



Collaborative Radically Integrated
Performers Society in Edmonton

Annual Report 2016

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Chairperson's Report

This year CRIPSiE was very successful in our grant applications. A few highlights include receiving a production grant from the Alberta Foundation for the Arts for the production of *Careful*, as well as an Edmonton Community Foundation grant for the creative collaboration with Alice Sheppard. Also we received a Stollery Foundation grant for adaptation specialist for accessibility support with artists and performances, and we received operational funding from the Edmonton Arts Council. CRIPSiE was also awarded \$10,000 from the Muriel Hole Fund, through the Edmonton Community Foundation, which has been reserved for use in the 2017 fiscal year.

CRIPSiE was nominated for the Mayor's Celebration for the Arts, Courage to Innovate award sponsored by Telus. It is an honour to be nominated by peers in our community, and in my opinion very well deserved. Good Luck CRIPSiE!

In 2016 we welcomed a new board member Molly Staley. Molly has been hugely beneficial to the team, bringing much energy and expertise to the board. Molly has been great in assisting with fundraising strategies and social media/communications.

We held our second annual fundraiser, Pajama Jam! on October 1st at Latitude 53. 76 people attended the Pajama Jam 2016, and we made \$1000. We will evaluate where we can cut costs next year while still maintaining the accessibility of this event. We received promotion on Dinner TV, which was a great boost for the Pajama Jam.

This year there was a huge focus on Strategic Planning with the Board, Artistic Directors and Artistic Associates. Brooke Leifso facilitated our first strategic planning session held in the gallery space at the Nina Haggerty Centre for the Arts. The board and artistic associates left with clear understanding of the challenges we intend to tackle in the next three years. We also left understanding which questions we have not resolved, but intend to stay with and return to. The challenges we identified are developing our financial sustainability and developing our practices around intersectionality. We have been awarded a Canada Council Organizational Development Equity grant to address these areas in the upcoming year.

We are still awaiting our eligibility confirmation for a casino from the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission. This process has led to developing more rich and defined bylaws and internal policies that are more clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the Artistic Directors and Artistic Associates.

The amount of thoughtfulness and growth that this organization has year to year is astounding. This has been a huge year for CRIPSiE and its supporters and I am thrilled to be along for the ride and able to share in their successes! Very much looking forward to next season!

~ Ainsley Hillyard

Our Mission and Mandate

Mission

CRIPSiE is committed to generating high quality, creative, anti-oppressive and inclusive art practices and performances.

Mandate

CRIPSiE strives to develop a more equitable, accessible, vibrant and engaged artistic community in Edmonton.





Kelsie Acton

Co-Artistic Directors' Report

We had a full and fulfilling year creating art, educating about disability and accessibility, as well as connecting to communities in Edmonton and beyond. Here are some highlights from our three CRIPSiE programs.

1. Performance Creation, Production and Presentation Program

CRIPSiE supports the creation, production and presentation of artistic performances, including dance, theatre and performance art. To produce high quality integrated and disability art, CRIPSiE currently operates on a two-year cycle – presenting a major production one year, and developing a capacity-building collaboration project the next. In 2016:

- We developed our organization through two major productions this year
 - A remounted version of *The Wedding Reception: Love in the Margins*, in collaboration with the mindhive collective.
 - A full-length production entitled *Careful*, featuring relaxed performance accessibility measure
- With the mindhive collective, we remounted *The Wedding Reception: Love in the Margins*. This performance was presented by Workshop West at the inaugural Chinook Festival in January 2016. The Chinook Festival presented the production three times over the two-week festival. We brought in approximately 45 audience members each night, for a total of 135 people over the three-day run. This is the first time CRIPSiE has substantially revise a work. We believe that the revised version was fearless - more explicit and uncompromising in its examination of the cast's lived experiences of ableism and the legacies of eugenics. One audience member who saw both versions said of the performance at Chinook, "I felt implicated this time".
- Our second production was entitled *Careful*. *Careful* ran November 18th and 19th, 2016 in the Westbury Theatre. We developed and revised several pieces for this production.



