's Black Sheep), to pink punk gig-circus (Muovipussi's Noise Juice), mind-bending physical storytelling and spectacle (Sawdust Symphony, Andrea Salustri's Materia, Marina Cherry's Only Bones) and retellings of classical literature (Ockham's Razor's Tess)

There were shows for young people and families with fire, music and mayhem (Tit For Tat's BOOKS!, Whispering Woods & the Murmuration Choir's The Shape of Belonging, Oh No George!) and presentations of brand new work in the making (Volt, Ruby & Charles) alongside a programme of workshops, talks, films and industry events.

Funding secured from Bristol City Council Highstreet Events Fund meant that we were able to launch Circus City with an outdoor performance of PUBLIC by Ockhams' Razor's graduate company of 10 young performers. Supported by local young people the reclaimed xxx to an estimated audience of 600 people.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

We made progress towards our charity's work with our objectives in the categories of:

Audience development

Circus City 2023 was our most ambitious festival and the largest post Brexit and the Covid-19 Pandemic. Across the month of October 3791 people attended across 39 performances and events. We employed 67 artists working across partner 11 venues. 28 volunteers supported our work enabling 532 individuals to play, dance, write, imagine and create at one of our workshops.

Across the festival we:

- Maintained progress towards audiences being more representative of Bristol as a whole (in terms of ethnic group, socio-economic background, disability, gender diversity): 12% Global Majority*, 12% Deaf/disabled, 27% Neurodiverse, 30% LGBTQIA, 44% >35yr olds.

- We demonstrated an increase across target areas including representation in people under the age 35 years old as well as people identifying as from Global Majority backgrounds which has doubled since 2021/19 (4% /6% respectively) but remains an area of focus to be representative of Bristol & national profile at 19%.
- We also demonstrated an increase of 30% in those identifying as disabled which increased from 9% to 12%.
- Continued to track the proportion of audiences experiencing contemporary circus for the first time to understand patterns and issues of attendance for audiences with an increase to 31% from 28% in addition to 72% telling us they were new to Circus City.
- In total we achieve 82% of our target reach for the programme

Artform and sector development

Through Circus City and our wider programme we are committed to prioritising people experiencing exclusion. By this we mean global majority, queer and disabled people and those experiencing social isolation in areas of deprivation who we engage as artists, participants and audiences.

Across our 2023 programme we:

- Presented a high-quality programme of performances and events, equal to the quality of CC202: Audiences fed back on the overall quality of the programme with 90%+ rating it as good or excellent across presentation, distinctiveness, concept, captivation and rigour. **94% of audiences rated their experience as good or excellent.**
- Employed 67 artists and 90 creatives across the programme of activities which also included industry events, workshops and networking opportunities.
- Increased our insight into the diversity of our artists: Data gathered post-festival show that 16% identified as Global Majority, 26% Deaf/disabled, 44% Neurodiverse, 70% LGBTQIA, 52% <35yrs old. The resulting programme of work including striking queer, neurodiverse and black led solo shows (Laura Murphy's A Spectacle of Herself, Livia Kojo Alour's Black Sheep), pink punk gig-circus (Muovipussi's Noise Juice), mind-bending physical storytelling and spectacle (Sawdust Symphony, Andrea Salustri's Materia, Marina Cherry's Only Bones) and retellings of classical literature (Ockham's Razor's Tess). **96% of artists fed back that their experience of taking part in the festival was good or excellent.**
- Developed a new national artist development and touring network for contemporary circus through New Authors. Of 67 applications, 8 were invited to interview to share their proposal. 4 artists (3 companies) received micro-commissions to develop their ideas across residencies and present at a sharing during the CC23 festival. One artist, Farrell Cox received a further commission of £5,000 to develop her proposal into a full show to tour in 2025/26: *"I definitely feel like I will look back at this moment in a few years and finally process who it has taken my career to its next steps".*

Organisational Impact:

Across the year 2023/24 we have been successful in securing funding to further develop our future ambition and to support the delivery of our aims. By introducing a year-round team, we have been able to strengthen our team with a Co-Director model and increased capacity. This has enabled us to develop existing and new relationships to ensure better connection, collaboration and use of resources going forward. We have been able to support the development of the skills and knowledge of our core team whilst identifying partners with whom we can continue to work un 2024/25. By keeping our organisation strong we ensure the resilience and future of its operation.

We have participated actively in networks across Europe attending festivals and conferences Circostrada, MICC, circusnext, UPI, Cologne Circus Dance Festival. We are excited to develop our Four Nations funded International Circus Exchange Network.

