



Artistic Director's Report: December 2018
Kat Single-Dain

Program report – a brief review of the major accomplishments of the Society throughout the year delivered by the Staff Representative.

Artistic Director Reports are made three times throughout the year (every 4 months). Kat Single-Dain has been AD for the DFC since January 2014, and currently acts as the Senior Manager. Another role is being developed presently to divide the administrative work. She is paid an honorarium of \$150/month

Greetings all readers!

I want to start by saying that I feel immensely grateful for and also intimately tied to the work of the Dusty Flowerpot Cabaret. By coincidence—or perhaps by the omniscient powers of Google—the moment I sat down to write this report a ‘memory’ showed up on my Facebook feed of the current board chair, Alastair, and I dancing at the after party of *Hard Times Hit Parade* in 2010.

The DFC and its productions have been the outlet of my most ambitious creativity and a source of deep friendships. I may not be alone in this. In many moments, from 2007 to now, the DFC has been an **undoubtedly special intersection of people**. This stands true today and perhaps it is what defines us. Wherever we are, be it a parade, a cabaret or a roving performance, “the Dusty Flowerpot Cabaret” is a Special, Playful, and Inquisitive Intersection of People.

Though it has an old soul, The DFC is a young organization, only having become a non profit organization in January 15, 2013 (my birthday, only by complete coincidence). In the life cycle of an organization, this is relatively young and like the life of a human being, youth is filled with challenges, learnings and ultimately growth. Questions of identity have plagued us in the past, yet in the past year, 2018, it seems we have let the questions answer themselves. At present, the DFC fills a niche role in Vancouver that is connected to its roots; with a unique “dusty” aesthetic upheld by core members and staff, it is an open playing field for new work by new and seasoned performers, and places high value on playfulness, engagement and theatrical immersion.

And, it is *alive*... Even on a very rainy Parade of Lost Souls this year, the community center counted 8000 participants arriving to the event. Again, we had record numbers of participants in our workshops. We have received all grants applied for in 2018 and have applied for more grants than any other year. We are at the cusp of having the administrative support and financial management that we have needed for years, being in the midst of completing a contract with Natalie LeFauvre-Gnam to fill these needs. We have hired a new Rentals Manager, Karen Jang, and clarified our systems for studio rentals. Our lease from the City at a studio that we may call home for another 14 years based on the renewal terms is moving forward. Our Dusty Flower

Shop has become a hub of physical theater and clowning practice and performance. And this same studio has received the first stage of Infrastructure Development funding for much needed renovations and improvements!

So, in short, we have a lot to be celebrating at the end of 2018. With two parades, a black box theatre/studio available for rent, a monthly cabaret and a weekly clown jam, our annual programming has become quite full in fact. In every case we have made improvements in our systems and are working towards operating all sustainably. After a year of focusing on the nuts and bolts of the DFC, I believe 2019 will be a year with space to dream again.

Let the dreams begin.

KSD



The aforementioned photograph, posted many years ago by Nayana, a current board member.

REPORT ADDENDUM AVAILABLE

An addendum to this report with 4 pages of details on all the year's activities is available at the AGM, as well as online at any time.

Artistic Director's Report ADDENDUM

A more detailed report of DFC activities of the past year.

All new Clown Gym. And a Clown Hub

Our studio is a hub of clowns in this here town! Three clown groups use the DFS to hold jams. One of these is our own, DFC sponsored Clown Gym which is intended for anyone who has trained in clowning before. It is not meant to be a class but a jam, so everyone in the room must start with the same basic vocabulary and knowledge of exercises. It continues on Saturdays 12-3 and is run by a committee. This is a win win situation for all graduates of clowning workshops, and for the DFC as an organization. It feeds content and performers directly into the cabarets and the parades. Collaboration and connection happen easily and allows for other opportunities to arise. And, basically, we all need practice so it is simply that as well.

We may choose to focus on this unique position of being a hub for clown practice/physical theatre more in future. Many members of the DFC were part of a team that ran a clown festival many years ago; Kat and Alastair were the co-producers, led by a committee that made all decisions collectively. The DFC would be in a good position to host a clown festival if we ever chose to.

