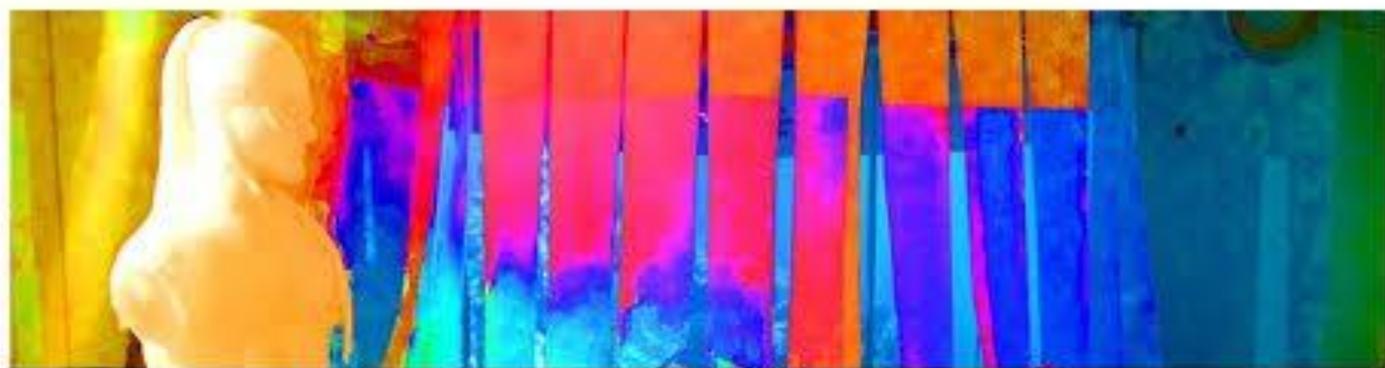


Lua admin is changing hands



Thank you Tam
for your admin
and project management skills

you've been a great
ambassador for Lua

Good luck with
your future projects

Keep in touch

Tam, we've really loved
your enthusiasm and
positive attitude



Good Luck
We'll miss you

Thanks for all
your hard work

Best wishes

Looking forward to working
on future projects
together

Welcome

As winter turns to spring, I find myself putting together my last Newsletter for LinkUpArts. I've had a wonderful time with the organisation so far; working on an eclectic collection of projects and meeting some fascinating people along the way.

LUA is a wonderful umbrella, truly nurturing the work of disabled artists, and I'm delighted that I shall be maintaining my links with the organisation albeit in a slightly different capacity – read on to find out how!

In the meantime we have some excitingly different projects evolving; over the summer, do get involved with our Inaccessible Access Project funded by Unlimited Impact, Shape and Wiltshire Community Foundation. We're also planning to run a new Storytelling Project – Sighting Stonehenge – in May. Watch this space for further details!

Thank you all for your support over the last few years! Wishing you every creative success!

- Tam Gilbert

www.linkuparts.org.uk
facebook.com/LinkUpArts
@LUArtists

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AS ONE DOOR CLOSES, ANOTHER OPENS...

Tam Gilbert leaves us at the end of March after a successful two and a half years as Admin & Fundraising Assistant, and Project Manager. We are delighted that our very own Hayley Davies will be taking over...

New changes are afoot at LUA! We are sad to see Tam leave us at the end of March and would like to thank her for all her hard work over the past two and a half years!



Since joining us in October 2013, Tam has undertaken the administration and project management for LinkUpArts. As well as working with the committee to fundraise for projects and commissions, she has maintained the website, built up our online presence and put together issues 13-27 of this Newsletter. Her projects include Our Tales: Unveiled, 24-hour Sky and Homegrown exhibitions at Salisbury Arts Centre, where she has introduced an annual performance element by LUA members!

Tam hands over her regular duties at LinkUpArts to continue to develop her freelance theatre work with her Bournemouth based company Persuasion Arts, where she runs drama workshops and projects for disabled people and others.

We are delighted that Tam will be joining the LUA Committee, where she will continue to work with us creatively. We feel that her passion and knowledge for Disability-led theatre and the arts will be a huge asset to our organisation.

Hayley Davies will be taking Tam's place as Admin & Fundraising Assistant from April. Hayley is already on the LUA Committee and is Project Managing our Inaccessible Access project which will provide Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and Access Audit training through the arts to disadvantaged groups, local businesses and other individuals in Salisbury.



