

MESHWORKS

Annual Report and Unaudited Accounts

1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022

MeshWorks is a CIO committed to producing and promoting Art by contemporary East African Artists, for audiences around the world, currently via the artist residency, research and performance platform East African Soul Train.

Charity Name: MeshWorks

Charity Number: 1185702

Registration Date: 9th October 2019

Trustees:

Amanda Hill-Dixon (Chair)
Peter Macdonald (Treasurer)
Helen Nicholson

Registered Address:

3 Sovereign Crescent, Lexden Road, Colchester. CO3 3UZ

Governance and Management:

With no paid staff, MeshWorks is a volunteer led organisation, currently run by a small board of trustees who receive no remuneration for their participation. The board of trustees are supported day-to-day by founder, researcher and producer Dr Poppy Spowage.

Current trustees include:

Amanda Hill-Dixon (Chair)
Peter Macdonald (Treasurer)
Helen Nicholson

Objectives and Activities:

MeshWorks' objective is to promote art for the benefit of the public by the production of contemporary East African performance and art projects in particular but not exclusively in Sub-Saharan Africa and the UK. To advance understandings about the social role of art and performance, MeshWorks produces and promotes contemporary art for audiences around the world via artist residency, research and performance platforms. This has included collaborating with international partners and supporting the development and delivery of the artist residency, research and performance platforms, including East African Soul Train (EAST) and Lost+Found. As well as providing training opportunities for East African artists, MeshWorks activities have a range of benefits for the public, including connecting and engaging local and international audiences with international contemporary cultural practice and advancing understanding about the social role of contemporary arts and performance practice.

East African Soul Train (<https://www.eastsoultrain.global/>)

EAST is a 7-day pop-up residency centred around a journey on East Africa's historic railways, which brings artists and people working in the creative sector together to explore their identity and collaborate. EAST is an emotional, physical and creative experience; it pushes boundaries, inspiring participants to experiment across disciplines and explore alternative narratives. At the end of the residency, there is a large public performance (in-person and online) and continued networking opportunities throughout the year for creatives. As a collective, EAST has created opportunities for 170+ artists from 4 continents, catalysed over 50 on-going collaborations, and is lauded by many artists as a critical marker in their career development.

Covid-19

The fourth edition of East African Soul Train was scheduled for summer 2020 but rendered impossible because of the global pandemic. It was then rescheduled for 2021, but as the pandemic progressed it became clear it was not possible in 2021. Simultaneously, two grants that Dr Poppy Spowage and MeshWorks had applied to in order to support EAST 2020 were pulled by funders due to the uncertain financial context: as a small voluntary team we took the decision to pause activity.

Lost+Found 2021

The team at EAST decided to pivot in response to COVID-19 restrictions, through producing Lost+Found a hybrid residency and research programme bringing virtual and offline worlds together in experimental ways, to investigate how key elements of an intense journey, which catalyses connection, collaboration and cutting-edge work across geographies and disciplines, can be adapted and translated using technology and gamified approaches. Instead of using high-tech solutions, Lost+Found tested out low-tech hacks and repurposed smartphone technologies (WhatsApp/GPS/ QR codes) to enable artists and audiences to explore their localities while being connected across boundaries.

Lost+Found 2021 engaged 13 artists from across Africa, India and Europe working in different disciplines (theatre/technology/visual art/music/fashion/poetry). Over the course of four weeks (with varying intensity) artists are guided through and invited to co-create a process virtually that inspires them to play, to share perspectives, to challenge their peers, take risks and create new collaborative work, for on and offline audiences. MeshWorks provided in-kind production support throughout. Whilst a pilot, Lost+Found was a huge success. For example, it:

- Connected 13 artists from 9 countries and 3 continents in a 6-week hybrid residency, research and performance programme;
- Catalysed new connections between the artists and their communities, which led to a range of new creative projects and collaborations that have continued beyond the programme;
- Effectively engaged all artists in a rigorous research process alongside the residency, to investigate the impact of new technologies and the move to the digital on their ability to connect, collaborate and create new practice – outcomes were shared with audiences world-wide;
- Simultaneously hosted two live events in Tanzania and the UK, which were streamed live into a virtual event, hosted at the same time for our global audience. The hybrid event was also screened by partners at Nafasi Arts Space in Tanzania and Ugly Duck Spaces in the UK. Alongside the engagement of approximately 50 audience members at 'live' events, we had over 70 attendees in the physical zoom, and continuous engagement via asynchronous viewing of art pieces post residency on our social media channels;
- Engaged a diverse range of local and global audiences and communities throughout the residency on social media;
- Responding to Covid-19 and associated travel/social distancing restrictions.

Lost+Found 2022, 2023 and beyond

With MeshWorks' support, over the next year the creative team at Lost+Found have decided to continue to explore the hybrid residency model, with anticipated support from the Swiss Arts Council (ProHelvetia) to undertake further research and British Council support for the second edition (£20,000, scheduled June-July 2023), which will focus on exploring how residency structures & funding mechanisms can be reimaged in a virtual context.

Financial Review


Income in the period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022 from voluntary donations and fundraising activities was zero. All MeshWorks' activity in this reporting period was in-kind, outgoing expenditure was also zero.

Statement of Financial Activities 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022:

Income					
	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds		Total Funds 31/03/2021
Fundraising Activities	£	-	£	-	£
Donations	£	-	£	-	£
Grants income	£	-	£	-	£
Sub Total	£	-	£	-	£
Expenditure					
	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds		Total Funds 31/03/2021
Project Activities	£	-	£	-	£
Staff Costs	£	-	£	-	£
Infrastructure	£	-	£	-	£
Sub Total	£	-	£	-	£
Net of Income/Expenditure	£	-	£	-	£
Total Charitable Funds	£	-	£	-	£

The Trustees are satisfied that MeshWorks is entitled to exemption from the requirement to obtain and audit under Charities Act 2011, section 145. The Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for complying with Charities Act 2011 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

Annual Return and Financial Accounts Approved by Board on: 12th January 2023



Luisa-Amanda Hill Dixon
Trustee, MeshWorks
+447968593939
Amanda.hill-dixon@wcpp.org.uk



Helen Nicholson
Trustee, MeshWorks
+447929625244
H.Nicholson@rhul.ac.uk



Peter Macdonald
Trustee, MeshWorks
+447976494298
peter.macdonald@equans.com



Receipts and payments accounts

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For the period from	1st April 2021	To	31st March 2022
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations and Legacies	-	-	-	-	-
Charitable Activities	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	-	-	-	-	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	-	-	-	-	-
A3 Payments					
Charitable Activities	-	-	-	-	-
Raising Funds	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	-	-	-	-	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	-	-	-	-	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	-	-	-	-	-

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds				
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	-	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets				
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets				
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
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		-	-
		-	-
		-	-



B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Peter Macdonald	12.01.2023
	Helen Nicholson	12.01.2023