

About



About Upswing

Upswing was founded in 2004 by Artistic Director Vicki Amedume. Having trained as an aerialist at The French National Circus School Chalon en Champagne and at Circus Space London, Vicki performed and created traditional and contemporary circus work as well as outdoor performance and touring theatre. After working with UK companies such as Scarabeus and Skinning The Cat, as well as international companies including Universoul Circus, the inception of Upswing was driven by a desire to create cross artform work that uses circus skills as an expressive vehicle.

The company takes the approach that serious, everyday and cultural issues can be explored in an entertaining way through circus and that it is important to engage with people on many levels – visually, emotionally, intellectually – to exploit circus' full potential as an art form. The combination of physical skills and cultural contexts to tell stories is what has helped them garner a formidable reputation both in the UK and overseas.

The company produces a mix of indoor touring productions, educational projects and bespoke, site specific performance for touring, festivals, events and the commercial sector.

Corporate & Commercial Events

Upswing can produce tailor made performance for corporate events on request.

Previous corporate work has included:

The National Theatre's fundraising gala event **Fast Forward**.

SunCap 2006 – A high energy performance incorporating aerial bungee, flying fire wings and 6 fire performers dancing over a pool of water at Blenheim Palace.

Monsoon Wedding – Created with Simmy Gupta of Nutkhut, a spectacle involving a cast of 55 performers on the stairways of the Natural History Museum conjuring romantic images of Indian rains. (youtube link)

Consultancy

Upswing can provide expert consultancy for your event, no matter how big or small, advising on performance, technical and aesthetic areas to ensure your event achieves its potential. Consultancy clients have included Liverpool City of Culture, *King Cotton* written by Jimmy McGovern and directed by Jude Kelly, *Wicked Lady* written by Bryony Lavery dir Theresa Heskins, *Lord of The Rings* (UK Production) Dir Matthew Warchus.

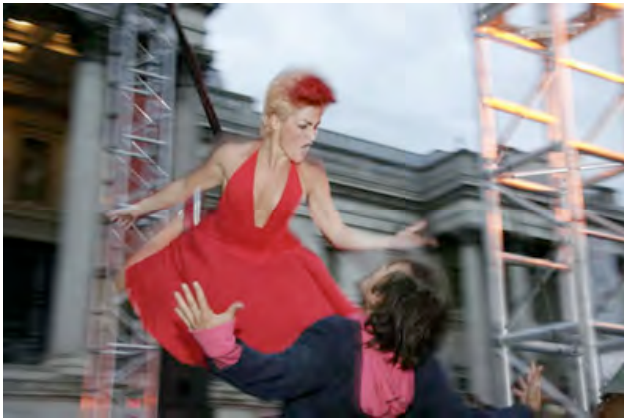
Learning, Participation & Training

Upswing's Learning & Participation programme for professionals and non professionals is currently in its early stages of development. Participants can learn skills through a range of informal projects that run in parallel with the development of new work in the company's repertoire, as in the two examples below, or as self contained programmes.

Love Bites: Following a pilot project in April 09, *Love Bites* will be developed through a series of residencies in autumn 09 where the company will explore the notion of young love with young people from Eastside Young Leaders Academy who will have the opportunity to be involved in the final production.

Homebringing: working in partnership with Hampton Community College on a cross-curricular project to create a site-specific outdoor performance to mark the 200th Anniversary of the Abolition of the transatlantic slave trade. The final performance was based on West Africa funeral ceremony called Home-Bringing. The ceremony was used at as starting point to inspire participants to create their own cultural ceremony as a memorial. It also allowed participants to learn about ritual and traditions in West Africa and physically explore themes of slavery and abolition through contemporary dance forms.

News and Dates



Loved Up – summer tour

13 June, 10pm

Rochester, Fuse Medway Festival, Rochester Castle Gardens

free <http://www.fusefestival.org.uk>

27 June, 7pm

London, East London Dance, Stratford Circus
020 8279 1015, www.stratford-circus.com

4–7 July

Co. Tipperary, Clonmel Junction Festival
www.junctionfestival.com

9–12 July

London, Watch This Space, National Theatre
www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/wts

For more information click on the venues' link or contact us on the numbers below.

Current

Loved Up

When the girls and boys come out to play who will come out on top in the game of love... A light hearted, fast paced fusion of aerial dance and hip hop centred around the pursuit of love.

Created initially as a collaboration between Vicki Amedume and Jonzi D, *Loved Up* was commissioned by The Mayor of London and performed as part of I Love Peckham and the Mayor's Trafalgar Square Festival in August 2006. Working with a group of young dancers and using staging and equipment that allows performers to explore new realms of movement, *Loved Up* follows its characters and their relationships in a show with old skool hip hop overtones.

