

VULCANA

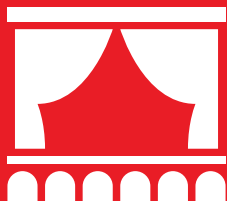


**ANNUAL REPORT
2021**

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2021 OVERVIEW



71 Performers



6 Vacant Room
Residencies



102 Artists

9 PROGRAMS

12 PERFORMANCES

82 FULL TERM
WORKSHOPS

38 HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

20 NEW WORKS



1360

Audience
Members



1200

Workshop
Participants



5,828 LIKES



2,595 FOLLOWERS



2,390 SUBSCRIBERS



MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR CELIA WHITE

2021 was an opportunity for Vulcana to finally fully welcome our community to our new venue after a year of instability and lockdowns. We were able to realise a full program of creative activities, welcome students, artists, participants and audiences as we continued to navigate pandemic uncertainty but with a bumpy easing of restrictions to arts organisations and venues. We were able to continue to develop the venue to create a flexible space that expanded its circus capacity. It continued to welcome practitioners from other artforms and for diverse uses, and build its reputation as a new Arts Hub on the southside of Brisbane.

2021 was a profound relief to get back to what we do well, using circus to connect people and communities and to inspire confidence and creativity in everyone who participates. We welcomed new communities to our circus and supported new performers to find lasting benefits for themselves and their communities through the experience of shaping their stories into performance and presenting to peers, loyal audiences, new partner community members and inquisitive strangers. Vulcana uses circus to promote positive images of women, trans and non-binary genders.



Through 2021 we continued to question our representations of these bodies in this form - the range of experiences, skills and relationships we are witnessing and producing.

Vulcana's contemporary circus is flexible, adaptable and responsive to communities, performers, content, site, and audiences. The experiences of all participants and artists generate unique performance that reflects individuals' and communities' concerns and in 2021 this made Vulcana's circus distinctive, relevant and an important contribution to Queensland's ongoing cultural conversations.

MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR CELIA WHITE

Vulcana is committed to providing multiple presenting opportunities to artists and continuing to build increased audiences for new work. Vulcana continues to support and resource artists to make innovative and engaging performance. The new venue expanded these opportunities in 2021.

Community engagement through 2021 has been very positive with multiple partner organisations involved in delivery, diverse and unexpected performance sites utilised throughout the immediate locale, re-engaging with traditional theatre spaces, new audiences engaged through the program, emerging and established artists being supported to devised and present new work, and discover the resources in this flexible venue, and engagement with local, state and federal levels of government all supportive of the cultural and social value Vulcana is bringing to its new home in Morningside.



Celia White

CELIA WHITE

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

BENA BROWN

In 2021 Vulcana continued to navigate the challenges of a global pandemic – lockdowns, restrictions, social distancing, mask mandates, vaccinations, COVID Safe plans – all contributing to uncertainty for the arts sector and demanding flexibility in the way we delivered our program of work. Over the course of 2021, Vulcana Circus was able to steadily increase capacity in performance works, student workshops, connections with diverse community groups, and collaborations and partnerships to further broaden our reach in Queensland.

2021 saw the financial status of Vulcana Circus stabilise, with ongoing support from federal government JobSeeker payments to retain experienced and valuable staff and trainers, and consistency in delivering our core business successfully, with innovative short courses and new offerings available to reinspire our student community. This financial position allowed us to plan to increase our staffing to include an additional administration officer, Jess Harlen (commencing in August 2021) to support the tireless work of Celia White and Angela Willock. COVID-19 impacted our financial position over several months with cancellations and refunds for workshops and performances.

Numerous successful partnerships with external organisations were a highlight of 2021 – community groups such as Hurricane Stars and Micah Projects, and arts organisations such as QPAC, The Judith Wright Centre, Women of the World Festival and Arts Queensland. With these collaborations, Vulcana Circus continued its commitment to create works that represent diverse bodies and experiences, many of which continue to be untold in mainstream arts organisations.

In 2021, Vulcana Circus underwent significant strategic planning to develop a program of performance pieces; workshops for adults, youth and children; and community sector engagement. This planning, with the support of Michelle Grant-Iramu, successfully led to Vulcana Circus being awarded Arts Queensland funding over 3 years, to 2024.

