

STRUT MEMBERS INFO SESSION
Thurs 22nd September 2011
10.30am – 11.45am
Green Room, King Street Arts Centre

On Thursday 22 September 2011 STRUT invited members to King Street Arts Centre for an informal information session where an outline of the organisation, roles of staff and opportunities were discussed with members to provide a better understanding of what STRUT offers to independent contemporary dancers and choreographers in Western Australia.

As a general guide, this document reflects what was presented on the day by the staff involved, as well as further information on STRUT support and activities in 2012 (where there was not ample time to cover these areas on the day).

Minutes of the meeting are also available for download on the Fact Sheet section of our website under Artist Support.

What is STRUT?

STRUT is the driver of emerging, innovative and quality choreography and contemporary dance, as the Choreographic Development Centre building a dynamic contemporary dance culture and community in Western Australia.

STRUT'S Goals

STRUT's goals are constantly in planning as they are responsive to the wider environment. They are based around:

- product
- audience
- critical discourse

Current goals of STRUT are:

- To support the creation and presentation of new work by WA professional independent contemporary dance artists
- To foster a choreographic culture informed by rigorous critical debate
- To engage with national and international practice
- To grow audiences access diverse contemporary dance experiences

STRUT and Future Moves

In 2007, following intensive industry consultations (commissioned by DCA) a report entitled 'Future Moves – Creating a Thriving Contemporary Dance Sector in Western Australia 2007 – 2012' was written by Alison McArdle. The report laid out strategies for growing the contemporary dance sector in WA. It made a recommendation of increased funds to ensure the sector could develop. This was used to lobby the WA state government for increased funding for the sector.

In 2007 the State Government (then Labor) announced a \$1.6 million package for the contemporary dance sector (original request from the sector was \$4 million) to be rolled out over 4 years, starting from 2009.

This package translated into 'Future Moves' funding, delivered through STRUT and Ausdance WA.

Future Moves is guided by a steering committee of which STRUT is a member (represented by Agnes Michelet). Other members of the steering committee include Ausdance WA (represented by Michelle Saunders), Performing Lines (rep Fiona De Garis), Buzz Dance (rep Pippa Davis, STEPS dance (rep Cassandra Lake), WAAPA (rep Michael Whaites), Country Arts WA (rep Philippa Maughan) and Sue Peacock (senior independent artist).

There are 11 strategies outlined in the Future Moves initiative, for which STRUT is responsible for 3.

These 3 strategies are focused on 'making adult work for adult audiences'.

The strategies delivered by Ausdance WA relate to marketing, regional development, lobbying and indigenous dance growth. There is 1 strategy delivered through DCA (the mid-career dance fellowship).

The 3 strategies STRUT is responsible for specifically are:

Strategy 1 – transitioning existing WA works into tour ready productions.

Strategy 2 – Increasing STRUT's resources as a choreographic development centre.

Strategy 3 – Increase STRUT's capacity to develop new productions.

Funding to deliver these three Future Moves strategies is allocated to STRUT as follows:

1. Employment of a Producer (to maximize visibility and touring potential of WA work)- \$60,000 p/a
2. Increase STRUT's resources to present new work for WA adult audiences (eg. Harakiri, Tongues of Stone)- \$120,000 p/a
3. Increase capacity to seed the development of new WA contemporary dance works - \$40,000 p/a

With the rapid growth of STRUT (since the implementation of the Future Moves initiative), a review of STRUT's staff structure took place to increase the organization's capacity to manage the strategies. STRUT staff has increased from 1.4 FTE (full time equivalent) to 3 FTE, with the aim to reach 3.4 FTE.

The Future Moves initiative has enabled STRUT to be more responsive to the needs of our members and play a larger role in getting WA independent dance artists from their initial idea to the presentation of their work. For example:

STRUT Short Cuts work/Co-Lab work / SEED residency work → Application to DCA or Australia Council funding for stage 2/ 3 development (assistance with applications by STRUT where possible)→ **Presentation** (supported by STRUT where appropriate)→ **Touring** (however important to note that tour management of independent work is not supported by STRUT unless the work is part of a STRUT touring initiative such as 'Duyetto').

One of our main aims is make artists stronger in applying for other funding. The aims of Future Moves is not to fund any one project entirely, it is more about being a 'leg-up'/ a beginning, to help us catch-up with the wider (national) cultural landscape.

STRUT's first contract relating to Future Moves was signed in June 2009 (6 months into the schedule). This first contract was for 2 years (2009 – 2010). A second 1 year contract was signed in 2011 and we are currently in the process of negotiating the third contract for the final year of the plan (for 2012).

