



SLOW THINKING

SESSION #4B: Horizon Scanning

Wednesday 17th June 2020

Host: Kate Webb, Senior Lecturer, Circomedia

This Slow Thinking session was facilitated by Kate Webb, and provided a space to think beyond the immediate needs of circus training delivery. Kate Webb is a Senior Lecturer and part of the development team at Circomedia. She is also a Relational Dynamics Coach.

The session included 8 students currently studying or about to graduate from Circomedia.

During this Slow Thinking Session, the following provocations and themes offered:

- We have a responsibility to students - what is the world of training going to look like in the future?
- As coaching artists, it is a conversation for all of us - what skills do we need on the other side?
- Do we need to change the perception of what we do? How do we communicate that to the wider world?
- What skills do circus artists have that can be transferable and of benefit for the wider community?

Discussions on Opportunities:

- This period is encouraging us to learn new skills and be adaptable.
- It has also shown which companies value artists and what companies do not.
- Is the current period making circus more accessible? Do we need to make circus in theatres to reach audiences or can we take circus to the audience?
- There were recent findings in Canada and circus artists were found to be the most resilient.

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2019.00346/full>

- With online performance, are we reaching the same audiences that would buy a ticket, or are we reaching new audiences?

- Street performance is increasing and buskers are in central London. What other opportunities are there that are not online?

Discussions on Skills:

- Are we going to be able to create and perform acrobatics work, or do we need to assume that we can only return to that later (post-vaccine)?
- How do two people make a show socially distanced?
- Do we work in performing bubbles? Do we look at the current sports models for cricket and football where the company works in a bubble? This could be possible with circus troupes, but does it become exclusive?
- The case for the arts is one we have to, as a sector, keep making. We've got to be advocates for the arts.
- It is harder for people to fail right now. You have to be in a certain privileged position to be able to take those risks. Will work become safe in content?

Input from Emerging Artists:

- Responses to the question: for artists that are emerging- how do you feel and where are the holes in your skill set?
 - Knowledge of funder language;
 - How to pitch a show;
 - Overcoming imposter syndrome;
 - Learning to create and manage risk assessments;
 - Marketing online
- How do emerging artists prove the value / worth of their work when starting out?
- There is a need to share opportunities and find ways to support one another
- Emerging artists feel there will be a lack of performance opportunity and public funding for them for some time
- Is there a need to be multi-skilled? To develop a more mixed model or personal income streams?
- Emerging artists are ready to get on with making work within our local community and want to show that artists are needed