Thanks to all the staff, trainers and volunteers that give Vulcana Circus such a strong identity in the Queensland arts sector. We see you and appreciate every second you dedicate to the vision of Vulcana Circus.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

BENA BROWN

Acknowledgement especially to the persistently joyful way that Celia White, Angela Willock, Nadia Jade and Jess Harlen go about their work at Vulcana Circus, and for continuing to deliver a program of work that inspires.

Thanks also to the Vulcana Circus Board of 2021- Sally Walker, Brooke Sinclair, Shona McKenzie, and Nadia Jade. Heartfelt thanks to Sally Walker for her organisational prowess as Secretary, and Nadia Jade for her long-standing knowledge of all things marketing and arts management, both of whom stepped down from the Board at the end of 2021. We welcome Arianne Wright and Kellie-Anne Robinson to the Board in 2022.



BENA BROWN





ABOUT VULCANA

Vulcana Circus is a not-for-profit arts and recreation organisation that works with the circus traditions of inclusiveness, strength, excitement and courage to transform and empower individuals and communities.

From our independent Arts Hub in Brisbane, we create a safe space where children, women, trans and non binary students can overcome barriers to gender equality, and develop strength and confidence through training in, and performance of, circus skills that have traditionally otherwise been gender specific.

Through risk and the subsequent self-trust inherent in circus, Vulcana promotes courage in the expansion of one's own ability, and fosters healthy relationships in a respectful environment.

We advocate that all underrepresented voices belong at the heart of social change, and therefore inclusivity is a core value of Vulcana, where we endeavour to involve diverse stories, cultures, bodies and abilities throughout the creation of our programs.

"Home of the Brave, Strong & Daring"

As a not-for-profit organisation, we deliver circus programs to disadvantaged sectors who otherwise may not have access, so that students are provided with opportunities to thrive as individuals and as pillars of their communities, collectively progressing the fundamental human right of gender equality through the arts.



2021 WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Our workshop programs offer full term opportunities for students to engage in learning circus skills and short holiday programs in specialty skills. These workshops are open to adults who identify as women, trans and non binary, and our youth workshops are open to all genders and range from fun and fitness, through to skill development for emerging and professional artists.

We also deliver community workshops, corporate workshops and in schools workshops that allow people to build confidence, trust, body awareness and spark creativity.

- 82 in house workshop programs across the year
- 18 community workshops
- The expansion of offerings, adding 11 new specialty skill terms or short courses

- 9 Vulcademy classes participated in creating ensemble works, as well as 5 solo acts by students, as part of the annual Showcase event.
- 4 workshop terms that led to public performance opportunities

- The delivery of Act Lab - a performance making workshop that culminated in performance opportunities

- See Saw Circus sponsorships - 12 funded places to financially disadvantaged students
- 23 circus trainers employed
- 2 traineeships delivered

A young woman with long brown hair, wearing a yellow long-sleeved top and black leggings, is performing an aerial hoop routine. She is upside down, holding onto a large wooden hoop with her hands. The background shows a gymnasium with a brick wall, a blue mat, and other people in the background.

VULCANA YOUTH PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS 2021

- 34 in house workshop programs delivered across the year
- 9 community workshops
- 1 regional circus intensive delivered

- The expansion of youth classes, with aerial specialty classes added
- Showcase opportunity given to all youth students to perform

- Sponsorships - 7 funded places to financially disadvantaged students
- 8 circus trainers employed
- 1 traineeship delivered



**2021
ARTISTIC
PROGRAM**



CIRCUS EXCHANGE

Circus Exchange was an exciting opportunity to invite women from Muslim communities across Brisbane to Vulcana.

Vulcana established a new partnership with Hurricane Stars, a Logan-based organisation that caters to culturally and linguistically diverse women who are from Islamic communities across the broader Brisbane region. Supported by Multicultural Australia, and inviting a number of Vulcana students, we delivered a 9-week program of circus-based activities that built confidence, group cohesion, explored new physical opportunities in a safe environment, and created an important cultural exchange between women. Participants all reported the strength of the feeling of community that was generated through the workshop group, and increased confidence and expanded trust in their own bodies.

