

TaikaBox ry

Operational report 2016



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1. GENERAL

TaikaBox ry was based in Wales in 2010 and registered in Finland as a not-for-profit dance/technology association. Its aim is to create new ways for people to experience dance.

TaikaBox ry's long-term aim is to establish Oulu Dance/Tech Hub – an internationally-recognized dance/technology centre, the operations of which are based on a new type of partnership between arts and business. The term dance/technology in this context is considered broadly as; all dance activity which integrates technology as part of the artistic content and creative process. At the heart of Oulu Dance/Tech Hub there is: a) physical expression and the idea of developing dance through using new technology; and b) the principle of developing the innovative power of technology businesses by facilitating artistic disruptions and risk-taking.

The association works holistically and flexibly with the professional sector and with different sections of the surrounding community. It supports dance/technology research and production; contributes to the professional development and employment of artists; raises new young professionals and actively develops a new type of community around its operations and new audiences for dance using new technology.

2. ORGANISATION

2.1. Staff and office

TaikaBox ry employed two artistic directors: choreographer/dancer Tanja Råman and digital artist/designer John Collingswood, who both worked part-time. John Collingswood worked in the association during 1.1.–31.5.2016 and again during 1.-31.12.2016. Both artistic directors shared responsibilities of production and events organisation, as well as planning, development and realisation of artistic projects. Tanja Råman also took care of the finances of the association and practicalities of planning, development and organisation of all activities. She also acted as the chairperson of the association. John Collingswood, on the other hand, looked after the technical planning, development and organisation of all activities, as well as took care of the branding, marketing and communications on behalf of the association.

During 2016, the association employed six freelance dancers and one musician in total during its research project and its performances.

The association headquarters: office and small studio is based at: Varjakantie 69, 90470 Varjakka.

2.2. Board

The association is governed by a board. During 2015-2016, Tanja Råman acted as a chairperson and the secretary John Collingswood acted as a vice chairperson. Other members were theatre director: Simon Harris; head of dance degree at Cardiff Metropolitan University: Sally Varrall; brand designer: Julian Sykes; head of marketing at Earthfall: Helen Di Duca and programme producer at BBC Wales: Ynyr Williams.

A new board was elected on 27.4.2016 during the AGM according to the constitution of the association. Tanja Råman continued as a chairperson and John Collingswood continued as the secretary of the association. Simon Harris continued as a member of the board and Julian Sykes was selected as a vice member. No other members of the board were selected. The board met two times during the year.

The new membership scheme started at the end of February in 2016. The membership consisted of free members (18), silver members (9) and gold members (0). Free memberships is free of charge, silver membership costs 1€ and gold membership costs 500€. The list of members can be found in the appendix.

The end of year accounts were prepared by Oulu-based accountancy firm A. Karppinen Oy and self-employed Teresa Majuri monitored the operations of the association.

3. OULU AS AN INTERNATIONAL DANCE/TECH HUB

During its first full operational year, the association started to develop a foundation for Oulu Dance/Tech Hub by building varied networks between arts and business and by developing projects in partnership with local organisations and individual artists and businesses. The association aimed to increase the visibility of dance/technology locally, nationwide and internationally through varied workshops, performances, collaborative projects and communications.

The emphasis of the operations was on starting and developing local activities in Oulu. The activities were made to happen partly by volunteers, partly financed with grants and with income received from international performances.

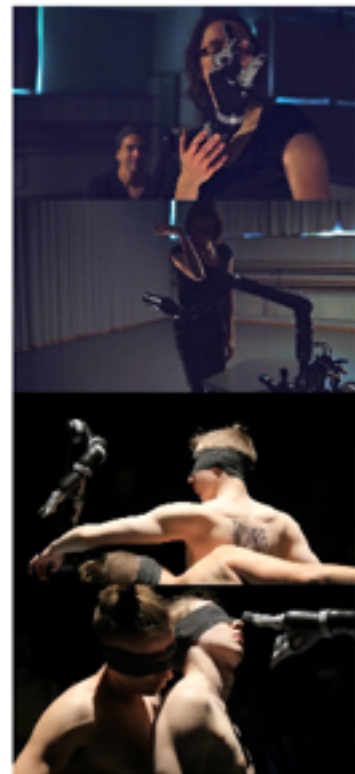
3.1. Oulu Dance Hack 2016

The association organised its first international Oulu Dance Hack event on 24.-26.2016 in partnership with EduLab Oulu, the dance degree at OAMK, JoJo – Oulu Dance Centre and BusinessOulu and with the sponsorship from Isadora, Probot Oy and Haltian.

Oulu Dance Hack 2016 was unique event, which brought together dance professionals and technology specialists to explore the integration of dance and technology. The aim of the event was to create networks between the arts and business sectors, encourage participants to take artistic risks in order to develop new partnerships and projects. TaikaBox ry and Probot Oy have already started a new collaborative project based on the event.

Nine international artists from USA, Canada, Italy, Portugal, Germany and the UK took part in the event and worked together with local dance and media artists and students.

Oulu Dance Hack residency is planned to become a professional meeting point, which takes place annually.



Taru Mäkelä
Images from Oulu Dance Hack
Interacting with a robot arm

Scotty Harburg and Ville Lindsten
perform with the robot arm



3.2. Artistic research

The association started to research for Born Old – *Tietäjä länikuinen* production in May-August 2016. This work is for children based on the Finnish epic, Kalevala. The research was supported by Valve Culture House and the dance degree course at OAMK and made possible with a grant from AVEK.

The association has applied for funding for the production of the piece in 2017. The work is targeted to national and international markets in 2018.

