

Accessible Arts

Equity and excellence in arts, culture and disability.



2020

Annual Report



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Front & Centre Arts Leadership Program graduates.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we work across NSW and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



We acknowledge the support of our principal funder the NSW Government through Create NSW.



We acknowledge the support of the National Disability Insurance Agency.



Chairperson's Message

2020 was a challenging year for all of us and the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic will be keenly felt by our community members and our industry stakeholders for some time to come.

Accordingly, I would like to acknowledge the hardship experienced over the last 12 months by the people and communities we serve, especially the many arts practitioners with disability whose lives and livelihoods have been severely impacted by the pandemic.

However – and as ever – the courage, resilience and creativity of our community right across the arts and cultural sector has come to the fore and we pay tribute to them for working with us and each other to respond to the challenges of 2020 and beyond with compassion and solidarity.

In spite of the turmoil, we achieved some significant outcomes throughout 2020 in terms of advancing the arts and disability agenda in NSW.

These outcomes – many of which are highlighted in this report – were achieved under the leadership of our former CEO Kerry Comerford who left Accessible Arts in January 2021 after more than two years in the role. We thank Kerry for her service and congratulate her on stewarding the organisation with such great commitment, enthusiasm, ambition and success.

Despite being a very small organisation with limited resources, Accessible Arts continues to make important strides in accelerating and celebrating the diverse professional, cultural and social impacts of arts and disability across NSW.

This would not be possible without the skill and dedication of our staff, board members, advisers and trainers as well as the contributions made by our wonderful network of funders, donors, supporters, partners, suppliers and stakeholders. We thank them all for their service and contributions.

Accessible Arts is driven by our vision of equity and excellence in arts, culture and disability. If 2020 has taught us anything, it is that this vision will continue to inspire us despite the challenges that may lie ahead as we work to strengthen the wonderfully diverse impact that people with disability have on the creative and cultural life of NSW.

Emeritus Professor Sharman Pretty AM
Chairperson



About Us

We are NSW's peak organisation for arts, culture and disability.

Our Mission

We advance the rights of, and opportunities for, people with disability and/or who are d/Deaf to develop and sustain professional careers in the arts and have equitable access to arts and culture across NSW.

Our Vision

Equity and excellence in arts, culture and disability.

*Still from Little Things Matter by
ArtScreen 2020 artist Debra Keenahan*

Our Values

Equity



Excellence



Partnership



Diversity



Creativity



About Us

Our Stakeholders



People

- Arts practitioners with disability
- Audiences with disability
- Families and friends of people with disability



Arts & Culture

- Arts companies
- Cultural organisations and venues
- Festival and event producers



Disability

- Disability organisations
- NDIS
- Carers and support workers



Government

- NSW Government
- Local governments
- Other government agencies and policymakers



Education

- Universities
- Vocational and training organisations
- Researchers

Our Programs & Services



Career Advancement

- Development and production initiatives
- Internships/mentorships
- Artist residencies
- Professional development workshops
- Leadership development programs
- Industry advocacy
- Networking events
- Advisory services



Audience Development

- Industry engagement
- Industry education
- Industry advocacy
- Training workshops
- Consulting services
- Program evaluation
- Program innovation



Community Engagement

- Arts Activated conference
- Artist talks and Q&As
- Community education
- Community liaison
- Community representation
- Networking events
- Media and comms

Our Team

Management

Kerry Comerford
Liz Martin
Michael Badorrek
Daniel Jaramillo

CEO
Arts Development & Training Manager
Marketing & Development Manager
Trainee Administrator

ILC Projects

Riona Tindal

Hunter Project Officer
(until 30 Jun 2020)

Trainers & Advisers

Athena Pavlis-Goard
Bec Hogan
Cobie Moore
Dan Graham
Daniel Savage
Emily Dash
Erika Gelzinnis
Faye Chamberlain
Georgie Zuzak



Accessible Arts management team.