Facilitators were supported by Dr Huma Kanwal from Centre for Islamic Thought and Education to understand cultural issues they need to be considerate of, and how to ensure a safe place for these women to try new things, an opportunity so rare, according to Hurricane Stars, as it is almost impossible to find activity providers willing to create this kind of exclusive and private space necessary for Muslim women to be able to participate.

This project was supported by Arts Queensland, Brisbane City Council, and in-kind support of partners.



OVER THE BACK FENCE

Over the Back Fence was an extraordinary circus adventure that took audiences on a bus tour of local sites that were filled with diverse performance.

The opportunity to create and present Over the Back Fence was a wonderful introduction for Vulcana into our local neighbourhood. This project was vital at this point in our history, moving locations after 19 years in New Farm. It gave existing students inspiration and satisfaction, inspired new student participation, generated new artists, welcomed audiences inside the venue for the first time and showed the potential of our new site. Over the Back Fence supported the creation of 12 new small works made by new, emerging and professional performers.

Leading audiences through the body of the building to an unused outside area for the first performance, our bus conductor tour guides then ushered everyone onto waiting buses to journey to a community garden to witness a series of small performance works, on to the local laundromat to witness dance work on the back deck and Deaf theatre amongst the washing machines, and then to a local brewery to witness a cabaret of aerial performance, before returning to Vulcana for burlesque, the music of Beauty and the Beats, and projected animations by Ashleigh Djokic.

This was epic theatre that used unexpected sites, audience interaction, and multiple artforms. Audiences were thrilled by their experiences, and delighted by the spaces, bus journeys, range of performances, and their “bus conductor” MCs.

The project was supported by Arts Queensland, Brisbane City Council, and in-kind support of partners.



SEEN BUT NOT HER

Seen But Not Her was a unique fusion of classical music with circus and movement, about women, produced entirely by women, and celebrating and examining historical and recent assumptions of the feminine. Musicians played the music of women composers, including Queensland composer, Nicole Murphy. And physical performers, as muses, or the spirit of absent composers, or as themselves in relationship to other women artists, explored their relationship to the musicians, their instruments and the changing musical landscape.

This project was a victim of 2 years of the pandemic over a series of cancelled performance opportunities, interrupted creative developments, that resulted in changes in musicians and circus performers. Finally, in 2021 we were supported by the Judith Wright Arts Centre to present the performance in the theatre. The work was exciting and the performance team was committed and innovative. On the first day of bumping into the theatre a snap lockdown was called. After years of interruption this was devastating. The lockdown was due to lift on the evening of the last scheduled performance. Supported by the theatre, the cast and crew entered the performance space at 6pm, set up lighting states, warmed up and did a lightning fast run-through of this brand-new work, and at 7.30pm presented one performance to a brave and enthusiastic audience willing to leave the safety of their homes to join a crowd in a public place to witness live performance.

This work was not only a representation of creative women, who have been historically and presently overlooked, the interaction of circus and music in a new and exciting collaboration, but also the importance and need for audiences to share the witnessing of live arts in the face of our ongoing pandemic circumstances.

This project was supported by Arts Queensland, Women of the World Festival, and in-kind support of The Judith Wright Arts Centre.



RESISTANCE CABARET

Vulcana cabarets are an opportunity to support emerging artists and provide an opportunity to all artists to test new works. They are celebratory, supportive and unifying. They generate energy and inspiration and invite artists from the Vulcana community and the broader arts community. This was the first cabaret in the new venue after a long year without this avenue for presentation. It was MCed by two artists from Brotherhood of the Wordless and represented an appropriately eclectic range of artists and artforms to an enthusiastic and socially distanced audience.

CINEMATATA CIRCUS

Using the expansive white walls of the venue as a projection site for film, this is a cinema lounge that brings performance and film together. This event showed DV8's *Cost of Living*, featuring Kareena Oates, one of the founders of Vulcana, and with performances from More Than Mime.

STREET SERENADES - BRISBANE FESTIVAL

Vulcana delivered workshops in Nundah, through Northside Connect, offering legal advice, domestic violence support and family/community services to those living on the north side of Brisbane, to women survivors of domestic abuse. These women were invited to participate in our performance project *Circus in a Tea Cup*.

This project was supported by Brisbane Festival as part of the Street Serenades program.