STRUT Staff Roles

Director, Agnes Michelet (Tues – Fri)

The Director is responsible for ensuring that the objectives of STRUT's business plan are met and that we are on track with our goals and mission/vision.

Agnes devises STRUT's program every year and is responsible for ensuring STRUT's core funding applications to DCA and program funding applications to the Australia Council are submitted/ acquitted appropriately.

In addition, the Director manages all STRUT staff and makes final decisions as advised by the STRUT board where appropriate.

Artistic Program Manager, Sue Peacock (freelance)

The Artistic Program Manager provides an artistic voice to critically inform what the Director does.

This is purely at a strategic level. Sue helps devise STRUT's annual program and assists the Director in organising, planning and writing STRUT's funding applications.

Sue also provides logistical support for STRUTS Short Cuts and Prime Cut seasons.

Producer, Jo Pickup (Mon – Thurs)

The Producer role at STRUT has been made possible through the Future Moves initiative and is specifically designed to help realise the objectives of STRUT's Future Moves Strategies:

Strategy 1 – transitioning existing WA works into tour ready productions.

Strategy 2 – Increasing STRUT's resources as a choreographic development centre.

Strategy 3 – Increase STRUT's capacity to develop new productions.

Primarily the role of the STRUT producer is to SHOWCASE, SUPPORT and ADVOCATE for WA independent contemporary dance artists and their work, giving priority to those who have previously undertaken, or are currently undertaking, STRUT residencies.

Through this kind of support the Producer specifically aims to:

- strengthen member profiles and their professional reputations in WA, inter-state and (eventually) internationally
- broaden the audience base for member's work by facilitating presentation opportunities wherever possible (not limited to full length, high production value work and may include site specific work/ hybrid projects – whatever is relevant to the work/ projects members are developing)
- empower members with the expertise to become more effective independent operators/ makers of new work/ promoters of their own work = successful independent artists!

To achieve these aims the STRUT producer:

- Provides ongoing support and advice for STRUT members, giving priority to STRUT residency artists, to ensure their work develops to its maximum potential.
- Provides key industry stakeholders (presenters/ programmers/ artistic directors/ producers) across Australia with the most comprehensive, accurate and up to date information about WA independent contemporary dance artists and their work.
- Acts as a vehicle through which critical feedback from these key stakeholders and others can be effectively communicated to WA independent dance artists- an effective, trusted two way communication channel for both artists and presenters/ producers. This role has significant value not only for individual independent artists, but also for the wider contemporary dance sector in WA, facilitating an unprecedented level of critical dialogue and exchange towards the presentation of new work.

Specific day-to-day responsibilities include:

1. Auspicing

If you would like a grant application auspiced Jo is the person who can help you. However you need to have your application at least 80% finished before you call her. Jo can review your application and double check your budget but she cannot help you prepare your entire application from scratch. Please ensure that you contact Jo for auspicing assistance at least 2 weeks before your application deadline.

STRUT charges a 4% auspice fee, and this fee covers the administration of your grant budget (financials) only. It also means your project artists are covered by STRUT's worker's compensation insurance (but you still need to add 3% of wages paid to your application budget to account for STRUT's worker's compensation insurance cover).

2. Support Letters

Before you ask Jo for a support letter please ask yourself the following questions:

- 1. Exactly why is this letter important to my grant application?**
- 2. What points does it need to detail?**
- 3. Are there at least 2 weeks left for STRUT to write this letter before my grant application is due in?**

Once you have answers to these questions please get in touch with Jo to discuss. You need to think through the exact reasons you would like STRUT's endorsement of your project and how this will add value to your grant application. Then we'll work out the most appropriate STRUT staff member to write the support letter (it may be the STRUT director, STRUT artistic program manager or STRUT producer).

3. Coordinating STRUT residencies

Jo is responsible for coordinating STRUT's residencies program (ie our SEED residencies and any other associated STRUT residency opportunities). She oversees this program from the application stage through to the successful applications showings and aquittal process. NB – Financial management of STRUT residencies is done by STRUT's Administrator.

Please get in touch with Jo if you have any questions about applying for a STRUT residency.

4. Facilitating (in consultation with the STRUT director) STRUT's presentation program (ie 'STRUT presents' seasons).

In this role Jo liaises with the artists involved/ with the venue/ STRUT director and provides general logistical support to the crew to make these seasons happen.