Upswing will be touring newly choreographed version of *Loved Up* this summer:

13 June, 10pm

Rochester, Fuse Medway Festival, Rochester Castle Gardens
free

27 June, 7pm

London, East London Dance, Stratford Circus
020 8279 1015, www.stratford-circus.com

4-7 July

Co. Tipperary, Clonmel Junction Festival
www.junctionfestival.com

9-12 July

London, Watch This Space, National Theatre
www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/wts

Artistic Director: Vicki Amedume
Choreographer: Leila McMillan
Performers: Cindy Claes, Nadia Lumley, Fabrice Omores, Winston Pyke
Riggers: Nikki Jeffries, Ilya Varty

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8yMi913FHw>

Future

Love Bites

Currently in development, *Love Bites* asks 'what is young love?'

Upswing will research people's experiences of love during a series of residencies in autumn 09, arming themselves with information, material and the truth to create a show that promises to shed light on this four letter word in typical Upswing fashion. The highs and lows, the passion and the risks, all will be explored in this honest and sensitive portrait of young love.

Love Bites will tour nationally in April-May 2010. Click here if you are interested in booking / programming *Love Bites*.
Info on Love Bites Learning & Participation Coming Soon

Fallen



Fallen tells the story of Angelique, a refugee who has lost everything she once cherished. Hers is a story of self preservation and how sometimes in order to survive in the present, you must confront the ghosts of the past. Treading a fine line between fantasy and reality *Fallen* shows us how strange the world looks when you are alone and far from home.

Fallen has been in development since 2008 and was presented as a work in progress during Musical Futures at Greenwich Dance Agency in September. Further development work will be undertaken in 2009.

A full touring version will be ready in the Spring of 2011.

Red Shoes

Drawing on the themes and imagery of the fairy tale *The Red Shoes* by Hans Christian Andersen, *Red Shoes* looks at how what people say about us can effect who we are. With an integrated cast of disabled and non disabled performers and featuring a huge 6 sided cube set, suitable for outdoors, *Red Shoes* uses physical theatre and the ancient tradition of Chinese Pole to create a mesmerizing vision that leads us to question how we see ourselves.

Red Shoes will be in research and development through 2009 with a likely presentation at the Liberty Festival in September, followed by a full tour of the production in Summer 2010.

Old

When your profession requires super human strength and skills that do not last with age – what happens to you when you get old? Circus artists are defined by their physical skill and extraordinary ability, but who are they as people? Using new writing and older performers *Old* looks at the effects of aging as it gradually takes away the tools of your trade asking how does it affect self worth and when you lose your place in the world? Is there life after the circus?

Old will be in development throughout 2009 and 2010. It will tour nationally in 2011/2012.



Past Productions

A high energy family show blending amazing circus skills, dance and music.

Voices

Commissioned by Greenwich + Docklands Festival in 2005 for Greenwich + Docklands Wisdom of Africa event.

Voices takes a tongue in cheek look at the stereotypical image of the strong African woman. The show was created as a family event, incorporating aerial dance and live music. It has toured extensively to venues and outdoor festivals including the Melbourne Commonwealth Games Cultural Festival, The Utrecht Festival and in the US.

Performers: Vicki Amedume, Maria Hippolyte and Tayo Akinbode
Composer: Tayo Akinbode
Costume Design: Abby Grewcock

Wrapped Up

Commissioned by the London Mela in 2006

A collaboration with Simmy Gupta of Nutkhut mixing kathak and aerial dance performed at the London Mela and the Mayor of London's Trafalgar Square Festival.

Performers: Vicki Amedume and Simmy Gupta
Costume Design: Abby Grewcock

Everyone's London

September 2006

Celebrating London's Olympic bid success Upswing's aerial performers made history as they descended on Nelson's Column, unveiling a 300ft silk banner of the London 2012 logo as they went.

Performers: Morag Whitman and David Linton
Costume Design: Emma Burton
Rigging design: Seth Allan and Steven Williams (Nippy Industries)

Hoopla

Commissioned by BBC London and London 2012 in 2004 for Fast Forward.

Five performers in five rings placing the iconic Olympic symbol against the backdrop of the National Gallery.

Performers: Vicki Amedume, Kirsty Little, Katherine Arnold, Melissa Merran, Juliet Donaldson, Fiona Lait

Sarakasi

Created for Six Flags in San Francisco in 2007

Working with a troupe of Kenyan Acrobats the show was developed to enhance the spectacular techniques they were using, such as Chinese pole and acrobatics, by weaving through a strong dramatic theme based on African mythology.

