

ANNUAL REPORT

VULCANA
2022



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2022 Overview



WELCOMED

1115 Audience Members
2900 Workshop Participants



EMPLOYED

54 Artists / Arts workers



SUPPORTED

78 Artists
7 Vacant Room Residencies



SUPPORTED BY

35 Volunteers



DELIVERED

11 Programs
20 Performances
82 Full Term Workshops
38 Holiday Programs
28 Circus Deliveries
14 New Works



5,828 LIKES



2,842 FOLLOWERS



2,747 SUBSCRIBERS



Chair's Message



*...driven by a clear vision,
aligned to core values,
and a willingness to
disrupt societal power
imbalances through the
harnessing of, and
sharing of stories through
circus.*



Over the course of my tenure as Board Chair of Vulcana Circus, 2022 has certainly felt stabilising, focussed, and expansive. We have endured years of instability related to moving venues, and all the bigness of COVID. But 2022 allowed us to settle, step (or leap!) into what we know, and build a strong platform for growth in the years ahead.

In terms of “stabilising”, 2022 saw us settle into our space in Morningside, and deliver a full program of in-house workshops, Vacant Room Residencies, and performances. This was the first year we were able to offer a program to this extent after the restrictions and uncertainty during COVID. In 2022, Vulcana commenced its multi-year funding from Arts Queensland allowing us some breathing room to conduct long-term planning and strategy around our creative program, governance, and philanthropic efforts.

This financial stability offered us the opportunity to really focus. What does Vulcana represent? What is important to us? What do we believe in? Our projects and offerings allowed Vulcana to deliver a program focussed on our core beliefs and values – the diverse experiences of women, non-binary and trans people through culture, climate activism, gender-based violence, and to celebrate our strong, our brave and our daring. We continue to be the only circus company in Queensland to do this - driven by a clear vision, aligned to core values, and a willingness to disrupt societal power imbalances through the harnessing of, and sharing of stories through circus.

In 2022, we expanded in many ways. Our workshop offerings diversified, and we have seen more than a 140% increase in workshop participants in the 2022 year. Incredible. It has been a real delight seeing the Youth Program grow and as a local community member, hearing parents rave about Vulcana and seeing kids (and grown-ups) in their Vulcana merch in the Morningside, Balmoral, Bulimba, Norman Park, and Cannon Hill locales. We have also been able to increase relationships with local businesses and politicians.

Investment in our staff is a priority for the Board, and in 2022 we were in the position to increase core staffing hours and positions, traineeships offered and completed, and fund professional development and training for staff.

2022 ended with us widening our reach through a community driven fundraising event through Creative Partnerships where we received matched funding for every dollar donated. Thank you to every single person who made a donation during this campaign, and to those regular givers who donate to Vulcana on a monthly basis. Every dollar donated is reinvested back into our organisation – to support new programs, the upkeep of equipment, new equipment and offerings, to support staff and their development, and to support creative development pieces in 2023. You create this community and we thank you.

Thank you to our incredible staff and trainers – you are the heartbeat of Vulcana Circus. You each turn up living and breathing the Vulcana values and spirit, and that has a ripple effect outwards to our students, their families and friends, and society at large. You can and do make a difference in every handstand you spot, foothang you encourage, drop you teach, and thoughtful check-in you invite our students to share. Thanks especially to our wonderful staff - Celia White (Artistic Director), Angela Willock (Programs Manager), Jess Harlen (Operations Manager), Victoria Barlow (Marketing Manager) and Helen Clifford (Head Rigger) for your bravery, perseverance, joy and commitment to Vulcana. Thank you also to the Vulcana Board, who this year saw more of each other than the past 2 years - Ashleigh Jones (Secretary), Brooke Sinclair (Treasurer), Shona McKenzie, Kellie-Anne Robinson, and Arianne Wright (and welcome baby Bella!). Thanks for your generosity, vision, focus and willingness to support the incredible work of Vulcana Circus.



BENA BROWN

Artistic Directors Message

We settled into our venue in a new way, feeling like we could put down roots and make this Arts Hub a home for a thriving Vulcana community.