5. Advocacy/ promotion of WA independents and their work to key stakeholders/ presenters & producers.

This means Jo provides STRUT members with industry level promotion only (and is specific to a list of approx 25 industry professionals). This does NOT equate to general marketing or publicity for you or your project.

Basically this advocacy is about Jo connecting with presenters and producers, providing them with information about you and your work if it could be of relevance to them.

So in this role she facilitates meetings between WA independent dance makers and presenters/ programmers where appropriate, and works to make presentation/ touring opportunities happen for these artists.

This advocacy and support extends only to the point of making the deals.. Then its up to you as the creator/director/ producer to deliver. ie Jo is not employed to project manage or to coordinate tours once the deal is done, she is there to open doors/ facilitate meetings & conversations that may lead to future opportunities for you and your work.

IN SUMMARY....

...if you are a STRUT member who is actively engaged in our program (regardless of whether you have undertaken a STRUT residency or not), and if you are serious about getting your work to an audience it is important to keep Jo in the loop!

The more information you can empower her with about who you are/ what ideas & work you are developing/ what you're interested in achieving, the better your chances are of connecting with the right people to make it happen!

NB – Any documentation/ information about you and your work that you send Jo will be kept confidential until she gets specific permission from you to send it to a third party.

What the Producer DOESN'T DO:

Project management; general media/ publicity; tour management' provide official representation for you or your work.

Communication Manager, Philippa Hansen (Wed – Fri)

The Communications Manager is responsible for marketing, branding and audience development at STRUT. The role covers marketing for STRUT residencies, 'STRUT presents' seasons, and STRUT produced projects.

Promoting and ticketing STRUT presents seasons require approximately 12 weeks of lead work and 4 weeks wrap-up and this is a major component of Philippa's role, effectively developing broader audiences for our member artists.

Liaising with media, photographers, videographers, designers and artists is all part of Philippa's role.

Philippa also develops relationships with venues, artists, marketers, organisations and businesses who can assist us in communication or promotion of STRUT activities. Philippa maintains the professional communication between STRUT and members and STRUT and the general public.

Philippa is also involved in initial meetings with STRUT artists in residence and STRUT season artists to plan the communications timelines of their projects, manage expectations and demonstrate what is required from both parties during the residency/season from an audience development point of view.

Philippa's major roles are as follows:

YEARLY

- Creating and publishing STRUT's annual calendar/ program
- Coordinating STRUT's annual launch
- Ticketing and Audience Development for all STRUT activities & events
- STRUT marketing strategy & marketing budgets
- Management of STRUT style guide
- Contribution to Annual Report

BI MONTHLY

- Composing and mailing STRUTchat (STRUT subscriber e-newsletter)

MONTHLY

- Composing Committee Board marketing report.
- Continual upgrading and detailing of STRUT Style Guide.

WEEKLY

- Composing and mailing member's e-news
- Carrying out general media/publicity for STRUT activities and events

DAILY

- Updating STRUT social media platforms
- Updating STRUT website with latest info and news

What the Communications Manager DOESN'T DO:

1. Break people's arms – Philippa can't force anyone to come to a show, review it, write a story, give good feedback or cooperate against their will
2. Promote or do publicity for projects or groups that have not been supported by STRUT (beyond members news mailouts).
3. Give artistic advice
4. Advocate, write support letters, or auspice (this is the Producer's role)

STRUT Administrator, (currently recruiting – interim position (Sept – Dec) filled by Tracey Meyers) (Tues, Thurs, Fri)

This role comprises two roles that are aligned- business management and program management.

Business management involves:

- Management of all STRUT accounts - includes invoicing, payroll, banking, superannuation
- Monitoring all STRUT budgets – includes STRUT seasons & STRUT residencies.
- Reviewing auspiced funding application budgets before they are submitted
- Financial management of auspiced projects (administering/ managing the budget only)
- Financial management of STRUT residencies (administering/ managing the budget only)
- Contracting staff and artists (except residencies as this is handled by STRUT Producer).
- Managing STRUT's insurance
 - *A note on insurance: Dancers paid directly by STRUT (either through a STRUT project or through a residency) are covered by STRUT's worker's compensation*

and public liability as they are included in the wages report provided to the insuring body annually. Dancers paid by STRUT as part of an auspice are covered by our worker's compensation but the project is NOT covered by STRUT's public liability insurance.

- Managing visa applications/ payments for international artists
- Coordinating STRUT audits and Annual General Meetings.