Hayley's journey working within the arts sector began at Holton Lee in 2006. Her job involved archiving over 30 years of Disability Arts material; some of which it is hoped will become part of the National Disability Arts Collection and Archive (NDACA) where she is now Company Secretary. It was at Holton Lee where she developed a passion for the arts - in particular Disability Arts, the history of the movement and preserving it. Since then, as well as being involved with LUA recently making a film documenting Our Tales: Unveiled Hayley has worked and volunteered with several different organisations including Disability Arts Online, Shape and The National Archives.

Hayley says "I am looking forward to taking on my new role and have some exciting ideas in store for the organisation!"

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Gemma Okell for all the time and support she has given to LinkUpArts. Gemma is leaving Salisbury Arts Centre after 10 years and we will miss her greatly! We wish Gemma all the best for the future and look forward to forming a relationship with Paula Redway who will be joining the arts centre soon, as Director.

OUR NEWSLETTER NEEDS YOU!

For a Creative Tea-break...

Put down the cake and pick up a pen!

We bring your Arts news and creativity to you, so keep us up to date with all that you do!

If you have an item you would like to contribute, please do send it to us...

We are looking for:

- * Poetry
- * Stories
- * Photography
- * Reviews
- * Upcoming events
- * New projects & workshops

Please send your contributions to admin@linkuparts.org.uk



GINI'S BLOG: LIFE AND WORK

In her latest blog, LUA's Lead Artist Gini reflects on her life and current working practice as an Artist...

I haven't blogged for quite a while, not because I'm not working, but because I'm surprising myself a lot with what I'm doing, wondering about life and work and not wanting to make explanation ... Rather like when small children grow - up or out, but not both at the same time.

Work is going well, I'm exhibiting in Japan and exploring a wider Asian field. It's exciting and mainstream - which is where I started. And the reason I'm asking myself who I really am. While I identify as a disabled person, I've not seen myself as a disabled artist since I really sat down and thought about it.

Wheels free me up, give me mobility, and are paradoxically my 'disability' - and they don't have any adverse affect on my practice. I love my wheels, where does that leave me?

I live my life with a disabled gaze. It's how I exist between the restrictions society imposes on me. But my art? I do create work that reflects that gaze, but I also create work that reflects my unrestricted, unfettered artist; work that has continuity with the time before I needed wheels.

And before I needed wheels, I didn't have a clue about disability. I might have fallen over a lot, dropped and broken a lot of things, lived with degrees of pain, but I certainly didn't identify as disabled.

So who am I? Am I in denial? Do I suffer from imposter syndrome?

I am in the process of making me.
It is my aim never to finish.
I began in rush, and with such an
innocent idea of who I might be,
but someone kept moving the goalposts and
it took me an age to know that someone
was me.
Now breathless in the freefall,
the rush of time drowning out
perspective as I nose dive
so close to the embrace
of solid ground, removes all
certainty from where I am
and who I might aspire to;
unpicks the construct that was
going to be me, but now
badly fitting, is way, way
too small to cope with shades of
green and grit, with death and pain,
the vulnerability
of opening my heart; the
sheer astonishment of this
fragility.
And the mess

the utter mucky chaos
as all my bits of rubrics cube
spill across the floor.
Random spaces,
unplanned; lacking the elegance
of balance, or the slightest hint
of design - or control - or
evidence of a masterplan
that would indicate
progression -
the path
to success -
the flower garden
filled only with fragrance;
a frozen perfection to hide
my imperfect shape,
lack of foundations
and the still clumsy,
still questing
fingers.

Stretched thin
between worlds,
tiptoed out on the faint line
where life and death exist
unbearably, exquisitely close
is the privilege of love
without which I would
never find the courage
to balance here
in this luminosity
of being, not waiting,
just being.
In trust.

By Gini

Artwork in this issue:

Front cover: Designed by Gini

Page 3: Photographs of Tam Gilbert and Hayley Davies

Page 4: Advert Poster 'A Creative Tea-break' by Tam Gilbert

Page 8: Garry Robson on stage as JJ Peachum in Graeae Theatre's touring production of The Threepenny Opera

Page 10: Bedroom battle ... The Solid Life of Sugar Water. Photograph: Murdo Macleod for the Guardian

DISABILITY: A CREATIVE ADVANTAGE?