2022 felt like we should be able to return to (a new) normal after the pandemic rollercoaster of the last few years. It was not the complete end to a pandemic as we had all hoped and there was a level of exhaustion to having made it through something devastatingly epic and historic. While the previous years had been so exciting to be able to survive and thrive and produce work that was relevant to the times we were in, 2022 promised a return to a way of working that we knew and understood.

Vulcana was the successful recipient of Organisations Funding through Arts Queensland which is a huge achievement for the organisation. 2022 was the first year with this new level of funding after a gap of 10 years. This has meant that we can use the stability this gives us to expand our other fundraising efforts, which included in 2022 a successful Plus 1 application for matched funding through Creative Partnerships that includes ongoing mentorship to develop our skills in this area. We were able to extend core staff employment.

In 2022 we were able to see the face-to-face classes grow in attendance and breadth, and in particular witness the growth of the Vulcana Youth program. We were able to deliver for the first time in a long time a professional development project to support trainees and trainers with skills development, inspiration and important teaching resources such as mental health first aid.

We settled into our venue in a new way, feeling like we could put down roots and make this Arts Hub a home for a thriving Vulcana community.

We invited audiences to the venue in increased numbers for our Cinemata Circus event featuring local film-makers, for an exuberant cabaret, Glimmer Cabaret, and for a Showcase for Vulcana Youth and Vulcademy.

As we prepared for a creative development for IMPACT, a community response to climate change, Southeast Queensland was ravaged by flooding rains that caused significant anxiety to already damaged neighbourhoods and their inhabitants. While this highlighted the need to gather people together to discuss performance strategies for climate change it also impacted the presentation of another ecologically driven project, Disappearing Acts.

The performance season of this project, that took mobile performances about the loss of biodiversity to green spaces across 3 council areas, had many venues cancelled, rescheduled, and re-cancelled as the rain fell and fell and fell. But we delivered this project to audiences at every opportunity the skies cleared. As with the precursor to this project in 2020, Vulcana took performances to delighted audiences in the face of adversity!



Celia White

About Vulcana

Home of the Brave, Strong & Daring

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.

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. We create supported pathways for new, emerging and professional artists to learn, create and produce new work.

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.



Vulcana's Strategic Plan 2022-2025 is driven by three strategic priorities:

1. Artistic Ambition

Creating artistically ambitious experiences to deliver diverse and distinctive storytelling.

2. Impactful Partnerships

Connecting diverse communities through artistic and cultural exchange.

3. Sustainability

Growing a sustainable Arts Precinct and contributing to the vibrancy of Queensland's performing arts sector.