FINANCIAL REVIEW**Festival Income:**

Our principal source of funding for this year's activity was Arts Council England who awarded us a grant of £89,500 across an 18 month period to deliver Circus City 2023 and additional artist development programme - New Authors. This matched funding towards activity for 2023/34 from Bristol City Council City Centre Culture & Events Grant (£16,000) and Foyle Foundation (£20,000). A Mobility Fund of £1299 was also secured from Fonds Podium Kunsten Performing Arts Netherlands to support Sawdust Symphony.

Ticket Income showed an increase on CC21 at £31,743 (avrg. Spend £8.30) compared to £25,931 (averg. spend £11.90). The reduction in average spend is in part due to the inclusion of large scale free event PUBLIC (subsidised by Bristol City Council) as well as a conscious approach to keeping the festival prices accessible.

Wider Income:

We continued to work with our Patron - George Feguson, who generously supported us with £1K towards our work across the year.. Partner contributions of £1K each from The Lowry, Deda, Worthing Theatres supported our New Authors programme with an additional £1K due in 2024/25 from Jacksons' lane.

Smaller grants were secured from Quartet (£5K), and the Nisbet Trust (£4350) respectively towards activity outside of the main festival programme to support us to reach underserved communities and to continue R&D to further our mission of making our festival inclusive for all.

A grant of £8,500 was awarded, as part of Arts Council led Four Nations programme, towards a new peer network creating more connections across England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Europe in 2024. Additionally £10,000 was awarded from Backstage Trust towards our ongoing work into 2024/25.

Donations:

Across the financial year we received £383 in donations identifying this as an area for further development and potential yield in future festivals.

Support in-Kind:

Our Programme continues to benefit from support in-kind from partners to the value of £20,210. We are grateful to our 11 local partner venues without whose cooperation and support the festival would not be possible. This year, with the inclusion of New Authors, we also received support in kind from

venues across the UK who provided space for residencies as part of the commissions.

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.

Assessing Risk:

The board assesses risk at each meeting.

During this year the main risks identified were:

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

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 23-2024:

Kate Webb - Chair

Tabitha Moyle - Treasurer

Sascha Goslin - Trustee

Amy Nicols – Trustee

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, who joined in April 2023.

During 2023/24 year the charity employed 3 key freelance staff – one Artistic Director, one Executive Director and a General Manager.

In addition to the key staff, during the festival delivery our core team expanded to include a marketing manager, production manager, emerging producer and wider team of freelance technicians to support the smooth delivery of our programme.

The charity also benefited from the support of 26 volunteers who gave an estimated 180 hours of support.

Handstand Arts maintained 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.

Handstand Arts CIO

Registered Charity No. 1181762

Unaudited Receipts and Payments Account

Year ended 31 March 2024

Accountants: Accounting4Actors Ltd

CHARITY INFORMATION

| | |
|---|---|
| Trustees | Sascha K Goslin Amy Nicholls (appointed 27 June 2023) Claire Teasdale (retired 27 June 2023) Kate Webb |
| Held office in the period but retired thereafter: | Tabitha Moyle |
| Charitable status | CIO |
| Charity no. | 1181762 |
| Address | 22 Victoria Avenue Bristol, BS5 9NG |
| Accountants | Accounting4Actors Ltd Jon Harris, ACMA, CGMA, MA, FRSA Suite LP61812, 20 Wenlock Road, London N1 7GU |
| Bankers | Unity Trust Bank |

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
HANDSTAND ARTS CIO**

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the financial records of Handstand Arts CIO for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the records in accordance with the relevant legislation.

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

In carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of CIMA, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

Jon Harris, ACMA, CGMA, MA (Cantab.), FRSA
Suite LP61812, 20 Wenlock Road, London N1 7GU
December 2024

HANDSTAND ARTS CIO

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT TO 31 March 2024

Year to 31 March 2024

Summary of Receipts and Payments

| | Note | 2024 | 2023 |
|--|------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <u>RECEIPTS</u> | | £ | £ |
| Ticket sales | | 32,876 | 0 |
| Donations | | 382 | 0 |
| Commissions | | 4,300 | 0 |
| Arts Council England | | 88,531 | 8,086 |
| Local Authorities | | 5361 | 23,713 |
| Trusts and Foundations | | 19,430 | 20,000 |
| Sponsorship | | 2,299 | 0 |
| Interest | | 168 | 0 |
| | | <u>153,347</u> | <u>51,799</u> |
| <u>PAYMENTS</u> | | | |
| Production etc costs | 1 | 122,936 | 11,640 |
| Administrative costs | 1 | <u>41,437</u> | <u>2,099</u> |
| | | 164,373 | 13,739 |
| Surplus of Receipts over Payments | | <u>-11,026</u> | <u>38,060</u> |