Kuva: TaikaBox ry

3.3. Performances

TaikaBox ry presented *Please Switch On* (made in 2014) at Young ID Zug festival in Switzerland on 9.9.2016 and *Between Coil and Recoil* (made in 2015) at the Community Dance Festival in Tornio/Haparanda on 8.10.2016. The performance of *Please Switch On* included two Finnish dancers and three local performers who auditioned for the piece the day before. At the Community Dance Festival in Tornio/Haparanda one Swedish and one Russian dancer

performed in *Between Coil and Recoil* alongside Tanja Råman.

The association also presented a performative presentation: *Näkymättömät Polut* as part of Kiertoliike 2016 in Jyväskylä. The event was organized by Tanssin talo ry.

Kuva: Christoph Schumacher



3.4. TaikaBox ry ja yhteisö



3.4.1. DigiDance workshop

TaikaBox ry offered DigiDance workshops to different groups and communities, such as children, young people, different disability groups, refugees and dance professionals.

The workshops integrated dance and an interactive visual and sound environment that were controlled by the moving body. Each workshop was tailor-made, taking into account the needs of each group. Although these workshops generally aimed to raise awareness of dance/technology amongst the community, they also had group-specific aims. Children and young people were encouraged and inspired to move and try dance using new technology. Disabled people were offered new artistic experiences and new technology was seen as an extension of their physical expression and as a creative tool. DigiDance workshops for professionals, on the other hand, focused on the integration of dance and technology as a choreographic tool. All workshops aimed to enhance the participants' own creativity and apply learnt knowledge and skills in their own practice.

In 2016, the association provided 17 workshops, (15 in Oulu, 2 in Helsinki). Throughout the year, 415 people took part in DigiDance workshops.

3.4.2. Koti

The association piloted a longer-term project called Koti to raise awareness of multiculturalism in Oulu. The project combined dance and new technology and it took place in October-December 2016. The project was created in partnership with Laanila School and High School, Vuolle College and Valve Culture House. Oulu City, Oulu City Theatre and EduLab Oulu supported the project by disseminating information about it and organising additional workshops for the participants. Arts Promotion Centre Finland supported the project with a small grant.

The aims of the project were: a) to provide immigrant and local young people a possibility to engage in high quality artistic work in a multicultural context; b) to help immigrant young people to integrate to the local community and; c) to raise positive awareness of multiculturalism in Oulu.

20 young people from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Congo, Kosovo, Japan, UAE, Belgium and Finland participated in the project. The performance that was created during the project was shown as part of Colourful Cultures Festival at Valve on 7.12.2016.

3.5. Partnerships

During 2016, the association emphasised building networks and developing partnerships - particularly in Oulu. The aim of this activity was to create new projects, to raise the profile of the association and to widen communications and reach through the partners' networks. The association created varied connections in the fields of arts and education as well as developed partnerships with businesses through Oulu Dance Hack, the Koti project, and the Born Old research project. TaikaBox ry developed new partnerships with BusinessOulu, Valve Culture House, Laanila School and High School, Vuolle College, EduLab Oulu, the dance degree course at OAMK, Haltian and Probot Oy.

The association also actively developed partnerships with national organisations such as Dance Info Finland and Dance House Finland. The partnership with Dance Info Finland was based on raising awareness. Other national partnerships were created within the field of integrated and community dance. The most notable partnerships were with Sally Davison and DanceAbility Finland ry as well as Titta Court and Community Dance ry.

The association continued to nurture and develop its international connections with Arts Printing House (Lithuania), DanseArena Nord (Norway) and Young ID Zug festival (Switzerland) through different projects and research visits.

4. Communications

The focus of the association's communications is on local and national dissemination of information to raise its profile through projects and writings. The association collaborated with Oulu City, BusinessOulu, Valve Culture House, JoJo – Oulu Dance Centre and Dance Info Finland to communicate about its projects. As part of Oulu Dance Hack event TaikaBox utilised its international partners' networks.

Targeted communications were sent out to the local arts sector, national dance sector, international dance/technology network and local technology businesses. During 2016, Dance Info Finland published two articles that focused on the association, the integration of dance and technology and Oulu Dance Hack event. Oulu City and Valve Culture House, on the other hand, supported the communications of the Koti project locally and internationally.

The association sent out four newsletters about its operations and projects to its members.

5. Finances

5.1. Income

The association's total income in 2016 was 28 558,29 euros. The earned income was 11 682,32 euros.

The balance carried forward from 2015 was 2 675,46 euros.

5.2. Grants

Grants were gained as follows: TaikaBox (UK) 7965,97 euros (for international activity), AVEK 4910 euros (Born Old – Tietäjä länikuinen research project known then as Tarusta Totta project) and Arts Promotion Centre Finland 4000 euros (Koti project).

5.3. Expenses

The association's total expenses in 2016 were 29 386,44 euros, of which staff expenses were 22088,48 euros. The association paid wages to two part-time employees and seven occasional workers and freelancers. The association's other expenses were 7297,96 euros, out of which milage (3885,68 euros) and workspace rent (2424 euros) were the biggest expenses. The end of year balance was -828,15 euros.

6. Appendix

Members

Free members(18): Zosia Dowmunt, Helen Laws, Ben Ridler, James Thomas, Christy Anson-Harris, Theo Brueton, Sanna Näätänen, June Campbell-Davies, Sanna Kangasluoma, Janina Rajakangas, Julian Sykes, Simon Harris, Tina Pasotra, Linzy Na Nakorn, Anna Maria Luro, Gertjan Biasino, Carole Blade and Elina Valtonen.

Silver members (9): Tommi Autio, Tanja Råman, Nick Minns, Jeremy Treays, Hannu Karjalainen, Helen Di Duca, John Collingswood, Ville Aunola and Petri Ainonen.

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