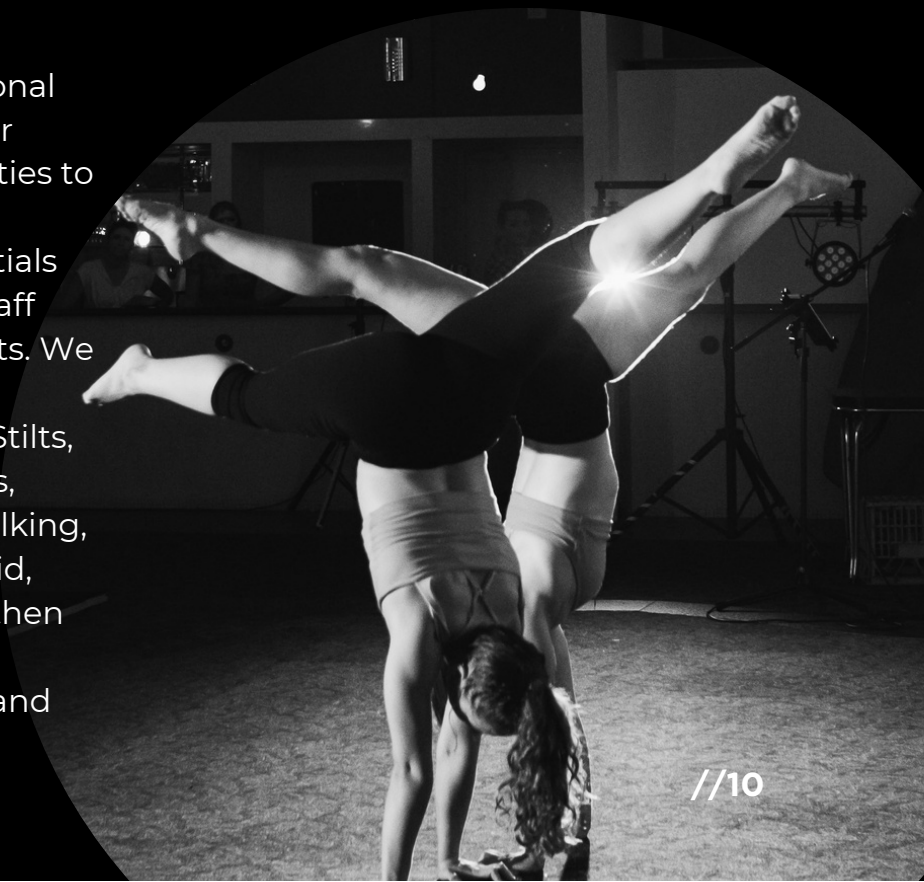
Workshops Program

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 through our Circus Exchange program, and workshops in the community, corporate workshops and in schools workshops through our Circus Delivery program that allow people to build confidence, trust, body awareness and spark creativity.

In 2022 we launched a professional development stream to give our trainers and trainees opportunities to develop their teaching skills, interpersonal skills, and credentials to enrich both the skill of our staff and the offerings to our students. We ran professional development sessions in: Lyra, Chinese Pole, Stilts, Creative development Exercises, Unicycle, Group Bike, Globe Walking, Fire safety, Mental health first aid, and First Aid. These skills were then able to be utilised within our programs, bringing fresh skills and inspiration to our students.

"I found the professional development classes extremely helpful and definitely incorporated those skills into classes. In particular I've been able to use the acro balance skills, unicycling skills, and some lyra skills in the youth classes. I think getting that devoted time to develop our skill sets was very beneficial as was getting a structured way to teach skills. For example - while I knew some acro skills already, being able to break them down and order them in a way that beginners could learn was very helpful" - SOPHIE, YOUTH TRAINER



VULCANA

Program Highlights



Vulcademy Adults 2022

Workshop participants: 2,900
Full term programs: 80
Holiday programs: 36
Outsourced/Community workshops: 28
Offering expansions: 12 specialty skill or short courses
Classes participated in showcase: 11 classes, 2 solo performances
Classes participated in other shows: 2
See saw circus numbers: 9 sponsorships
Trainers employed: 24
Trainees employed: 4
Professional development programs delivered to trainers/trainees: 14

Vulcademy Youth 2022

Full term programs: 36
Community workshops: 7
Traineeships: 2
Circus trainers employed: 8
Expansion of Youth programs with additional aerial class added
Youth circus partnership established
A rise in student enrolments



Digital Fictions

This longer term partnership project was established between Vulcana Youth and Circus Ipswich to bring two groups of circus students to exchange their passion and ideas derived from circus experiences. In 2022 it included an exchange between the two groups of students. Using a private digital platform they could use in class and at home, they generated a resource of images and ideas.

Professional Development for Young Trainers

With the increase in Vulcana's Youth Program Vulcana delivered a program of professional development for trainees and trainers to ensure that we have the skills and facilitators necessary to deliver increased classes and class numbers across the range of circus skills offered to young people. Classes in ground and aerial skills, including teaching methods, games exchanges and student safety, were delivered and mentorship offered. The project attracted new trainees to the organisation and included First Aid training and First Aid for the Mind.