Lindsay Eales

Co-Artistic Directors' Report Continued

Les Étoiles: A Resurrected Motif (choreographed by Lindsay Eales), *Intimacies* (choreographed by Lindsay Eales and Danielle Peers) and *Help!* (choreographed by Kelsie Acton) were substantially revamped for this production. Alison Neuman, our emerging choreographer, created a piece entitled *Fix You*. We commissioned short works from Brandon Wint (spoken word entitled *Love in this Body*) and Rebecca John (choreo-poetry entitled *bi/chotomy*). Finally, we developed and presented the world premiere of *Succumb*, choreographed by the world-renown Alice Sheppard (see page 7).

- *Careful* attracted 220 audience members, a substantial increase from our previous audiences of 130. This production marked several major milestones for CRIPSiE in terms of accessibility. For previous performances we have charged pay-what-you-can. This year we experimented with a sliding scale of \$5-25 and made it clear that no one would be turned away for lack of funds. We also provided information on what sliding scales are and why we were using them on all our online materials. This was a success, as we saw our average ticket price rise to just under \$12.00 per ticket from approximately \$10.00 per ticket. For *Careful* we provided ASL interpretation and close captioning for all the text in the program. We have been wrestling for the past two years with how to make ASL and close captioning an integrated, cohesive part of our performances. *Careful* was the first time we feel like we had substantial success.

Relaxed Performances

- We experimented with relaxed performances for the first time at *Careful*, and received many comments about how welcoming the space felt. These initial comments have been backed up by the results of an on-line survey that we conducted immediately following the performance. We have received a few suggestions through the survey to improve this performance format (such as asking that the performance be a scent-free space) but we believe we have developed an exciting model for future accessible performances. A document detailing our choices, successes, and areas for improvement in producing relaxed performances will be available on our website shortly.



Additional Dance Development and Performance:

- Co-Artistic Director Kelsie Acton choreographed *Volitation*. This is a six-minute dance piece was performed at the 26th Orchesis Dance Motif, a pre-professional showcase in January 2016.
- A version of *Help!* was presented at Toy Gun Dance Theatre's inaugural *Dancing in the Park* in the summer of 2016.

Emerging Choreographer Program:

- In February 2016, having run a successful series of company classes in fall 2015, we accepted Alison Neuman to the emerging choreographer program. Alison was provided with space, a cast of five CRIPSiE dancers, and mentorship from the Co-Artistic Directors. Her new work, *Fix You*, was presented in *Careful*.

Teacher Training:

- In February, four artists attended a weeklong Canadian Integrated Dance Teachers' Training, hosted by MoMo Dance Theatre, which included dancers and instructors from across Canada.

Co-Artistic Directors' Report Continued

2. Video Program

CRIPSiE creates and produces video work on issues relating to disability and performance. Our video work explores the CRIPSiE community and the beauty of integrated dance more broadly. Our videos also focus on community-based art expression, as well as documenting our live performances. In 2016:

- Our work is in the process of being archived as the first entry on disability and performance within the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics video library – the first major library of performance across the Americas. Video for this archive has been accepted by the Institute, and should come online in 2017.
- Our feature film *New Constellations* continues to be shown in various venues, including in University of Alberta classrooms, although its official festival touring period has ended. We also signed a distribution and showing contract for *New Constellations* in South Korea in 2016.

3. Educational Outreach Program

Our Educational Outreach Program consists of four main aspects: a) Talks/Lectures/Panels; b) Informances (Educational Performances); c) Public Classes and Workshops; and d) Accessibility in the Arts Consultation. In 2016:

- We did a number of talks/lectures/panels: A talk-back for *Love in the Margins* at the Canoe Festival on “ableism, eugenics, and structural barriers to relationships”; a talk-back for *Careful* on disability and race-informed artistic practice and relaxed performance; a lecture at *NextUp Edmonton Leadership Program for Social and Environmental Justice* on “Disability Arts and Social Justice;” and a public lecture on race, disability and dance by Alice Sheppard. In November, Accessible Media Inc. featured us for a story on disability art and community, to come out in early 2017.
- We held one major informance this year, which was featured at the University of Alberta Arts-Based Research Studio on August 19th, as a part of Alice Sheppard’s artist residency.
- We ran public rehearsals, classes and workshops, including: Alice Sheppard’s integrated dance workshop on August 13, 2016, as well as open rehearsals teaching about integrated dance and disability-informed choreography on August 10th, 12th, and 17th.
- We offered Accessibility in the Arts Consultation, using accessibility audits and consultation to increase access to artistic venues and events in Edmonton. For the second year, Fringe Theatre Adventures hired CRIPSiE to consult for their major festival. We re-audited some venues that had changed, provided accessibility feedback on the festival website, and audited the grounds to provide suggestions for increasing access to people with disabilities. We donated accessibility consulting to Concrete Theatre and the Alberta Opera Touring Association. We also donated audits for the Found Festival, and plan to work with them to develop an accessibility audit for non-traditional venues.