Our thanks to Disability Arts Online for allowing us to reproduce Editor Colin Hambrook's feature on a debate chaired by critic Lyn Gardner at the Arena Theatre. The debate was part of a series of conversations hosted by the Guardian. A Nation's Theatre is a joint initiative, from the newspaper and the Battersea Arts Centre highlighting a showcase of innovative theatre made in the regions to be brought to London this summer.

Speaking from the floor, Bob Findlay-Williams was first to challenge the title of the conversation: "how can oppression be a creative advantage?" How can 'disability' as a sign for discrimination be heralded as an artistic platform, except through the lens of a privileged perspective on the Arts.

If you accept the Social Model of Disability then you'll understand that 'disability' is not an attribute you have. Disability isn't a condition. It's a sine for barriers: social, economic and class barriers that limit opportunities for disabled people to realise potential.

Over the course of 90 minutes a panel of representatives from the disability arts sector: Paul Darke, Kinny Gardner, Garry Robson and Jo Verrent got enmeshed in a conversation that attempted to talk about art but got sidetracked by politics. And perhaps that answers the question about why such a dearth of mainstream arts organisations were present. How does disability arts attract producers, directors etc. when art is consistently left out of the equation?

It's a discussion the movement has been having for many decades. How language reflects oppression is important, of course, but it's a great shame that a precious opportunity to talk about art and aesthetic is overturned by the central agenda, which to many would appear to be about semantics.

The panel conveyed passion for some of the innovations that have happened in recent years, but there could have been so much more discussion about 'theatre' and the ways that creative access has been pioneering new forms of theatre.

There was talk of Caroline Bowditch's success as Scottish Dance Theatre's Dance Agent for Change from 2008-2012 when she radically altered perceptions of the narrow fit that defines the body of a dancer. Jo Verrent also went on to talk about Jess Thom's success in changing attitudes with her tic-driven 'Touretteshero'. Thom has significantly opened up ideas within the theatre profession about the idea of 'relaxed performance' as a creative theatrical language, which brings audience and performer closer. Yet somehow the conversation didn't go far enough to convey that important step.

Kinny Gardner of Krazy Kat talked about the importance of making children's theatre accessible and the impact that confers on the expectations of future generations.

And Garry Robson talked about the role that theatre can play in changing peoples' hearts and minds. "Graeae's Threepenny Opera took flight when the touring production became tied into a campaign to save the ILF. Many of the theatre people we were working with turned out for demonstrations when they realised the impact of the cuts to many of the cast."

Us old folk within the disability arts sector have known each other a long time now. And we sit inside our little bubble

having our own personal class battle. We love the drama of it. But to be honest I'm not sure if it is clever or noble. Our anger doesn't address how different the landscape is now and the paucity of opportunity open to younger disabled people for whom the doors for receiving theatre training are closing ever more firmly, just when we had got to a point where we thought changes in the law meant drama schools were going to have to address access seriously.

There was quite a bit of talk about 'the table': the pros and cons of speaking to the gatekeepers, those in power, what Mervyn Peake would have called 'The Holders Of The Purse'. Tim Wheeler of Mind the Gap came up with a pertinent quote: "You need to be at the table or you'll find yourself on the menu", promptly followed by an insistence that disabled people are on the menu; that we are separated by language and experience and as such are subject to assimilation or rejection.

During the Paralympics we found ourselves at the height of being used in a way that doesn't correlate with our experience. Quite rightly we are angry with the way that disability arts is being used to dismiss the politics of disability. Lyn Gardner related headlines heralding "disabled as the new able, the new art fashion," as if being f**ked over by society was a trendy thing to aspire to.

But what we conveniently forget of course is that a few miles across the channel in Europe our conversation, which inevitably ends up as a slanging match aimed at Arts Council England would be ridiculed by the arts intelligentsia.

There is no precedent in Europe for professional arts practice, which explores the human body in all its diversity. Art that carries a hint of a social agenda simply isn't considered art. There is no consideration for 'the audience' or the idea that your theatre should reflect the demographic of who comes through the door. Art is about a history of form and aesthetic that is the preserve of the artist. End of.

In Europe we would have no place in an artistic landscape, which prides itself on the inalienable rigor of Art for its own sake. The few disability arts organisations that exist there translate as 'defected', 'incapacitated' or 'handicapped'.