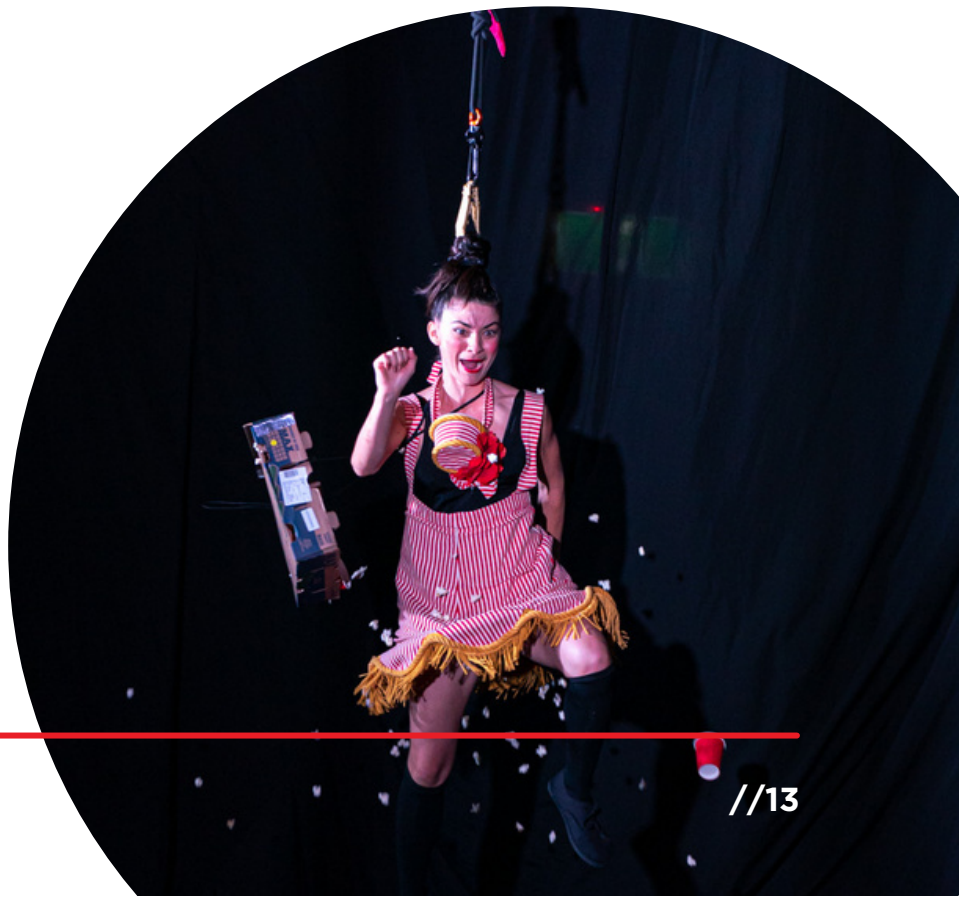


See Saw Circus

See Saw Circus provides sponsored places in Vulcademy and Vulcana youth programs. See Saw Circus students can access Vulcana classes free of charge making access for their families and support organisations achievable. See Saw Circus allows full participation across the four terms of workshops. Vulcana works with community organisations who refer students that could benefit from access to play and confidence building activities. Vulcana invites participants from community workshop and performance programs and offers places to adults who self-refer or are invited.

Showcase 2022

Hosted by the fabulous and whirlwind performer, Marianna Joslin, an alumni of Vulcana who has crafted her own work and performed and toured nationally and internationally with other circus companies, this event was a celebration of the accomplishments of students throughout 2022 to share with their family and friends. Marianna performed her hair hang, an amazing circus feat rarely performed in Australia. Classes from Vulcana Kids presented their skills, Vulcana Teens produced an epic circus version of Alice in Wonderland and nearly all classes from Vulcademy created the widest eclectic range of funny, serious, and wonderfully strange performance pieces highlighting their skills.



ARTISTIC PROGRAM 2022



Circus Exchange

Circus Exchange for Young Muslim Women

Vulcana, in partnership with Multicultural Australia (MA), Hurricane Stars, and Reclink Logan, supported young Muslim women to deliver and participate in a program of circus-based activities in Logan.

Hurricane Stars, with whom Vulcana has had an existing relationship through a program delivered for Muslim women across Brisbane in 2021, identified the lack of culturally safe and appropriate activities for women in feedback from that project and how valuable this would be for young women.