Board

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Sharman Pretty AM | Chairperson |
| Andrew Buchanan | Vice-Chairperson |
| William Thorne | Treasurer |
| Kate Lidbetter | Secretary |
| Michael Dagistino | Director |
| Alex Jones | Director |
| David Kay | Director |
| Emily Dash | Director |
| Jaci Armstrong | Director |

Glenn McKenzie
Holly Craig
Jeff Wood
Karen Peacock
Keith Rutherford
Kerri Shying
Maree Jenner
Michelle Brown
Nat Thomas
Rebecca McCormack
Riana Head-Toussaint
Ruth O'Brien

Key Stats 2020

200

individual arts practitioners
with disability employed,
supported or mentored



2000

event participants



20

events produced
or supported



650

training participants



2020 Archibald Prize finalists Emily Crockford (left) and Digby Webster.



20K

website visitors



32

training sessions
delivered



16K

social media followers



12

arts organisations
provided with consulting
services



670K

social media reach



3.8

staff (FT equivalent)



COVID Response

As with many organisations, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 saw our operational team commence working from home and then rapidly adapt our programs and services for online delivery. This approach has continued into 2021.

Right throughout the pandemic, we have been providing vital information and support to artists with disability and have

With funding from the Australia Council for The Arts, we developed and began offering a new training workshop called *Delivering Accessible Online Events* and four of our six ATAG industry education events throughout the year had a focus on digital and online accessibility.

We also secured a range of COVID-19 related grants from Create NSW, the City of Sydney and the National Disability



Disability Confidence Training online workshop.

advocated to the NSW and Australian governments as well as the broader arts and cultural sector for increased support for artists and audiences with disability.

With so much activity moving online as a result of the pandemic, a key focus for us throughout 2020 was educating workers in the arts, cultural and events sector about approaches for making their online programming and services accessible for and inclusive of people with disability.

Insurance Agency to adapt, upgrade or support the delivery of our programs and services.

Career Advancement

Throughout the turmoil of 2020, we continued working with our industry and government partners to provide a range of opportunities for artists and arts workers with disability to empower their creativity and careers.

Through our artist residency program with the Bundanon Trust – funded this year through a successful end-of-financial-year appeal – five women with disability

We supported eight artists with disability to collaborate and present a fully accessible online art exhibition – simply titled *2020* – which explored how the turbulent events of 2020 affected them as both artists and people with disability.

In partnership with Bell Shakespeare we supported the development of a new show exploring neurodiversity through Shakespearean characters. 10 women



*2020 Bundanon Trust
Residency participants.*

(four visual artists and one filmmaker) spent a week at the prestigious national estate, with their career-building experience being profiled on ABC TV.

Through our ArtScreen 2020 initiative, artist Debra Keenahan created and premiered a provocative new video artwork about the dehumanisation of people with dwarfism. We also launched our ArtScreen 2021 initiative, which will involve three artists with disability premiering new video artworks at Sydney's MCA in December this year.

artists with disability graduated from our Front & Centre arts leadership professional development initiative, we delivered a range of online skills building workshops - with organisations such as Arts On Tour, Women On Boards and Create NSW - as well as a session on working with First Nations artists with disability, and we trained artists with disability in the Hunter area to deliver disability confidence workshops to arts and cultural organisations in that region.

Audience Development

During 2020, our focus on increasing access for people with disability to performances, exhibitions, screenings and other cultural events and activities had a distinctly digital flavour due the COVID-19 pandemic.

We continued to deliver our ATAG industry education and engagement program but in an online rather than live format. ATAGs feature panel discussions

We delivered 32 arts and disability online training sessions across two workshop streams, including a newly developed *Delivering Accessible Online Events* workshop which was created in response to the industry's shift to online activities due to COVID-19. 650 participants attended our workshops in 2020 from a range of organisations. We also commenced development of online learning modules for our *Disability*



Access audit at NIDA.

about being more inclusive of people with disability in professional practice.