The Third Thursday Cabaret

We have run the monthly Third Thursday Cabaret from Jan to May and from Sept to Dec, 2018. The committee for the cabaret has settled into being composed of the people who are also running the event, so it is essentially a production committee. This is currently Rhys Lillo, Nayana Fielkov, Nate Owen, Candice Roberts, and KSD. It is relatively active on account of the ongoing nature of the cabarets, and is in a state of exciting evolution, where meetings are a 'dust storm' of new ideas and problem solving.

The cabaret provides an opportunity for new work to be seen in Vancouver. While the hosts are curated and hired by KSD, the acts themselves are currently accepted without curation, though we have started to make our particular focus on physicalized forms of theater a priority over the order in which we receive submissions, and have spoken about starting to curate a portion of the acts. All are in agreement that this is a direction that we would like to take, as acts and audience grow.

Grant Writing

Here's the shortest, best news of all; All grants thus far have been successful in 2018, and further to this we've applied for more grants in 2018 than ever before.

Parade of Lost Souls 2018

My goal with the parade is to create a production team that holds with some consistency. Nate Owen came on board in 2018 as the Production Manager for Parade and Co-Producer in training. This went well and he is signed on for next year as well, so that is good news in relation to my goal!

Nate and I have an intention to work throughout the year on the parade so that it is not as much of a rush towards the end. We will begin to do this in January.

On a somewhat personal note, I was delighted by directing a new flash mob concept that went very well, pitting Thriller vs. Time Warp. Participation was very enthusiastic, with an average of 45 people at each rehearsal. I had a blast choreographing, teaching it, and casting the characters, and we ended up on TV which was just a bonus. We were part of Talent Time just after Parade and so that will be available soon. One particular moment was inspiring related to this at the Parade; on our last run of the flash mob our power cut out just as Thriller was about to start. Instead of dispersing, the crowd stayed. Instead of giving up, the dancers started clapping to the beat. Soon enough we performed the entire dance to the sound of hands clapping...no power needed. People power prevailed.

There are many details that I could report on, but I will end with only a few other brief notes on POLS:

Our relationship with Britannia continues to be strong and supportive.

The after party at the Wise Hall was very successful and I've booked it again for next year.

The budget for POLS was \$33,700 and is available in detail in our google drive.

City of Vancouver Bylaw Reform

To catch new members and board members up on a point of pride for the DFC in the past three years, the DFC became a case study of sorts for the City of Vancouver in its efforts to make public celebration more accessible to produce. This has been an amazing opportunity for me to speak directly and honestly with people like Andrea Reimer who had been helping to push forward some changes to the city's procedures around permitting and festival production. The goal has been to change the process so that more low budget events may happen without being held up by heavy administrative requirements during the permit process. After many consultation meetings I've had with various government employees over the past three years, in 2018, we saw a significant change; this year, to our surprise, we were not required to have a COV permit for the Parade! If we remain on Britannia Community Center and School property, this should be the case in years to come. In short, the DFC has had a lasting affect on the 'no fun' city!

Summer Solstice Parade

In short this event was very successful. A full report on the event is available in our google drive written by Alex Chrisholm from the Gathering Place Society. He and Candice Roberts led this event with all its grant writing and production annually; the DFC co-produces the event with the Gathering Place.

Studio Updates "The Dusty Flower Shop" - Hiring a new Rentals Manager

Karen Jang was hired as our new Rentals Manager and Rhys Lillo was rehired into his position as Studio Operations Manager. This was done by the studio committee. At this point she has been brought up to speed on our systems, clarified our rental contract, updated our rates and methods of booking, and has advertised the studio on a number of new platforms. Rhys Lillo was re-hired in his role as Studio Operations Manager. He deals with all the physical aspects of the studio. Candice Roberts continues to do work trade for keeping the studio in top form. The studio team is thriving, and has a great working relationship that is solidifying over time.