Through consultation with MA we identified potential barriers to participation and they suggested a young leadership model to address these barriers. Vulcana issued callouts to their Future Leaders Advocacy Group (FLAG) for involvement, and to Hurricane Stars and Vulcana. The young women who responded assisted with project planning to ensure the workshops were culturally safe, as well as communicating this opportunity to their communities and peers, and then supporting participants in their ongoing participation.



Circus Exchange

Vulcana employed artists highly skilled in circus and community engagement to deliver the workshops and ensured that there was cultural diversity in those artists to create more safety for young women involved. Vulcana doesn't have Muslim artists or trainees, so the involvement of the young leaders was critical to bridge any cultural gap. "This program changed my mind set. I thought it (would be) so hard for Muslim girls to join circus", Anita, young leader from FLAG.

The project also supported two trainees to develop skills in community engagement projects that is a core part of Vulcana's program.

The participants' confidence grew throughout the series, as well as their connection to each other. Their support for each other developed as they tried challenging physical and creative tasks.

"I felt like I got a good idea of what the circus entails and it was so fun! (The facilitators) acknowledged my fears and frustrations and helped me navigate that in a safe and caring environment." AISHA, WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT



Disappearing Acts

Eight artists were employed to create two new, full-length, portable works that used a van as the performance site under the umbrella name of Disappearing Acts. This project was responding to an urgent issue of loss of biodiversity and creative development was instigated with meetings with environmental scientist Ayesha Tulloch to seed images and ideas. The resulting performances asked audiences to reflect on our relationship with nature, how we value our birds, and the wild spaces that support them.

These two outcomes created very different responses.

"I was so impressed with how the artists took sometimes complex information about ecology, animal behaviour and conservation and translated them into stories that the public would understand and empathize with. It's hard to do, and they did it so well." Ayesha Tulloch

Bush Camouflage was abstract and exploratory, investigating the relationship between two artists/characters, between circus and sound making, and between objects and movement. Bush Camouflage was presented by circus performer, Abbey Church and sound artist, Jodie Rottle as two construction workers who arrive and set up to try and find the birds they need to understand each other better. Together through circus, movement and sound they call to the birds as they reconcile their urban personas to this green landscape and to each other in it.

"The setting was beautiful - the musical elements were stunning - the performers were great!" Audience member



Disappearing Acts

"I thought it was a gently, funny, peaceful show. I enjoyed watching it in the open, surrounded by my friends and community. I loved the audience participation and the way the actors used the car." Audience member

Birds of a Feather used clown and storytelling as performance modes to explore our relationships to birds. It was presented by circus performer, Mayu Muto and clown, Phoebe Manning, as Joyce and Denise - two citizen scientists on their way to the Tarkine Forest in Tasmania, who are passionate about birds and want to invite the audience to join them in their bird adventure and advocacy, with magic, storytelling, circus and dance. Together they explain their passion and encourage audience participation in saving our precious species.

"Strong moral message about climate and climate change, playful and curious, funny and poignant, there was a range of beautiful components which came together to create a really touching show." Audience member
"... Birds of a Feather was just great, so poignant and thought provoking but entertaining and fun!" Audience member

We delivered the performances to outdoor green spaces across Brisbane, Moreton Bay and Sunshine Coast council areas, under the Anywhere Festival banner, including Nudgee Beach and Bunyaville Environmental Education Centres, The Clubhouse Moorooka and the MET Maroochydore. We presented the work to the whole school at Milpera State High School and at our Vulcana Arts Hub in an outdoor setting.

Several planned venues had to be cancelled and others rescheduled due to the unprecedented rain that flooded Southeast Qld in May 2022.



