

Can you help Creative Electric get to the Fringe?

Creative Electric are staging a fully accessible (socially, financially and physically) Edinburgh Fringe run of The Happiness Project which places disabled, queer, working class and female stories centre stage and engages with audiences of the same demographics.

Creative Electric were recommended for the Create Inclusion Fund by their Creative Scotland assessor and received high marks in every category of the application process. However, the fund was massively oversubscribed with applicants looking for over £2.6 million in funds and only £265,000 was allocated for inclusive projects.

This means that although Creative Scotland stated :

“The Happiness Project” is by itself a work of artistic quality with strong social resonance and relevance in terms of ideas and meanings. The cast appears to have been assembled in a way that truly represents a social model of disability on stage. All this suggests strongly that Creative Electric’s experience and collaborative approach can result in developmental relationships between artists and audience. This project has the potential for enhancing the company’s practice and by extension its ability to produce work of quality in the future.”

the company were unsuccessful in securing this essential funding.

They are now crowdfunding to cover essential access costs for their disabled performers including support workers, therapy costs and transport support.

Artistic Director Heather Marshall said :“We want to provide platform for minority artists who are often overlooked. We live in an era where we recognise that crippling up, blacking up and queering up is wrong yet this is not reflected on our stages. Ableism is very apparent in Scottish theatre and needs to be addressed. The Happiness Project is our way of challenging this and providing a platform for artists who’s voices are often not heard.”

Creative Electric work with the Social Model of Disability which was created by disabled people and states that people are not disabled by their bodies or health but rather the barriers that are put in place by society. The Happiness Project is an intersectional, inclusive professional production that works with disabled, working class, LGBTQ and female artists to support them to create exciting, challenging new work.

“Creative Electric has given me a voice to put my identity into art and feel genuinely proud and accomplished of the work that myself and the company have created. Creative Electric supports and nurtures voices that are typically censored, together with a group of young people we confront live situations and investigate our answers in this process. Creative Electric has liberated me, helped me in education, my own arts practice and also in my personal life. What I am part of is more than a theatre company, it is a community and a safe haven. I am immensely grateful for that.”

Georgia, performer

The Happiness Project has been selected as part of Summerhall’s Edinburgh Festival Fringe programme and the company are proud to be programmed alongside some of the most exciting Scottish and International artists.

However to ensure that they can support their artists they need financial support. They want to ensure their artists receive the full support they need through individual care packages. These differ for each performer but include personal support workers, therapy sessions and travel support.

Creative Electric are now crowdfunding via Justgiving and are looking to meet an initial target of £2000. <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/the-happiness-project>

If the company reach their target of £2000 then their next stage is to start supporting audiences. An additional £500 will allow them to offer free tickets to The Happiness Project to young people aged 14+ who have not had the opportunity to attend the theatre before and would not otherwise be able to afford to experience the fringe.

Creative Electric are also offering sponsorship opportunities for local businesses. If you'd like more information please email Heather Marshall, Artistic Director at creative_electric@hotmail.com

