

# VULCANA

Annual Report 2018



Image: Chloe Callistemon

## **Operational Report**

2018 has been a pivotal year in Vulcana's history. After 18 years in our home at Brisbane Powerhouse, we were advised our lease would be finishing. The results of the ABIF business operations review demonstrated the social enterprise model of the organisation was not sustainable and unless further growth could be made, or new income streams activated, the organisation would not be able to continue to trade. These factors, triggered a search for new premises, and identified that the ability to secure subsidised premises was key to the organisations future sustainability and would provide an opportunity for a focussed philanthropic push.

An investment was made in a 12 month mentoring program for Angela, Yonna and Nadia with Hancock Creative to focus the marketing efforts of the the organisation through web and social media efforts.

Internally we restructured the staff roles and Yonna took on the Training Centre Manager role, whilst Angela moved her energies into fundraising and core income growth in the newly created Development Manager role.

We continued to exceed our expected capacity with the delivery of a fabulous creative program and the workshops remained largely stead with slight decreases reflecting sector trends.

At the end of the year, a Brisbane City Council premises at Comslie was identified, as appropriate and would be coming up for tender. We secured our ongoing premises at Brisbane Powerhouse until June 2019 giving the organisation security and time to submit a competitive tender.

The organisation has moved through a challenging 2 years, but new opportunities are looking bright. I would like to thank the core staff, trainers and Board for their continued enthusiasm, hard work and vision.

Jo Pratt  
General Manager

## **Notes to Financial Report**

Whilst our income and expenditure levels remained largely stable over the course of the year, the organisation continued the pattern of loss from 2017. It is critical for the ongoing financial sustainability that the organisation increase its income potential and also philanthropic support. Uncertainty around future venue lease had some impact on workshop income this period, alongside a general sector trend of reduced participation

## Workshop Program

### Vulcademy: Adult Workshop Program

Yonna Simon's role was expanded to Training centre at the start of 2018 after working alongside Angela Willock on the Kids program in 2017. Her wealth of skills and experience helped to maintain the Vulcademy program throughout 2018. Circus attendance was down across Brisbane overall in 2018, however Vulcademy managed to stay strong and continue to offer a diverse program, as a key player in circus training; a vibrant and exciting program with clear pathways for beginner, intermediate and advanced level training.

Huge thanks go to our incredible team of trainers, who continue to make our workshops amongst the best in Australia.

Vulcana offered a number of bursary / discounted places to women trans and non-binary people who aren't in a position to be able to afford to pay themselves. The feedback that we've received from these members of our community has been incredibly positive.



Image: Alana Freelance

### Showcase 2018

Students had the opportunity to share their skills in our 2018 showcase through the theme of 'rebel women'. On a sticky December evening, our community packed out the Stores Studio to witness the results of 12 months of hard training, show lights and all! It was wonderful to welcome the Vulcana Kids to our showcase again too who explored rebel women and magical animals as their theme!

## **Vulcana Kids / Teens**

The Vulcana Kids program grew from strength to strength in 2018, with strong class attendance numbers at both Junction Park and New Farm locations.

Vulcana's Teen class that was launched in 2015 at Brisbane Powerhouse, New Farm, has grown steadily and is now a vital link between the adults and kids program. We have a teen who has successfully completed his trainer traineeship and is now training new teens.

With the current strong position with the Kids and Teens program now plus the interest from our new Colmslie community, we are looking forward to growing our kids and teens program in our new venue next year.

We were unsuccessful in securing any funding for See-Saw over 2018, however we were committed to sponsoring and/or facilitating community exchanges for several children who would not have been able to attend otherwise.

## **Vulcana Program**

The artistic program for 2018 continued to facilitate strong mentoring opportunities for artists and creators, including the Incubator and Artist In Residence programs as well as punching above our weight in terms of artistic outcomes.

## **Incubator Program**

In 2018 Vulcana supported 15 artists to create new short circus works with the support of Vulcana director, Celia White as mentor. It particularly welcomed queer and trans artists to develop work towards a cabaret, Peculiar Rabble, that celebrated queer stories and aesthetics. Some artists were returning to continue their creative development and one of those artists was supported through the Artist-in-Residence program to create a full length solo work that has been conceived and developed across 2 Incubators.



## **Artists In Residence Program**

2018 AIR artists included Alex Mizzen who presented her solo work, Invisible Things, that won Pick of the Festival and Top Reviewers Pick from Anywhere Theatre Festival, and was nominated for a Matilda Award; Umwelt Collective from the Gold Coast presented Re:membering, a showing of their beautiful and delicate new work about family connections and how to love; and Mayu Muto, a member of GUSH circus, created Mutating Roots, an exploration of a Japanese woman's experiences in Australia, torn between cultural worlds, navigating assumptions and stereotypes and accepted into the 2019 Adelaide Fringe Festival.

## **As If No-one Is Watching**

Vulcana produced a major new work in 2018, *As If No-one Is Watching*, in partnership with WaW Dance and Line 26, now Digitalmakers, in and around the Vulcana Studio. This new and very successful performance work integrated circus, dance, digital technologies, installation and ensemble performance, and created a very moving outcome for performers and audiences.

It brought generations of women together from a range of experiences, cultural backgrounds and skills to collaborate and share insights and ideas and create a cohesive ensemble across ages and art forms.



**Image: Rod Noendeng**

*As If No-one Is Watching* successfully incorporated digital media into the performance that was new territory for Vulcana and WaW Dance. The actual success of this medium was twofold – one, that the delivery of storytelling in the voice of the story teller directly into the ear of the listener created an intimacy that was compelling, and two, that the process of bringing these performers together in a trusting environment created the space for important stories to be shared.