Financial Report

CRIPSiE had another great financial year! We have \$8,733 in the bank, and have set aside \$3,000 of this amount as an emergency savings (reserve fund). We paid \$49,673 to artists, and spent 95% of our funds directly on making and showing art. We have already received a Canada Council Grant and \$10,000 in donations (from the Muriel Hole Fund) for 2017. Below is our simplified financial statement. Full statements have been sent to members, and are available upon request.

Simplified Financial Statements - December 30, 2016

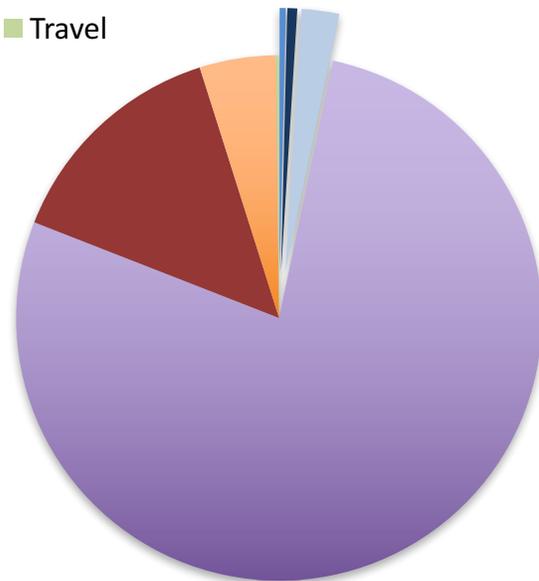
Income	
Donations	\$867 ¹
Grants	\$63,787
Artistic Income	\$6,833
Fundraising	\$1,782
Total Income	\$73,270

Expenses	
Administration	\$242
Advertising and promotion	\$388
Fundraising costs	\$1,475
Artists Paid	\$49,673
Artistic production	\$9,073
Space rental and insurance	\$3,006
Travel	\$118
Artist & Organizational Develop	\$1,310
Accessibility	\$6,475
Total Expenses	\$71,760

Financial Position	
Equity beginning of year	\$7,224
Income minus expenses	\$1,509

Retained Surplus end of 2016	\$8,733 ²	*95% spent on making and showing art
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- Administration
- Advertising and promotion
- Fundraising costs
- Artists Paid
- Artistic production
- Space rental and insurance
- Travel



Full audited financial statement available on request

Notes

1. We received a \$10,000 donation last year that the board deferred into 2017 income, so we count it next year.
2. \$3,000 of this is in a Reserve Fund, which is as a safety net that can only be used if the board votes to use it.

Spotlight: Creation Intensive with Alice Sheppard



In August, twelve CRIPSiE artists had the incredible opportunity to work with Alice Sheppard, a world-renowned dancer and emerging choreographer who has performed with Axis Dance Company and other major integrated dance companies in the U.S. and U.K. Full Radius Dance Company, and MOMENTA DANCE COMPANY have also commissioned her work.

We spent two weeks together, creating and rehearsing almost daily to build a 15-minute work entitled *Succumb*. We performed the world premiere of this work as a part of CRIPSiE's 2016 production *Careful*. *Succumb* explores care-- when we accept it, when we reject it. How do we express care without touch or contact? When and how is care a joy? When is care a "care" or a

"burden"? What are some of the unwritten and unspoken ideas around care in our different communities? How do we "take" care; who does the "care-giving?" Why? *Succumb* searches for connection, seeks relationship, exposes the desire to belong.

As a part of this Artist Residency through the University of Alberta's Arts-Based Research Studio, we also held open rehearsals, and a works-in-progress showing of *Succumb*, to share our creative process with the public. We were also fortunate to have Alice offer a community-based integrated dance workshop, as well as an incredibly insightful lecture/performance on disability, race and dance.