Program management involves:

- Coordinating STRUT professional class (Mon- Thurs mornings)
- Coordinating STRUT beginners class (Tues evenings)
- Coordinating STRUT intermediate class (Thurs evenings)
- Logistics relating to STRUT seasons/ events (travel and accommodation for artists involved, liaising with the production manager, APRA licensing etc)
- Coordinating STRUT workshops/ professional development program
- Coordinating STRUT studio bookings for class and for STRUT's professional development program

STRUT Residencies in 2012

In 2012 up to 4 SEED residencies of up to \$10,000 each will be offered. There is \$35,000 available to be dispersed (eg. could be 4 residencies of \$8,500 or 3 of \$30,000 and one \$5,000).

These residencies have been made possible through the Future Moves initiative and are designed to support works in their first or second stage of development, ie the emphasis for these residencies is on 'seeding' and not presentation. They are designed to provide a chance for artists to get in to the studio to test ideas/ gather creatives.

These residencies include up to 3 weeks per application studio time at KSAC (120 hrs time in total). This does not need to be in your budget if you are planning to work at KSAC. More detailed info on KSAC studio availability times/ dates is listed in the call for applications (sent Sept 29 2011).

Selection criteria:

- potential to deliver quality artistic outcomes
- ability to progress the art-form
- potential to connect with an audience
- the experience of/or potential benefit for the artists involved
- accurate budgeting for the project

Assessment Process:

STRUT residencies are judged by a voluntary assessment panel made up of 4 members + 1 STRUT vote (combined vote from STRUT Director/ Artistic Program Manager & Producer).

The 4 panel members are chosen as follows:

- 1 senior contemporary dance artist/ choreographer
- 1 contemporary dance theorist/critic
- 1 performing arts presenter/ programmer
- 1 youth performing arts industry professional

For more detailed information on 2012 SEED residencies please contact STRUT Producer (call for applications sent Sept 29, applications closed Mon 24 Oct, notification of results to applicants Thurs 24 Nov 2011).

Additional STRUT support/ opportunities for members

'STRUT presents' seasons/ presentation support in 2012

STRUT has recently changed the way we support WA independents to present their new work.

Previously STRUT has allocated up to \$25,000 for 'co-production' support residencies. These 'co-pro' residencies were chosen via a call for applications and were judged by the same voluntary assessment panel as STRUT SEED residencies.

The residencies were intended to support the third stage development of a new WA work including presentation of the work by STRUT in a premiere season.

Acknowledging the limitations of these funds for the desired outcome, combined with the desire to access the new theatre (STCWA) and develop audiences, in 2012 STRUT has decided to re-direct these funds to curated presentation support for artists on a more responsive basis.

Essentially, in 2012 STRUT will continue to present seasons of new work by WA independent dance artists, but the decision of what STRUT presents/ supports will be made by STRUT's director in consultation with STRUT's artistic program manager and STRUT's producer.

The kind of support/ the extent of STRUT's support will vary according to the scope of individual project, and is something that is negotiated on a case by case basis with STRUT's director in consultation with STRUT's artistic program manager and STRUT's producer.

Our 2012 presentation support has already been allocated, and the WA works that have been chosen to receive this support will be announced at our 2012 program launch (January 2012).

We hope to continue this kind of presentation support post 2012 (post Future Moves) so if you have a new work that you are looking to present in WA in 2013 please make this known to STRUT's producer.

Ongoing 'responsive support' for members

In addition to STRUT's presentation support for our members, we also have the ability to provide some 'responsive support' for activities or initiatives that will further our objectives for the WA contemporary dance sector.

This responsive support is about providing small amounts of funding where possible to assist WA independent dance artists who are actively engaged in our program, when regular avenues for funding support cannot be accessed.

Examples of this kind of responsive support is STRUT's contribution of \$1,000 to Rhiannon Newton's trip to New York in Dec 2011 to present her solo 'Check Point Solo' at Judson Church.

If you have a project that you think is eligible for this kind of responsive support, please contact STRUT producer to see if/ how STRUT can help.

STRUT's 2012 program

STRUT will officially launch its 2012 program with a public event in January 2012 (stay tuned!).

STRUT's 2012 program will comprise a range of professional development opportunities, residencies, in-theatre seasons, contemporary dance events and studio showings (pending results of Australia Council and DCA funding).

However one event that is definitely going ahead in 2012 is STRUT's tenth anniversary 'STRUTathon' which will take place at PICA (gallery space) on Sat 28 Jan. It will be a 10 hour marathon of short works made over the past 10 years by STRUT members (call for applications sent 29 Sept, applications closed 3 Nov, notification of results to applicants Thurs 24 Nov 2011).

For more information on the 'STRUTathon' please contact STRUT producer.