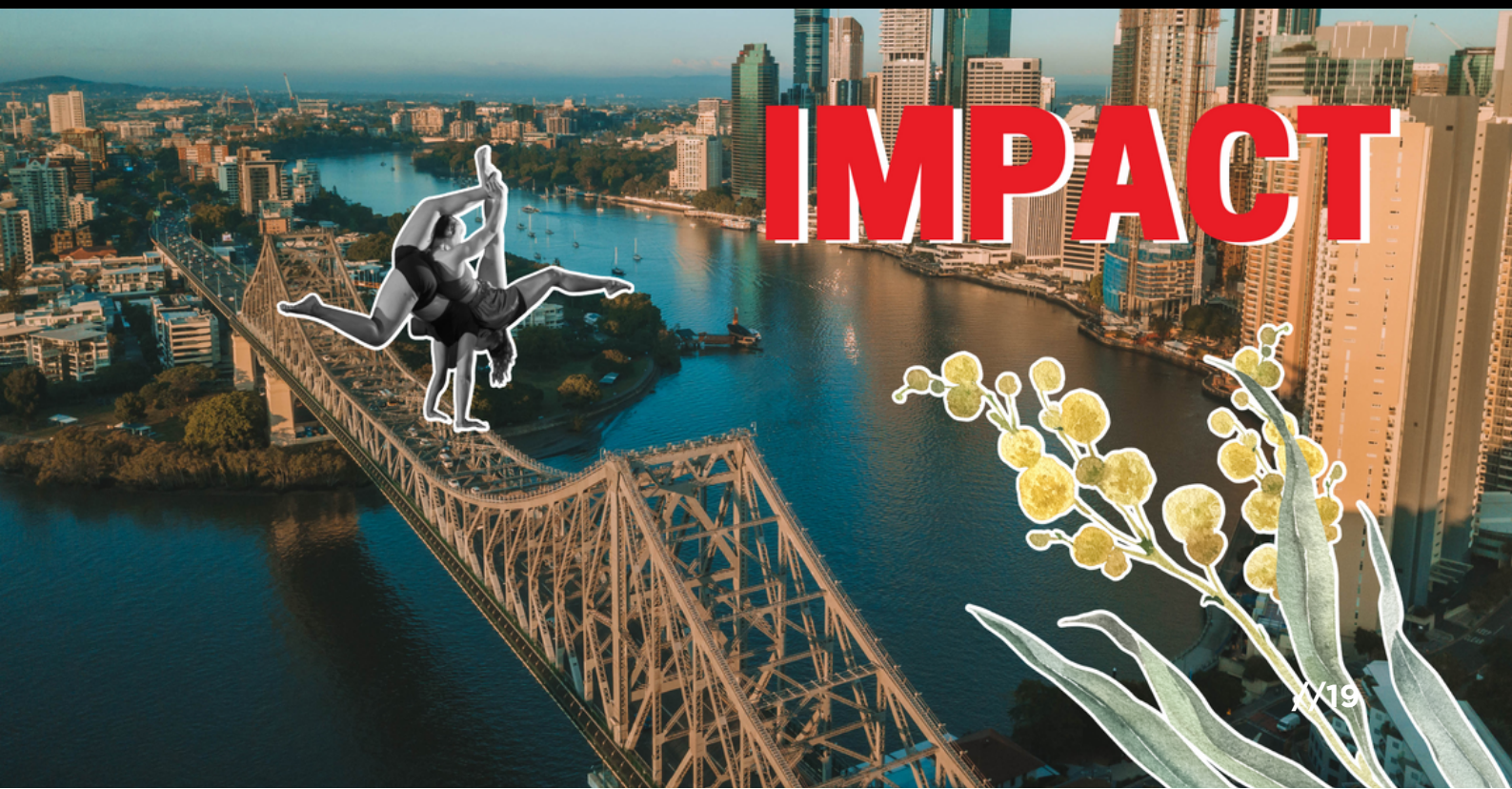
IMPACT Creative Development

To gather ideas, information, to generate images and to excite potential contributors and participants for a community performance in 2023 about climate change, Vulcana undertook this creative development through workshops and public conversation events.

Facilitated by people deeply involved in their area of climate action or research, Vulcana invited people to participate in four conversations:

Pasifika communities and climate change. Led by Mary Maselina Harm and Robati Harrison with coordination by Lisa Viliamu Jameson, they facilitated a talanoa, a beautiful conversation about the significant cultural, economic and physical impacts of climate change on Pasifika communities.

Young people and climate change. This conversation was led by climate activist, Beatrice Valek, who works with 350.org, an international organisation taking action against climate warming. She brainstormed with the group the causes of climate change, our responses to climate change and possible actions we could take to address climate change.