In this project, we also experimented with how to make a dance intensive (with multiple rehearsals in a short period of time) more accessible. We offered two levels of commitment (afternoon and evening rehearsal times), made food available, and explored social accessibility through coloured "name tags" that represented the amount of social engagement dancers were desiring of during downtime. We learned that a lot of these choices facilitated access, but that a couple more days off during the project would have been useful to facilitate rest and focus for some dancers. Alice creates movement that challenges conventional understandings of disabled and dancing bodies. Her focus on creating movement from impairment and disability experience has broadened and deepened our creative practice at CRIPSiE. On her experience with CRIPSiE, Alice has shared:



Working with CRIPSiE this summer was one of the most rich, challenging, and rewarding experiences of my professional life: I was simultaneously able to deepen and extend my practice. CRIPSiE practices its ideals in expansive and supportive ways, thereby creating a community that can take extensive risks in both performance and in creative process. Few art groups explicitly commit to crip and mad aesthetics, much less to the former as well as race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality. These commitments mean that CRIPSiE asks us to work beyond what we think we know, thereby supporting nuance, complexity and open-ended perspectives.

We couldn't have done this without the support from University of Alberta's Arts-Based Research Studio, the Edmonton Community Foundation, and the Brown, Black and Fierce! Collective.

Artistic Associate's Perspective



Kaylee Borgstrom

Kaylee is a teacher by day, Artistic Association by late afternoon, and photographer by early evening. When she has a spare moment, she also loves to read, spend time with her family, and snuggle with her dog.

Being an Artistic Associate with CRIPSiE this year was exciting and full of action. It certainly felt like the busiest year we've ever had! After all, we put on our self-produced full-length show (a personal highlight of the year for me - performing in three dances for such receptive and engaged audiences was a thrill!), and hosted a two-week dance intensive with renowned disabled dancer Alice Sheppard. On top of all that, there was a remount of *Love in the Margins*, as well as another successful Pajama Jam fundraiser, and performances at various festivals around the city including Dance in the Park. An Artistic Associate is, well, an Artist and so I'm sure you can imagine what my rehearsal schedule was like this past year! But I am just one of several Artistic Associates, and one of many CRIPSiE artists who all worked incredibly hard to make our performances successful. The Artistic Associates worked diligently all year to contribute to CRIPSiE's fundraiser and performances. One of our members secured amazing auction items for our Pajama Jam (including a recording studio package valued at over \$2000!), another spent hours taking and editing video of performances as well as keeping track of the finances (no small feat), and I found myself undertaking the creation of Artist Profiles to help promote our November show, which also introduced me to more members of our artistic community. As Artistic Associates, we all have our own part to play in supporting CRIPSiE, and I am always so proud to be a part of such an inclusive and welcoming community. ~ Kaylee Borgstrom



The Artistic Associates are a group of volunteer CRIPSiE artists with a wide range of abilities and experiences. They are voted in by their peers, and make sure that the art and practices of the organization represent the needs and desires of the community.

Kaylee Borgstrom
Alison Neuman
Kasia Rychlicki
Danielle Peers

The Board of Directors is an arms-length group of volunteers, voted in annually by the society's members to make the final financial and operational decisions for the Society.

Ainsley Hillyard (Chair)
Molly Staley (Vice-Chair)
Krista Posyniak (Treasurer)
Alexis Hillyard
Wendy Marusin

The Artistic Directors are chosen by the Artistic Associates and the Board of Directors, and they work with these two groups to collaboratively run a thriving arts organization.

Kelsie Acton
Lindsay Eales

Artist's Perspective



Tony Luong is one of CRIPSiE's new performers, making their debut at *Careful* in November 2016. Fun Fact: Tony has a superpower! They are a modern-day replica of Sailor Moon, where they use the powers of empathy, compassion and warmth to fight evil by moonlight and win love by daylight!

As I continue to explore my gender through resisting binaries, I've spent a lot of time thinking about how the physical and spiritual parts of myself are connected to my emotional and mental wellbeing. & so I've been making space for myself to heal by exploring creativity through art, dance, and poetic expression.

After performing for CRIPSiE for the first time, I was overcome with tears. As we glided and painted stories across the stage, I felt so radiant and beautiful. We performed in the piece "Les Étoiles", which was an exploration of connection, journeying and home for two nights and for over 200 audience members. As the Fox, my favourite scene is when I am accompanying the Prince to his death. Although I wanted the Prince to stay, as their friend, I found strength to support their decision with all of my love and support. The world can be a scary place, but we don't have to navigate it alone as we build mutually beneficial relationships that allow us to care deeply for one another -- even through death.