The studio has roughly a zero balance, or 'brake even' status in 2018. Financially the studio is not reaching our goals for rental income, which was set last year at roughly \$28,000 (double the previous year's income) by a hopeful studio committee. This should be a focus in the new year, as increasing rental income would provide necessary funding for our operational expenses.

Studio Updates- Infrastructure funding

We have received the first stage of a two-part Infrastructure Grant from COV for renovations on the studio. Our hopes and plans for the studio as stated in our grant application are as follows:

- Add second stair to mezzanine
- New washroom at mezzanine level above main floor washroom
- New kitchenette
- New kitchen counter that can double as bar for the event space
- New permanent retractable seating
- Extend and finish existing sprung floor
- Repaint existing sprung floor
- new blinds / curtains over existing vertical blinds
- New enclosed storage at mezzanine level (dusty flower pot)
- New enclosed storage closets at mezzanine level (other user)
- New / update general lighting and lighting control
- New grid for theatre lighting and new ceiling power outlets
- Update HVAC distribution according to space layout
- New security system with integrated locks
- Improve entry vestibule in conformance with strata bylaw
- Repaint all walls and ceiling

On Nov 26th 2018, Natalie and Kat completed a matching ask to Heritage Canada for our successful Studio Infrastructure grant received from COV. This is \$2500 for the development of a renovation plan. This is not for the renovations themselves but for the planning. The matching ask for the planning stage only, if received, will bring the total to \$5000 to cover the cost of architectural plans and DFC management of the renovation planning.

Studio Updates- Lease in Progress

KSD has been working with Debra Bodner at COV to craft our lease. A draft lease has been sent to the 2018 BOD. The next step for the 2019 BOD is to determine if we need a lawyer to also look at this for us, make any amendments, and then have a meeting with the COV and their lawyer to sign it.

For those who are arriving new to us, here is a brief history of the studio for you: We took over the space on Nov 1st, 2013, directly from PD because we had just produced Pols for them on basically zero budget. A grant came through for \$8000 from Heritage 2 days before the Parade that year so before that everyone had been working for free. Jeanette and I knew that this would lead to having access to the studio, so we did it for the love and the investment in this possibility. We inhabited the studio on a month to month basis starting Nov 2013 until the COV made a call out and intake of proposals for the long term NPO tenant. Jeanette and I wrote up our proposal

and gathered more than a dozen letters of support. They received 19 proposals by companies as large as Children's Festival and Mortal Coil, yet we DFC were chosen by COV as the longterm tenants of the space in 2014. [This is the little video I made of the announcement at City Council.](#)

Contracts and Sponsorships

This coming December we are sponsoring an event, the Authentic Self Party happening at UBC. A performer from Parade of Lost Souls and the cabaret, Dianna David, is running the event. We will be donating set decoration items that are used for Parade of Lost Souls.

There is an upcoming contract that KSD is managing in April 2019. It is to create theme specific costumes for the 420 festival and contract roving performers. This is budgeted at \$2500-3000

Hard Times Hit Parade and Scarlet Queen of Mercy Films

These are two previous DFC and DFC/KSD joint productions that were filmed for the purpose of finishing as original musical features. The films are currently being edited by production company Obsidian Arts. KSD is directing the films, working with editor Justin Snell, and working within the dedicated film making funds received from a BravoFACT grant of \$8200 to complete both films.

Administration/General Management Tasks

In point form:

Insurance – Changed hands to another service provider because our former insurer failed to respond to changing demands of Parade performance. Still operating through Front Row Insurance but with a different provider, Ecclesiastical.

Bylaw Reform – working with Kerry Elfstrom and the board we have updated our bylaws as per the requirements of the new societies act.

BOD: Board of Directors

The 2018 Board of the DFC was pleasure to work with. Many founding members choose to step onto the board, creating a cohesive and knowledgeable base from which to make decisions easily and with positive energy. Five members of the board in 2018 have been involved in shows and productions since 2010 or before, which also created a sense of continuity and unity between the board, committees and staff of the DFC.

I want to acknowledge and THANK everyone from the BOD for volunteering their time this year. With busy lives it is no small thing to do! THANK YOU.

That's all from me!....For now.
KSD

DFC

AD REPORT 2018