Social scientist, Rebecca Cunningham, who is also a creative collaborator with artists to create artworks responding to the issue and concerns of climate change, led a discussion about how art can illustrate, respond to, or inspire action against climate change, and what are the impacts of these artworks on viewers or participants.

Meleika Gesa-Fatafehi, a Torres Strait Islander and Tongan storyteller whose writing work focuses on poetry and climate change, led our final conversation. They led us through their history of climate change from the perspective of colonisation, and how this global political and economic force continues to impact First Nations communities.

Vulcana used a digital platform, Padlet, to create a digital reservoir of resources and comments from each conversation that all contributors and participants can access and use.

Vulcana delivered a series of creative developments on the themes through a collaboration and exploration between First Nations writers, Che Skeen, Aurora Liddle-Christie and Lyric Araluen and physical performers Mayu Muto, Abbey Church, Lauren Watson and Sammie Williams.

IMPACT

CONVERSATION SERIES: SCIENCE, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND ARTS



Cinemata Circus 2022

This event invited local film-makers to showcase their work, in a mix of live performance and film for audiences, with film-makers in attendance.

Films shown were:

- Award winning film Adele, by Mirene Igwabi, the story of a young African Australian girl dealing with the cultural gaps between her parents and her changing perspectives as a young woman in Australia.
- Delta of Venus by Nancy Cao, An exploration of sexuality and fantasy.
- Fragmentation, a dance film, and Ruby, a triptych, tracing the dizzying movement of a swinging trapeze, by Suzon Fuks.
- Aminated Flow, a series of small experimental animations linked together by animator Ash Djokic.



Glimmer 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.

Glimmer was MCed by Gogo Bumhole a hyper-femme persona who juxtaposes a Bratz doll like appearance, with extreme and grotesque performances that challenge the social expectations of a femme body. She introduced a range of emerging and professional artists to a sold out audience, that included guest artists Aunty Dawn Daylight who performed her beautiful welcome through song, Australasian Dance Collective Mature Ensemble, Hot Brown Honey, Poet Claire Alcock, singer/ songwriter Harlan. The event also featured mural artist, Esquidy, who painted a mural during the whole event.



Reflections in a Teacup

To launch 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Vulcana partnered with QPAC, Micah Projects and Chrysalis Projects to produce Reflections in a Tea Cup at the Cremorne Theatre.

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign that kicks off on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day. It is used as an organizing strategy by individuals and organizations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.

Reflection in a Tea Cup brought performers and partners together from the 2021 project Circus in a Tea Cup to celebrate the project's achievements and to hear from the performers about the benefits of this creative process on their survival and recovery from domestic abuse. The conversation was skilfully led by Bec Mac from Chrysalis Projects.

As part of the event the performers re-rehearsed and presented a dance from the original work. This experience was unifying and brought back the joy, the challenges, as well as the sadness that was tied up in the whole process. This emotional event reinforced the power of this work to create change in participants and audiences and its value to advocate for an urgent end to violence against women and girls.

This event also launched a fundraising campaign to raise funds towards Circus in a Tea Cup 2024.



Climate Scapes - Part 1

This was the start of a practice-led research collaboration between researchers from the Creative Arts Research Institute at Griffith University, and performers and consulting director from Vulcana. The research aims to unite scientist/scholars/creative artists to explore how physical theatre and circus can communicate climate conversations about climate challenges faced by the broader community. Based in scientific discourse and drawing on previous theoretical investigation by Linda Hassall, Samid Suliman and Kaya Barry, the project aims to utilise theatre and performance methods, in response to escalating climate change experiences such as eco-anxiety and/or climate migration.



Vacant Room Residencies



SPARKLE SOCIETY

Sparkle Society was supported to produce *Cab Suave*, inspired by Film Noir, that opened at the Ron Hurley Theatre as part of CircFest Meanjin.