I am forever grateful that CRIPSiE invited me to be part of their community. As we collectively found new ways to move our non-normative bodies through time and space that mitigates shame, I felt as though I could heal - like I could start again... as myself.

Not only did my childhood dream of being a dancer come true, I am empowered to continue doing community-based work as an artist of social justice. I deeply admire each artist for sharing their passion & for changing parts of my own narratives of being. Above all, I've connected with some really lovely humans who have shown me that kindness, compassion, and vulnerability can in fact change the world. & for me, that's a warm affirmation that true love is possible. ~ Tony Luong

What's Up Next for CRIPSiE?



We have some exciting collaborations and opportunities in 2017.

- We are collaborating with local artists Gerry Morita and Jodie Vandekerkhove to create accessible improvisation technique.
- We hope to develop a dance for an invited performance with Tangled Art + Disability in Thunder Bay.
- We will invite emerging choreographers to begin developing works for our October 2018 show.
- Kelsie Acton will lead a research project with CRIPSiE dancers.
- We will work with Jan Derbyshire from MoMo Dance Theatre on their MOVE project (Moments of Voluntary Expression).
- We are a part of developing the next Canadian Integrated Dance Teachers' Training with Pamela Boyd and integrated dance companies across the country.
- We will 'train to perform' as part of Orchesis Dance Motif 2018.
- We have received an organizational development grant from the Canada Council for the Arts. We will learn to visually describe dance, create an ASL vlog about CRIPSiE for our website, develop our strategic plan for the coming years, and consult with a financial advisor.

Special Thanks to our Funders



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Photo Credits

1. *Les Étoiles: A Resurrected Motif*. Choreographed by *Lindsay Eales*. Featuring Iris, Kaylee, Danielle, Eric, Alex, Tony, and Bobman. Photo by Marc J. Chalifoux
2. *Fix You*. Choreographed by *Alison Neuman*. Featuring Quinn, Alexis, and Julie. Photo by Marc J. Chalifoux
3. *Ainsley Hillyard*. Photo by Marc J. Chalifoux
4. *Help!* Choreographed by *Kelsie Acton*. Featuring Kaylee and Iris. Photo by Marc J. Chalifoux
5. *Kelsie Acton*. In *Succumb* by *Alice Sheppard* (in teal, with Nicolle, Mary, and Erin). Photo by Marc J. Chalifoux
6. *Lindsay Eales*. In *Intimacies* (choreographed and performed with Danielle Peers). Photo by Marc J. Chalifoux
7. *bi/chotomy*. Created and performed by *Rebecca John*. Photo by Marc J. Chalifoux
8. *Careful talkback artists' panel*. Featuring Nicole Saunders (ASL), Danielle, Eric, Rebecca, Brandon, and Kelsie. Photo by Oliver Rossier
9. *Alice Sheppard Creation Intensive - in process*. Featuring Alice, Sara, Rebecca, Mary, Bobman, Danielle, Kelsie, Nicolle, and Alex. Photo by Kaylee Borgstrom
10. *Alice Sheppard at the University of Alberta Arts-Based Research Studio Artist Residency Talk/Performance*. Photo by Kaylee Borgstrom
11. *Succumb*. Choreographed by *Alice Sheppard*. Featuring Mary, Erin, Kelsie, Sara, Alex, Danielle, Bobman, Jinny, Kaylee, Rebecca, and Nicolle. Photo by Marc J. Chalifoux
12. *Kaylee Borgstrom - as Kristy in Love in the Margins*.
13. *Love in this Body*. Created and performed by *Brandon Wint*. Photo by Marc J. Chalifoux
14. *Audience at Careful*. Photo by Oliver Rossier
15. *Succumb*. Choreographed by *Alice Sheppard*. Featuring Lindsay, Kelsie, Danielle, Rebecca, and Kaylee. Photo by Marc J. Chalifoux
16. *Tony Luong - post show photo*.
17. *CRIPSiE Backstage*. Featuring Iris, Eric, Alex, Nicolle, Tony, Danielle, Jinny, Lindsay, Sara, Angela, Erin, and Kaylee. Photo by Quinn Wade