Vulcana was extremely happy with the performance outcome of this process. Creating an installation of individual performances for audience to experience in their own way and bringing these performers together in a large ensemble to present a dynamic and moving group performance was an immense achievement.



### **Ghosts of a Goddess at WOW Festival 2018**

Vulcana created a stunning wall dance performance, Ghosts of a Goddess, to launch the WOW Festival, 2018 at Brisbane Powerhouse. The performance, on the front wall of the Powerhouse, was spectacular and an exciting opportunity to create a performance piece utilising the dynamics of aerial dance and the opportunity of accessing the 20m wall.

**One Billion Rising Vulcana**, in partnership with WaW Dance, Nia Australia and Brisbane Domestic Violence Service, again danced in Queen St Mall to advocate for an end to violence and abuse against women and to raise funds to assist BDVS to assist survivors of abuse.

### **Circus Connections**

Vulcana returned to Junction Park State School to deliver Circus Connections, again in partnership with TriCare Aged Care Residence, the Annerley Stephens History Group and this time the local RSL, to offer circus workshops, play and intergenerational exchanges. The student group came from different classes and ages and didn't all know each other before joining the project. During the project they found a way to work together and form a Circus Connections bond.

The highlight of the project was the visits by the students to the Aged Care residence to run the workshops at "their place". Many more of the residents could join these events and watch and interact with the students as they played and displayed their developing skills.

The project created a unique and lasting record of the project that the students loved, in the form of a digital animation from hand drawn images of the participants throughout the project. This art work in response to the project was created by Ashleigh Djokic, a student at Griffith University's Queensland College of Art.



Image: Alana Freelance

The project introduced a valued community member, John O'Hagen, 97 years old, to the school and wider community. John, and his assistant George Anderson, from the Stephens sub branch RSL, opened and closed the project with a display of his 150 year old restored barrel organ. This gave refreshing insights into the contribution our elderly community members can offer to students.

The final outcome was the presentation of a performed workshop in the Annerely Arcade, an overlooked part of the Annerely shopping precinct on busy Ipswich Rd with the students dressed in spectacular animal costumes made by Velvet Pesu.

### **Cabarets**

Vulcana presented Peculiar Rabble, a cabaret of queer and trans artists and others from the Incubator to an enthusiastic audience.

Vulcana presented two unique programs of unruly, funny, evocative performance from Vulcana collaborators - alumni, teachers, performers, and inspirers, Raise the Roof Cabaret Season, to celebrate Vulcana's fabulously diverse and creative history. It was wonderful to invite artists from across Vulcana's current and past community of artists to contribute their work to these events and to celebrate the history of Vulcana in the Stores Studio over the last 18 years in anticipation of an impending move for the organisation.



Image: Chloe Callistemon

Vulcana auspiced and supported the **Circus Corridor**, a Gold Coast based collective, developing a culture of contemporary circus on the Gold Coast and who created The Rising for the Commonwealth Games in 2018.

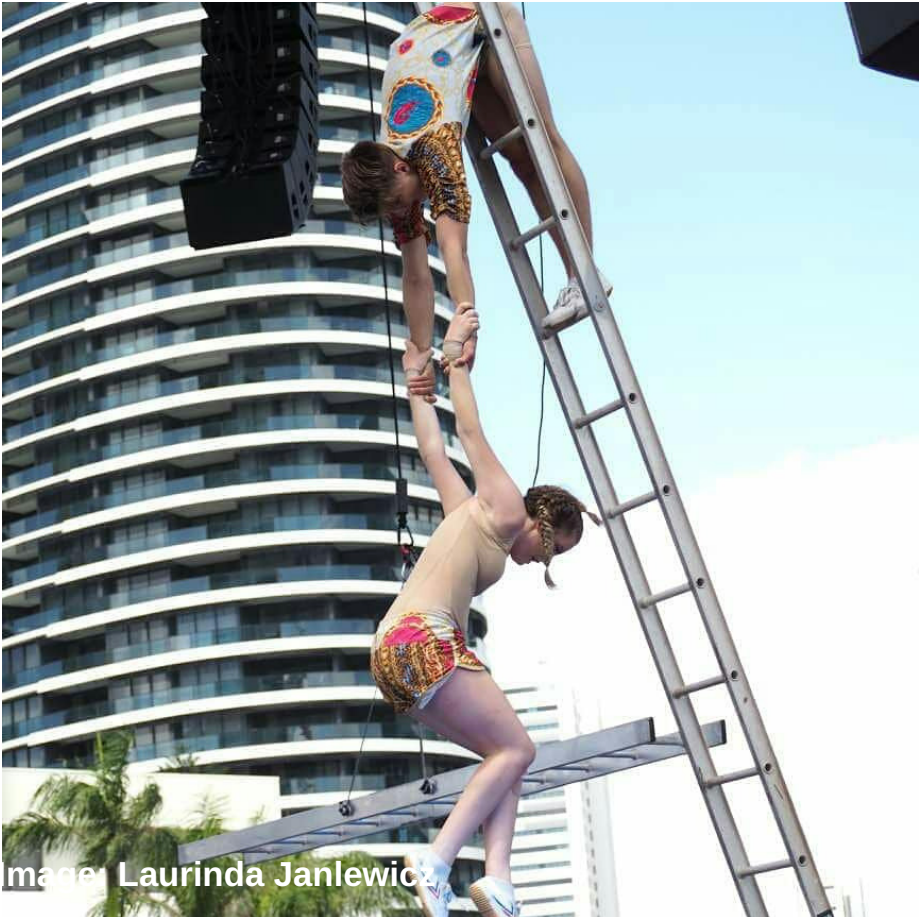


Image: Laurinda Janlewick