CIRCUS IN A TEACUP

Circus in a Tea Cup was a moving piece of theatre, presented at The Cremorne, QPAC, that was the creative response of the performers, drawn from domestic abuse survivors, sourced through our partnership with Brisbane Domestic Violence Project, and members of the Vulcana circus community. In partnership with Micah Projects and QPAC, Vulcana created a powerful exchange between women of different experiences and provided performance support to new performers to produce a powerful work using circus, movement, storytelling and video projections to communicate the power of resistance, the triumph and joy of connection with other women, and the reigniting of trust in oneself.

Through the making of Circus in a Tea Cup women from the Vulcana community and Brisbane Domestic Violence built deep connections. There was a lot of trust and respect nurtured throughout the process, ensuring feelings and experiences were valued, and that sensitive stories, when shared, were dealt with respectfully.

Circus in a Tea Cup was an incredible validation of the value of using the arts in the process of healing. We worked with the notion of recovery, that each image and idea was rewriting these women's narratives and claiming back their power. Circus in a Tea Cup was a powerful example of the diversity of contemporary circus, valuing diverse bodies, experiences, stories and physical images that together produce profound theatre.

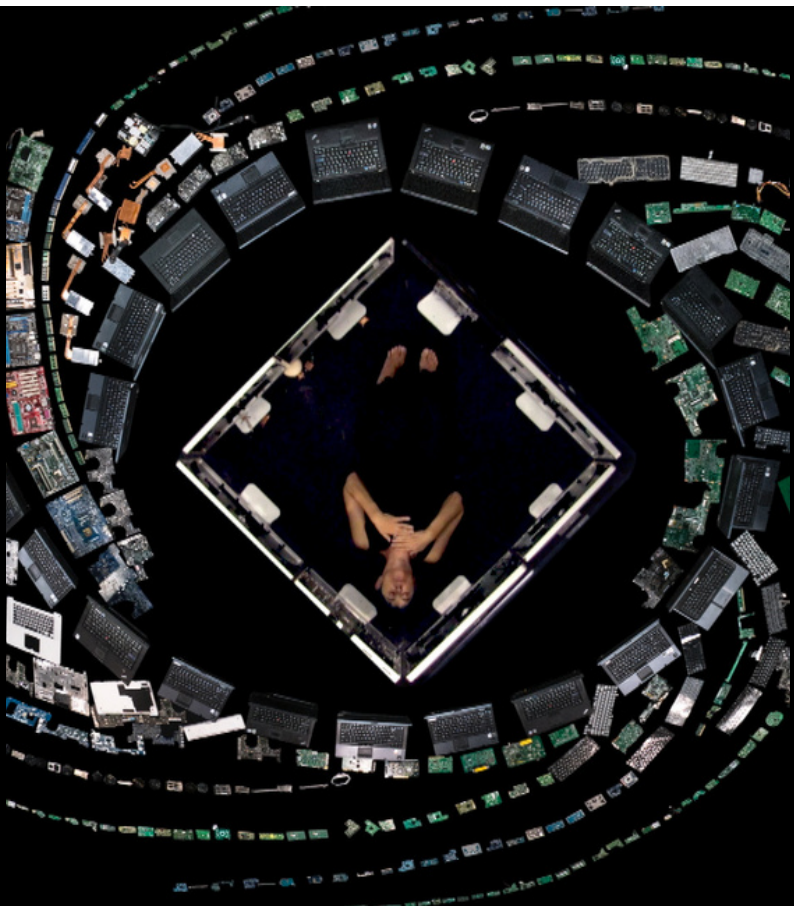
This was a unique partnership with QPAC that supported a process of community performance and trusted that this work would produce quality theatre. It produced a very successful season and the start of an ongoing partnership.

This project was supported by Micah Projects and Arts Queensland, and in-kind support from Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

VACANT ROOM RESIDENCIES

Moment of Inertia

Creative development and presentation of “Sometimes I Say Your Name Out Loud” as part of Anywhere Festival - a dark circus meditation on loss, friendship, love and moving forward.