Year ended 31 March 2024

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

| | <u>2024</u> | <u>2023</u> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <u>Current Assets</u> | | |
| Cash at bank | 30,016 | 41,721 |
| Other | 679 | - |
| TOTAL ASSETS | <u>30,695</u> | <u>41,721</u> |
| <u>Reserves</u> | | |
| brought forward from 2023 (2022) | 41,721 | 3,661 |
| Surplus in the year | <u>-11,026</u> | <u>38,060</u> |
| RESERVES CARRIED FORWARD | <u>30,695</u> | <u>41,721</u> |

Notes to the Receipts and Payments Account

1

Detailed Income and Expenditure report

Turnover

| | | |
|--|------------------|-------------|
| Ticket Income - Events e.g. talks, conferences | 412.00 | 0.00 |
| Ticket Income - Shows | 31,364.25 | 0.00 |
| Ticket Income - Workshops | 1,100.00 | 0.00 |
| Total Turnover | 32,876.25 | 0.00 |

Direct costs

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Artist Accommodation | 4,029.10 | 482.63 |
| Artist Fees - Shows | 42,112.18 | 0.00 |
| Artist Fees - Workshops | 2,122.34 | 0.00 |
| Artist International Travel | 5,259.71 | 0.00 |
| Artist Per Diems | 1,466.53 | 0.00 |
| Artist UK Travel | 271.98 | 0.00 |
| Commission/Residency Artist Fees | 4,942.65 | 0.00 |
| Go See & R&D - Logistics | 332.93 | 0.00 |
| Green Room Hospitality | 697.09 | 0.00 |
| Licences | 75.00 | 0.00 |
| Marketing Manager | 0.00 | 560.00 |
| Producer | 0.00 | 4,000.00 |
| Professional Fees - Project | 38,844.97 | 6,500.00 |
| Props and Stage Design | 93.15 | 0.00 |
| Security - Traffic/People Management | 252.00 | 97.75 |
| Technical Costs | 8,056.10 | 0.00 |
| Transport | 264.44 | 0.00 |
| Venue Hire | 14,115.80 | 0.00 |
| Total Direct costs | 122,935.97 | 11,640.38 |

| | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Surplus (Deficit) of sales over direct costs | (90,059.72) | (11,640.38) |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|

| | | |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| Administrative Costs | | |
| Access costs - audience e.g. BSL, AD | 5,498.99 | 150.00 |
| Access costs - staff | 1,587.42 | 0.00 |
| Accommodation | 118.35 | 0.00 |
| Audit & Accountancy fees | 492.00 | 813.20 |
| Community engagement e.g. tickets, venue hire | 172.00 | 0.00 |
| Core Staff | 20,823.63 | 0.00 |
| Documentation | 1,660.00 | 0.00 |
| Evaluation - fees | 600.00 | 0.00 |
| Evaluation - Materials and Equipment | 22.75 | 0.00 |
| Fees | 0.00 | 50.00 |
| Insurance | 2,748.00 | 0.00 |
| Logistics - Travel etc. | 0.00 | (58.36) |
| Marketing - Distribution | 489.48 | 0.00 |
| Marketing - Fees | 1,125.97 | 0.00 |
| Marketing - Merchandise | 825.00 | 0.00 |
| Marketing - Print & Signage | 1,462.00 | 0.00 |
| Marketing - Social Media | 1,646.40 | 212.24 |
| Office Costs | 487.43 | 0.00 |
| PR | 575.00 | 0.00 |
| Staff Training | 495.83 | 280.00 |
| Travel - Bus, Train & Tube | 467.39 | 641.47 |
| Travel - Car Park & CAZ charges | 54.20 | 0.00 |
| Travel - Taxis | 85.60 | 10.20 |
| Total Administrative Costs | 41,437.44 | 2,098.75 |
| Surplus (Deficit) before other income | (131,497.16) | (13,739.13) |
| Other Income | | |
| Arts Council England | 88,531.00 | 8,086.00 |
| Commissions - Partner Contributions | 4,300.00 | 0.00 |
| Donations | 382.77 | 0.00 |
| Interest Income | 168.16 | 0.00 |
| Local Authority Grant - Bristol City Council | 5,361.50 | 20,713.50 |
| Local Authority Grant - WECA | 0.00 | 3,000.00 |
| Sponsorship | 2,299.15 | 0.00 |
| Trusts and Foundations | 19,430.00 | 20,000.00 |
| Total Other Income | 120,472.58 | 51,799.50 |
| Surplus (Deficit) on Ordinary Activities | (11,024.58) | 38,060.37 |