We delivered six ATAG events on subjects including digital accessibility; arts, disability and technology; live-streaming accessible events, making live music accessible; and disability inclusion in Australia's media industry. 1200 people registered to participate in these sessions. Adapting our ATAG program for online delivery was funded by a grant from the City of Sydney.

Confidence Training workshop with funding from the National Disability Insurance Agency. We plan to start offering this service in mid-2021.

We also continued to provide revenue generating consulting services to help organisations in the arts, culture and events sectors make their programming, policies, services and infrastructure more accessible. Clients in 2020 included: Sydney Living Museums, Sydney Fringe Festival, National Association of Visual Artists and National Institute of Dramatic Arts.

Community Engagement

Providing opportunities to share information and ideas that will help advance arts and disability in NSW remained a key focus for us in 2020. Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, most of these activities were delivered online.

To profile the work of artists with disability, we produced two events in our In-Conversation series of artist Q&As, one

disability were included in the program which boasted a live panel discussion, live performances and a feature film screening.

We also presented and supported a keynote session and several panels at the Art State 2020 conference in Wagga Wagga, presented and supported Arts Access Australia's Meeting Place forum, supported three panel discussions about



*Roz Hammand (left)
and Bridie McKim*



*Activated Arts host
Anthea Williams*

with ABCTV *In The Heights* actor Bridie McKim and a second with 2020 Archibald finalists Emily Crockford and Digby Webster. We also launched Activated Arts, a new monthly arts and disability radio show and podcast produced in partnership with 2RPH that explores and showcases the talent and work of professional artists with disability.

In partnership with the Inner West Council, we delivered the 2020 Inclusive Film Festival to mark the International Day of People With Disability in December. Eight local artists with

dance and disability in partnership with AusDance NSW and hosted a delegation from South Korea's Chonnam National University at our offices in Sydney.

Through our communication and digital platforms, we promoted a wide range of information for and about arts practitioners and audiences with disability, and we connected artists with disability to each other as well as professional and funding opportunities. We saw considerable growth in our online engagement in 2020 and expanded our reach across multiple channels.

Organisational Development

The most significant outcome from 2020 in terms of our organisational development was the completion of our new Strategic Plan 2021-24. The plan was developed following consultation with our community members and stakeholders. The 4-year framework will guide how we will deliver our programs, services and activities through to 2024 to achieve maximum impact for all our various stakeholders.

external projects. This included a City of Sydney grant to upgrade our website to meet latest accessibility standards. Our fee for service activities - including training and consulting work - raised a further \$100,000.

The shift to online service delivery brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic has also provided us with an opportunity to reorient many of our services and



Emily Dash



Jaci Armstrong

We also welcomed a decision by Create NSW to continue to provide core funding for our organisation through to 2024. During this turbulent time for the arts and cultural sector in NSW, it is enormously helpful to have this level of financial security so we can move forward with confidence in terms of delivering our core activities.

Throughout the year we secured a further \$250,000 in cash and in-kind support from a range of government, community and corporate organisations which was used to fund a range of both internal and

events to be offered in the future as online only activities, which will enable us to reach a wider audience outside of Sydney. Adopting digital formats not only increases the accessibility of these activities but also reduces their respective costs.

In 2020, we also welcomed two new board directors – writer, director and disability arts advocate Emily Dash and disability advocate and policy advisor Jaci Armstrong.