Suzon Fuks

Rehearsal and online presentation of “Be Like Body – Obsolete”, as part of Magdalena Online Festival. Made in collaboration with six writers: Amaranta Osorio, Annie Abrahams, Nasim Khosravi, Parvathy Baul, Ya-Ling Peng and Younghee Park, from different cultures and in their own languages contributing to the process of making the performance, e-book and audio track, by responding to the prompts:
How do we advance technology without giving up our sense of humanity?
What does it mean to become / be obsolete?

VACANT ROOM RESIDENCIES

Lauren Watson and Celia White

Development and rehearsal of “Nerve”, presented at Queensland Theatre Company as part of The Undercover Artist Festival, a bold new work that uncovered trauma, grief, discrimination, and disability identity. Starting with nerve pain and asking the question, “Do you have the nerve?” Lauren describes her everyday challenges and triumphs, and celebrates her identity through circus, movement and storytelling.



See Saw Theatre

Redevelopment and presentation of “Outhouse”, by Phoebe Manning and Sarah O’Shanesy as Luna and Hope, two friends on a quest to leave planet earth in their outhouse rocket, to give the planet the rest and rejuvenation she needs. The Outhouse is an all ages, interactive clown show combining physical theatre, shadow puppetry and animation which celebrates future thinking, resilience and the power of the imagination.

VACANT ROOM RESIDENCIES

Bare Legs Circus

Rehearsal assistance for their first full length work, "DISTURBO", a striking exploration of self-revelation and relationship, of queer embodiment, presented as part of Anywhere Festival.



Polytoxic

Rehearsal assistance for "Demolition", presented at Powerhouse Theatre for Brisbane Festival. DEMOLITION is an explosion of cabaret, theatre and social activism set to rebuild the world from the ashes up. Exploring topics such as Consent, De-colonisation, Stolen Land and just trying to get home safely at night. Fierce femme tradies taking a sledgehammer to the system.

Polytoxic take up residence at Vulcana's Arts Hub for their project to project headquarters.

Statement of Financial Performance

Year Ending December 31, 2021

Income	2021	2020
Donations and Sponsorships	13,695	47,544
Grants and Subsidies	105,737	305,090
Workshop Fees	221,282	105,378
Other Income	141,448	543,172
Total Income	482,162	543,172
Expenses	2021	2020
Administration Costs	107,970	73,893
Sales and Marketing	7,875	2,783
Staffing	254,299	316,951
	370,144	393,627
Closing Retained Profits	112,018	149,545

Statement of Financial Position

Year Ending December 31, 2021

Assets	2021	2020
Current Assets	217,815	264,968
Non Current Assets	40,841	22,915
Total Asset	258,656	287,883
Liabilities	2021	2020
Current Liabilities	49,566	191,976
Non Current Liabilities	1,164	-
Total Liabilities	50,730	191,976
Members Funds		
/Net Assets	207,926	95,907

THE TEAM

Vulcana Management Committee

CHAIR	Bena Brown
SECRETARY	Sally Walker
TREASURER	Brooke Sinclair
GENERAL MEMBER	Shona Joyce McKenzie
GENERAL MEMBER	Ash Jones
GENERAL MEMBER	Kel Robinson
GENERAL MEMBER	Ari Wright
GENERAL MEMBER	Nadia Jade

Staff Members

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR	Celia White
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR	Angela Willock
MARKETING COORDINATOR	Nadia Jade
ADMINISTRATOR	Jess Harlen
HEAD RIGGER	Helen Clifford

VULCANA



THANK YOU

All of the Vulcanistas | Our Trainers and Trainees | Volunteers
Participants | Performers | Guest Artists

Parents, Partners, Caregivers and Families | Prize Donors

Arts Queensland | Micah Projects | Judith Wright Arts Centre | Women of the World
Festival

Queensland Government | Brisbane City Council | Queensland Performing Arts
Centre

Councillors Kara Cook and Lisa Attwood | Hon Dianne Farmer



**Queensland
Government**



**Brisbane
City Council**



MICAH PROJECTS



Breaking Social Isolation
Building Community

**JUDITH
WRIGHT
ARTS CENTRE**

Vulcana acknowledges the Jagera and Turrbal peoples, the custodians of the lands and seas on which we live and seek inspiration. We pay our respects to all Elders past, present, and emerging. We recognise that this land now called Australia always was and always will be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land and the great privilege it is to create and hold community here today.



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