My point is that while we are busy biting the hand that feeds, there are more serious conversations that go unheeded. If we want our message about the value and importance of disability art to carry weight then there has to be more rigour applied to the language of art.



Disability doesn't carry a creative advantage but what it does do is open the doors to original forms of expression, rooted in our experience. In reflecting on the title of the discussion and thinking about the disabled artist who has changed art irrevocably, the first artist who comes to mind is Antonin Artaud, the French disabled artist who lived from 1896 – 1948.

There are few forms within contemporary performing arts that Artaud didn't have a hand in inventing or influencing in a significant way. Sound Art, Butoh, and many forms of Physical Theatre would not have come into being without Artaud. Like Picasso or Hendrix Artaud shines as the artist who tore up the rule-book and gave the world something new. He scorned theatre's script-based format and single-handedly created a dramaturgy rooted in the body that is now the basis of all radical contemporary theatre.

And he did that because he was a disabled artist. Artaud made his contribution in the face of rejection and incarceration at every turn of his short life. Yet in 25 years of involvement in disability arts I've never heard anyone valuing Artaud's immense accomplishment from a disability perspective. We don't seem to know how to value the achievement a disability aesthetic brings to Art.

And if we're not careful Disability Arts will go the way of Artaud, rendered by the history books as an anomaly. Artaud is consistently acknowledged by the artists who have come in his wake, Peter Brook being possibly the most notable theatre director to credit the impact of Artaud's 'Theatre of Cruelty' on his own ideas. And the creative advantage and innovation that individual practitioners have brought to theatre will not be forgotten. But the movement that nurtured an attitude that questioned prejudice and discrimination could all too easily get lost in a sea of squabbling.

By Colin Hambrook

THE SOLID LIFE OF SUGAR WATER

Graeae Theatre Company and Theatre Royal Plymouth bring their new co-production 'The Solid Life of Sugar Water' to the National Theatre from February to March. Lyn Gardner's review of the production is lifted from The Guardian.



They meet in the queue at the Post Office. Just like in a romcom. But this has no happy ever after. It's far too honest for that. Sometimes brutally so. Alice (Genevieve Barr) thinks he's "140% harmless" and terribly English because he keeps on apologising when his parcel comes apart. Phil (Arthur Hughes) thinks she's gorgeous and finds her deafness "exotic". Soon they are a couple and then they are trying for a baby. But

when their daughter is stillborn, grief makes their relationship come apart. The blood stain on the car seat – from the fruitless dash to the hospital – is like a rebuke between them. The space between them in the bed a desert where nothing can bloom except the memory of the bloodstained sheets that he still hadn't changed when she came back from the hospital.

Jack Thorne's intense two-hander for Graeae is hard to watch but rewarding. The bed – which takes centre stage in Amit Sharma's spot-on production – becomes a battleground where what cannot be said physically manifests. There is a lot of sex in this play, but it's never gratuitous, instead showing two people for whom words have failed and who are trying to use their bodies to reconnect. Its graphicness serves a purpose by pointing up what is being kept hidden. As befits a production created by a company who put deaf and disabled actors centre stage, there are many ways to read and hear this relationship if you are prepared to look beyond appearances.

There are layers within layers in both Thorne's deceptively simple script and a production in which what is unspoken and what is shown are in constant dialogue – sometimes a scuffle – with each other. It makes it fascinating to watch as Alice and Phil are constantly contradicting each other and inadvertently revealing themselves not just by what they say, but in the way they are placed on stage. He tells us what she likes most in bed; she makes it clear that he's completely, utterly wrong.

One of the things that makes this so brutal to watch is not just the emotion of the terrible tragedy that has befallen them, but the fact it becomes increasingly clear that this relationship was entirely based on miscommunication in the first place. Evasiveness and deception have killed intimacy as much as the death of their child. That's hard to take and all power to a production and cast who don't shirk it but make us confront an uncomfortable truth.

By Lyn Gardner

To book tickets, visit <http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/shows/the-solid-life-of-sugar-water> and for more info see <http://www.graeae.org/productions/sugar/>

JOBS & OPPORTUNITIES

Stopgap Dance: Recruiting for an Administrative Intern (paid)

An exciting opportunity to join the Stopgap Dance Company team and gain invaluable experience as an Administrative Intern...

The Intern role will encompass a variety of administrative tasks as well as assisting in the organisation and delivery of education and outreach projects.

