



UPSWING

Hull 2017

Working with older people

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Changing Altitudes

Since 2010 Upswing has been working on a programme of activity to profile and inspire dialogue around arts, ageing and intergenerational performance. Through this programme we aim to challenge stereotypes surrounding older people, their abilities and connection to the rest of society.

We believe that high quality arts experiences have wellbeing impacts beyond their intrinsic cultural value; we have found that our work supports physical and cognitive skills development but also helps with emotional wellbeing.

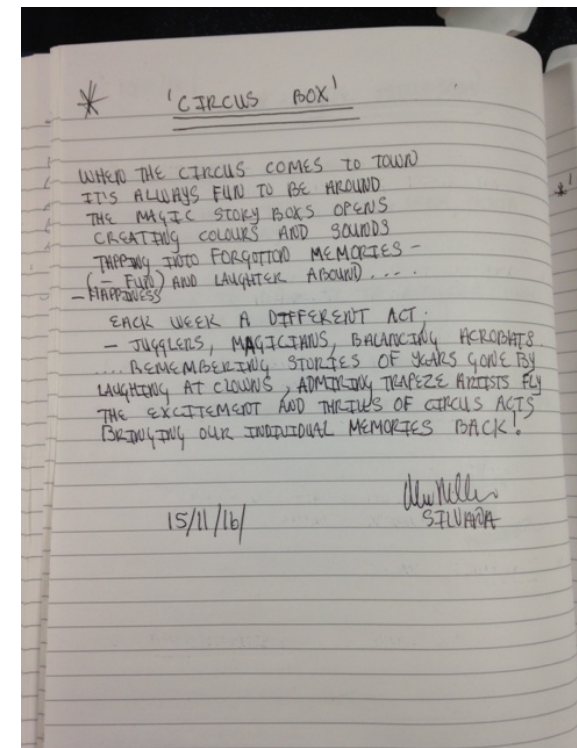


Story Box Circus

In 2016, Upswing was approached by Magic Me to deliver a 10 week long residency at Silk Court, an Anchor care home in East London, to work with staff and residents to develop our circus practice for a care home audience. During the preparation phase, Upswing artists took part in specific training to work with frail older people and those with dementia. In turn, care home staff took part in circus skills workshops in advance of the sessions with residents at the care home.

Watch a sort video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T3lhG7aCVA0>



Silk Court residents enjoying some juggling and a poem written by the senior care home staff

Care Homes Hull 2017

Story Box Circus on tour

Inspired by our 10 week long residency in London, we are proposing to create a touring version of our experiential circus performance and workshop for staff, family and residents of 6 care homes in Hull in the lead up to International Older People's Day on 1st October 2017.

For each visit, our artist-educators will begin with a performance, after which they will lead a seated circus session for the residents and staff. In order for the seated circus to become a regular feature in the home, we will offer training to the staff (and potentially family members), providing them with a detailed guide to continue the activities in the longer term.

Tour delivery

In advance of arrival, we will send a project video to each home and a pack including images, activity plans, testimonials from past projects and risk assessments.

We will also organize a site visit to each home (three days to visit 6 homes).

During each site visit we will deliver a 90min induction session with key staff (activity manager and any other staff that might be present). This will be an introduction to Upswing, a demonstration of our capability in this area and a chance for them to try some of the activities we will be bringing during the tour.

The site visit is not essential but useful to get staff on board and ensure a legacy for the project.

- Week 1 - rehearsals with our team of artists-educators to create a 20min show consisting of a solo by each artist and some ensemble material to frame the performance. Within the rehearsal we will also train the artists to deliver workshops focused at older people and dementia sufferers if they haven't taken part in our training before.
- Week 2 and 3 - We tour the show to the 6 care homes (3 homes each week). Our team of artists/educators and production co-coordinator will decorate the space(s) identified during the site visit. They will then deliver the workshop elements and finish with a group performance which incorporates participation.

Objectives

Our 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 and demonstrate that care homes can thrive as creative communities.

We will carry out an evaluation at each home to measure our impact on the wellbeing of the older participants.

Human wellbeing has psychological, social, physical and functional components:

- Psychological wellbeing and functioning consist of, for example, mood, emotions, coping with challenges, self-esteem, cognitive processes, learning and concentration.
- Social wellbeing and functioning are formed through community spirit, group participation and by being appreciated. The level of social functioning is manifested in how effortlessly the participant engages in social interaction.
- Physical wellbeing and functioning are built on the motor skills, mobility and physical strength. Physical functioning is the way in which a participant manages his or her activities of daily living.

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 and previous evaluation showed an increased understanding between staff and residents:

“I realise I have been underestimating my customers” - Marcia Forsythe (Manager, Silk Court Care Home)

We hope to create a legacy handbook so that other care homes can learn from this project and have the confidence to programme unique creative activities in their spaces.

Budget

The total cost of the activity is £25,569 plus VAT and is inclusive of

- planning, training, site visits, health and safety documentation
- Rehearsals, props, costumes, artists fees, equipment
- Transport, travel and accommodation
- Administrative overheads and evaluation
- Filming and photography
- Legacy handbook

Please contact camille@upswing.org.uk 020 7613 4843 for more information.