



UPSWING

Hull 2017

Working with older people

Programme of Work

We propose **three strands of activity** that can each be delivered as independent projects but that can also be combined as a wider programme of activity to profile and inspire **dialogue around arts, ageing and intergenerational performance.**



Strands of Activity

Aspiration: the Greatest Show on Earth

Engagement: Story box Circus / Aerial workshops

Celebration: one day celebratory pop up festival

Aspiration

Working title - The Greatest Show on Earth

A bespoke performance based on Upswing's 2013 production 'What Happens in the Winter'

A show with older performers exploring the impact of age / the ageing body on their work and their feelings of reduced visibility in performance and on the stage, mirroring the feelings of invisibility of older people (particularly women) in wider society.

The performance would be expanded to become a bigger celebration of ageing and performance working with a range of older circus and cabaret artists to create a chorus of voices that playfully debate how we physically and emotionally navigate ageing.

We would use the context of circus and cabaret and the act based structure of 'What Happens in the Winter' and present the show as a brilliant night out for an intergenerational audience.

Engagement

Story Box Circus

A touring experiential circus performance and workshop for staff, family and residents of care homes. The goal is to offer not only a fun, physically and mentally stimulating activity but to ultimately leave staff and residents with new skills and competencies that allow the circus to become part of their daily lives.

In past programmes we have found that the adapted use of circus disciplines such as juggling/manipulation and contact work enable staff and residents to find different ways to relate to each other.

Each visit will follow the three steps of the overarching project: inspiration, training and activation, first seeing and experiencing something, then trying it out for yourself. Our artist-educators begin with a performance, after which they lead a seated circus session for the residents and staff. In order for the seated circus to live on in the home, we will offer training to the staff (and potentially family members), providing them with a detailed guide following the training.

The aims would be:

- Residents are able to access a new and high quality arts experience
- Care home staff have new skills to be able to engage the residents and so are better able to meet their individual care needs
- Participating care homes see increased value in the arts as a tool for improving their services.
- We create a context that increases community feeling in the home encouraging staff to work one on one with residents and residents to interact with each-other.

Aerial Dance for the over 50s (and their families)

A series of 5 weekends or weekday evening sessions over 10 weeks where we introduce a group to aerial dance and ensemble acrobatics. We would highlight this to be an intergenerational activity, where over fifties would be encouraged to bring a partner, a friend, a child or a grandchild. Together, they would learn some aerial dance moves building up to a simple group choreography that could be developed into a performance made with professional and local performers.

Celebration

A one day participatory and celebratory event in the form of a pop up festival in both outdoor and indoor settings. Various events would be held in public spaces: the streets, libraries, shopping centres alongside an indoor programme presented in more traditional performance spaces such as theatres and art centres but also in care homes for participants and audiences with limited ability to travel.



This celebration of intergenerational arts will incorporate various performances from professional artists, our workshops Aerial dance for the over 50s and their families, elements of Story Box Circus and presenting the updated and refreshed ‘What Happens in the Winter’ as the Greatest Show on Earth. In addition we would like to reconnect with our partner organizations and artists whom we have collaborated with over the years: [Entelechy Arts](#) and [Magic Me](#) in London, [Dartington](#) and Dance in Devon, [Live Age](#) in Stoke amongst others. They would join the pop up events with talks and debates, present the artists they work with and give this Celebration in Hull 2017 a national significance.