Applicants must be aged between 18 – 24 and currently claiming Job Seeker's Allowance (proof will be required), due to the fact that part of the funding for this role is from The Creative Employment Programme – a fund to support the creation of traineeships, formal apprenticeship and paid internship opportunities for young unemployed people aged 18 - 24 wishing to pursue a career in the arts.

For a full job description and information on how to apply please email Joy St-Denis on admin@stopgapdance.com, or for more information on the post visit <http://stopgapdance.com/news/recruiting-for-an-administrative-intern-paid>

Applications must be received by 5pm on Friday 4 March 2016.

Why not check out these opportunities for artists and theatremakers?...

South West Theatre Symposium Salisbury Playhouse, Tickets £10 (includes lunch and refreshments)

Salisbury Playhouse, Theatre Bristol, Take Art and Activate Performing Arts invite anyone working in theatre and live performance (including dance, circus, puppetry, live art) in the South West to come together for a day to celebrate the launch of Theatre Fest West. The event takes place on Friday 18 March 2016 from 10am to 5pm and is aimed at producers, theatre makers, programmers, promoters, funders, directors, writers and artists.

<https://theartsinwiltshire.wordpress.com/2016/02/12/south-west-theatre-symposium/>

Call out for Makers stall applications for Salisbury's Contemporary Craft and Heritage Festival

Salisbury's Contemporary Craft and Heritage Festival will be a three day event this year and will take place on the Salisbury Cathedral Green from Thursday 8th September (preview evening with wine & canapé reception 6pm to 8.30pm) and will be open to the public on Friday 9th and Saturday 10th (10am – 5pm) as well as Sunday 11th September (10.30am – 4pm).

Applications for makers stalls are now open until 25th March, for the Salisbury Contemporary Craft and Heritage Festival.

<https://theartsinwiltshire.wordpress.com/2016/02/15/opportunity-call-out-for-makers-stall-applications-for-salisburys-contemporary-craft-and-heritage-festival-2/>

REMINDERS FOR YOUR DIARY:

Café LUA/EXTRA

March.....9th
April.....13th
May.....11th

Café LUA takes place every second Wednesday of the month (except August) at Salisbury Arts Centre from 2 – 4pm. We usually meet in the café area, but specific projects can mean we are in one of the work spaces, do ask at the Box Office if you are in any doubt. Café LUA is a social get together for artists with disabilities – an informal, open space for inspiration and discussion. However you are involved with or interested in the arts, do come along and meet us, find out about us, and about Disability Arts. We'd love to meet you and hear more about your arts practice or interests. Each month, as well as open discussion and networking, we focus on a particular topic or issue.

Wednesday 9th March **Open Curatorial: 'People V Planet'**

Join us to view this new exhibition by an invited emerging curator. The exhibition is prompted by Salisbury Art's Centre's annual programming thread, which for 2016 is 'People versus Planet,' Come and share your thoughts on the exhibition and say goodbye to Tam over a cup of tea and a slice of cake!

Wednesday 13th April

Come and meet the team and find out what's in store for the Spring/Summer! We're changing the emphasis of Café LUA – we want to talk more about Access, as well as the Arts! Hear more about our Inaccessible Access Project and our new Café LUA Extra events. Bring your ideas for future projects, theatre visits and themes with you!

Wednesday 11th May

The theme for this month is yet to be confirmed, but we promise an interesting topic and lively debate!

At the heart of LinkUpArts:



For more information about the career artists
in LUAN: linkupartistsnetwork@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER FORMATS

You can receive this Newsletter in print form,
it is available in bigger type and an audio cassette. You can also download it from
salisburyartscentre.co.uk -> Resident Companies ->LinkUpArts



creative direction

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LinkUpArts and Salisbury Arts Centre work together for the benefit of both organisations. LUA advises and consults with Salisbury Arts Centre on its Disability Arts programming and helps to promote the events. Salisbury Arts Centre gives LUA its home and provides marketing and administrative support. LUA is a strategic creative partner in Salisbury Arts Centre's Creative Family.

Registered office: Salisbury Arts Centre, Bedwin Street, Salisbury Wiltshire, SP1 3USt. Edmunds Arts Trust is a company limited by guarantee, trading as Salisbury Arts Centre. Registration no.1412263, incorporated in Wales, and a Registered Charity no. 1023945