

Live Art UK

the national network of Live Art promoters



April 8, 2011

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Live Art UK network writes in response to the announcement by Arts Council England (ACE) of its National Portfolio Organisation awards for 2012-15.

Whilst we welcome the news that many organizations and artists working with Live Art have received increased funding and others have received funding for the first time, some key organizations and artists are no longer part of the Portfolio, and other dynamic new players have been turned down for NPO status. No one can yet know how the NPO decisions, will affect the ecologies of diverse, emergent and experimental practices in the long term, but it is something we must all be alert to.

Live Art UK supports ACE's aims to "get great art to everyone", understands the difficult decisions they faced, and appreciates their efforts to strike a balance between supporting bigger, national institutions and smaller, independent organizations committed to innovation and risk. As many others have emphasized, it was the Government's Settlement last Autumn which resulted in a cut to ACE's budget for funded organisations of 14.9%, and the responsibility for these drastic and damaging cuts must ultimately rest with the Government and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

This reduction in ACE's funding is a matter of great concern to Live Art UK, which supports the emergent and experimental practices of a diverse range of artists. The Live Art sector is characterised by small, entrepreneurial and resource-light organisations working in partnership. With reduced funding available, the UK's capacity to encourage artists to take risks, to self-reflect and to see the world in alternative ways will be severely diminished.

In this context, we are worried that a number of disabled and culturally diverse led organizations, and others dedicated to the possibilities of digital technologies, have received substantial, or, in some instances, total cuts to their funding. We are equally worried that significant organisations developed through the distinctive and highly influential dynamics of artist-led culture have also been excluded from NPO.

We know that England will be increasingly dependent on the strength of the knowledge industries in the years ahead. Now, more than ever, we are reliant on our ability to communicate and think creatively, and the quality of our education. The cuts to ACE, the cuts to the arts and humanities within Higher Education, and increases in university fees will not facilitate the growth of knowledge industries, and can only lead to a diminished society.

Sincerely,

Live Art UK: The Arches, Arnolfini, Artsadmin, BAC, The Basement, the Bluecoat, Chapter Arts Centre, Chelsea Theatre, Colchester Arts Centre, Compass Live Art in Yorkshire and the Humber, Fierce Festival, Forest Fringe, greenroom, hÅb, Home live art, Inbetween Time Productions, LIFT (London International Festival of Theatre), Live Art Development Agency, Live at LICA (Nuffield Theatre Lancaster), New Work Network, Theatre Bristol, and Wunderbar

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Editors notes:

A full version of the Live Art UK statement can be found here: www.liveartuk.org

Live Art UK is the national network of Live Art promoters, working to support and develop the Live Art infrastructure for the benefit of artists and audiences. The Live Art UK network explores new models and partnerships for the promotion of Live Art; develops new ways to increase the national and international visibility of Live Art; initiates strategies for a more sustainable future for Live Art practitioners and promoters; and aims to provide a representative voice for the Live Art Sector in the UK.

www.liveartuk.org

After over 14 years of activity in the sector, as a unique artist-led organisation with over 1,500 members nationally, Live Art UK member New Work Network has been unsuccessful in its NPO submission. This decision may jeopardise New Work Network as a national support body for the professional development needs of emerging and established artists. Please contact Co-Directors, Jason E Bowman and Orlagh Woods on 020 75399373 for further information.

www.newworknetwork.info

After nearly 30 years as one of the pillars of both the national touring infrastructure and of artist development in the North West region, Live Art UK member **greenroom** has been unsuccessful in its NPO submission. So many national artists refer to it as 'coming home', and without **greenroom**'s support, time, space and resources, an echoing void is left which threatens both Manchester's artistic community and hugely impoverishes the city's flourishing audiences. Please contact Artistic Director Garfield Allen on 0161 615 0501 for further information.

www.greenroomarts.org