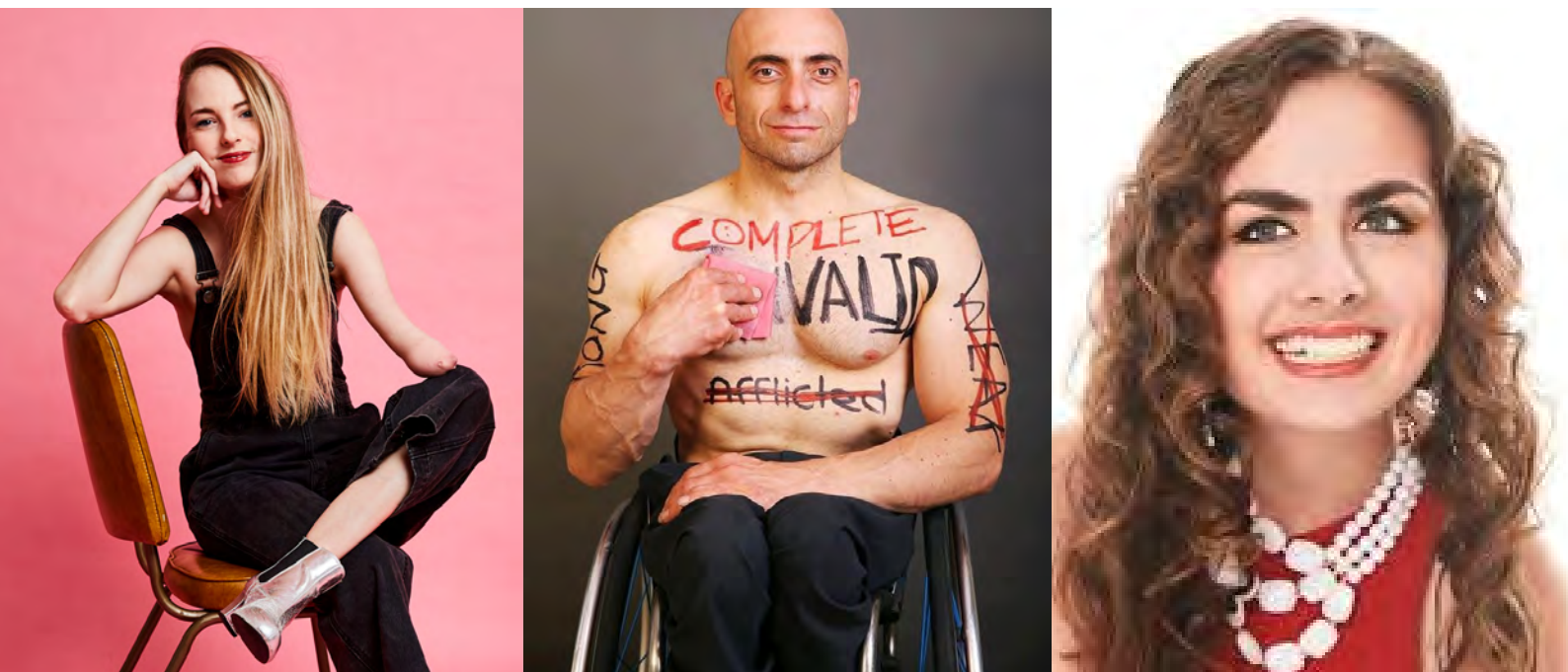
Credits

Front Cover (L-R)

- 2020 Exhibition artist M'Batha Nguta | Image: M'Batha Nguta
- Detail of *Self Portrait with Daddy in the Daisies watching the field of Planes* by Emily Crockford | Image: AGNSW
- Sculptor Jeff Wood wearing a mask made from pet food tins | Image: Jeff Wood
- ArtScreen 2020 artist Debra Keenahan | Image: Robert Brindley

Back Cover

Artist Rhiannon Pegler at the Bundanon Trust | Image: Rhiannon Pegler



IFF 2020 performers (L-R) Madeleine Stewart, Paul Nunnari and Lara Nakhle.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 2 Image: Christopher Snee | 9 Image: Liz Cooper |
| 4 Image: Robert Brindley | 10 Image: Liz Martin |
| 6 Image: AArts | 11 Image: ABC Brett Broadman |
| 7 Image: AGNSW | 12 Image: E. Dash J. Armstrong |
| 8 Image: Liz Martin | 13 Image: M. Stewart P. Nunnari L. Nakhle |

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