SEE SAW THEATRE

See Saw Theatre rehearsed and presented *The Outhouse*, a two woman clown show for all ages, about resilience, human connection and the power of the imagination. Planet earth is in dire straits, so these two clowns have decided to give planet earth the rest and rejuvenation she needs. They invited audiences of kids and adults to be active participants in 2 seasons of this work at the Vulcana Arts Hub in 2022.



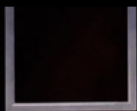
COLLECTIVIST

Collectivist was supported to re-develop the next iteration of the strange and debauched *Dwell Hotel* for Anywhere Festival



COLLECTIVE CIRCUS

Collective Circus, an ensemble of young circus artists, were supported to develop and rehearse work towards their first full length performance work, *Waitlisted* that premiered at CircFest Meanjin, aiming to shed light on the often ignored and overlooked aspects that come with being young.



GRACE LAW

Grace Law and collaborators were supported to develop *Human* as part of the Dead Puppets Society's DPS Lab, a 14-week workshop series that mentors independent theatre-makers to develop original ideas under the guidance of their visual theatre practitioners.

Independent artists Georgia Bale and Alex Mizzen were supported to explore and develop ideas.

Vulcana welcomed artists Chelsea McGuffin and Co, and Anna Yen's Playmoves, as well as continued to host Polytoxic and Hot Brown Honey as regular venue residents.

Auspiced projects

Vulcana auspiced performance and entertainment company, More Than Mime, to produce their *Living Statues Laneway*, a training and performance program delivering professional development in mime and living statue.

Administration & Governance

In 2022, the Vulcana Management Committee met on a monthly basis to review Vulcana’s activities and financial position and drive strategic alignment. In addition to monthly meetings, a full strategic review was undertaken, from which four key areas of action were identified. Vulcana Staff worked with the Management Committee to take the following actions in 2022:

Area	Action Taken
1. Staff salaries and roles	Review of all roles and salaries with new contracts issued as appropriate.
2. Staff training	Delivery of wide range of staff training including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · First Aid · Mental Health First Aid · Fire Safety & Evacuation
3. Rigging and equipment	Conducted annual rigging and facility induction for all trainers. Began process of formalising existing systems to ensure better visibility and documentation (will continue this process in 2023).
4. IT systems	Upgrade of existing IT infrastructure to ensure systems are fit for purpose.

Statement of Financial Performance Year Ending December 31, 2022

Income	2022	2021
Donations and Sponsorships	17,215	13,695
Grants and Subsidies	137,570	54,736
Workshop Fees	219,797	221,282
Other Income	39,687	192,450
Total Income	414,268	482,163
Expenses	2022	2021
Administration Costs	134,747	107,970
Sales and Marketing	9,339	7,875
Staffing	248,666	254,299
	392,752	370,144
Closing Retaining Profits	21,516	112,019



Statement of Financial Position Year Ending December 31, 2022

Assets	2022	2021
Current Assets	257,217	217,815
Non Current Assets	51,951	40,841
Total Assets	309,169	258,656
Liabilities	2022	2021
Current Liabilities	70,013	49,566
Non Current Liabilities	9,713	1,164
Total Liabilities	79,726	50,730
Members Funds/Net Assets	229,442	207,926



Vulcana Management Committee

Chair - Bena Brown

Secretary - Ash Jones

Treasurer - Brooke Sinclair

Member - Ari Wright

Member - Kel Robinson

Member - Shona Joyce McKenzie

Staff Members

Artistic Director - Celia White

Programs Manager - Angela Willock

Operations Manager - Jess Harlen

Marketing Manager - Victoria Barlow

Head Rigger - Helen Clifford

Thank you

All of the Vulcanistas | Our Trainers and Trainees | Volunteers
Participants | Performers | Guest Artists and Consultants
Parents, Partners, Caregivers and Families | Donors
Arts Queensland

Queensland Government | Brisbane City Council | Logan City Council
Creative Partnerships | Queensland Performing Arts Centre
Micah Projects | Multicultural Australia | Hurricane Stars
Reclink Logan | Circus Ipswich
Councillors Kara Cook and Lisa Attwood | Senator Di Farmer



Queensland
Government



Brisbane
City Council



creative
partnerships
australia



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.



Vulcana Circus

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