Loved Up



Technical Specifications

The team on tour for full show:

- 7 people (4 artists, 3 technical staff)
- 2 shows per day, duration 20 minutes plus 20 minute open dance floor

Get in:

- Allow up to 4 hours to rig over-stage truss
- Allow up to 4 hours for tech rehearsal and sound-check.

Get out:

Please allow up to 3 hours.

Additional requirements:

- Bottled water for the performers.
- Safe storage space for equipment and personal items
- A heated, dry location (such as a heated marquee or dressing room) large enough for 7 people to warm up in and within walking distance from performance area.
- Access to toilets within walking distance of dressing rooms

Photography

No flash photography during performance

Sound Requirements:

PA with amplifier and CD playback and a sound a lighting desk operator available for tech rehearsals.

Lighting Requirements:

The show can be staged as a daytime or evening, indoor or outdoor performance. If scheduled after dark lighting is required but there is currently no lighting design for the show.

Outdoor Staging Requirements:

Steel deck staging is suggested to improve sight lines as the action is not all aerial. Dance flooring over the stage is required. If staging is not possible then dance flooring is required. Surfaces must be even and if hard such as concrete, marble, stone, a padded floor covering will be required under dance floor.

The aerial rig for performance can be provided by the venue or sourced by the company. The rig must have a minimum

clearance of 7m high and internal width of 7.5m. It must support a static load of minimum 2000kg with two hanging points mid stage that are 2.5m apart. The further two points clear of the performance area either side are required as counterweight points. There must be an obstacle free path between the mid stage points and the counterweight points. The legs of the rig should be constructed from ladder section or ladders attached to the structure to allow the counterweights to move up and down.

Indoor Staging Requirements:

The venue would be required to supply suitable aerial rigging points for the performance.

The show requires a minimum of four accessible overhead rigging points able to take a minimum static load of 1000kg. The points must also be able to take a minimum horizontal load of 500kg.

Two of the points should be mid stage and 2.5m apart. The other two points should be clear of the performance area above the counterweight points with an obstacle free path between the mid stage points and the counterweight points.

Two fixing points near ground level capable of supporting 250kg are required at directly underneath the counterweight points. These can be stage weights or ground anchors. If floor anchors are available we do not need stage weights otherwise we need 2 x 250kg.

A clear performance space of at least 8m x 7m and a minimum height of 7m is required. If the floor space requirement cannot be met alternate versions of the show can be presented with prior notice.

The performance area should be clear of obstacle from ground level to ceiling. Please see attached rigging diagram for layout of overhead rigging. The floor area should be flat, even and clear of all obstacles.

Dance floor is required but sprung flooring is not essential, steel deck or wooden floors are fine however if floors are concrete, marble, stone a padded floor covering will be required under dance floor.

Two fixed ladders or sections of box truss minimum 7m length located clear of the performance space, but with clear sight lines to the performance area are required for counterweighting. The preferred orientation for these ladders is so the operator can observe onstage action without having to turn around.

If the venue cannot provide the above set up the company can provide source truss, weights and other equipment at an additional cost. If requirements cannot be meet by hiring additional equipment it may be possible to present an alternate version of the piece. In both cases a site visit would be required to assess potential.

For more information:

Please call or email Vicki Amedume on 07939027444 or at vicki@upswing.org.uk.

Contact

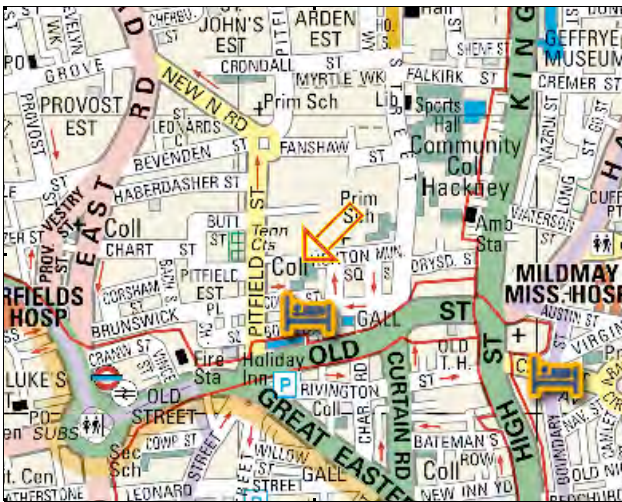


Contact us

Upswing, Unit 1, The Energy Centre, Bowling Green Walk,
London N1 6AL
T: +44 (0)20 7613 4843 E: info@upswing.org.uk

Vicki Amedume, Artistic Director: vicki@upswing.org.uk
Ghislaine Granger, Producing Manager:
ghislaine@upswing.org.uk

How to find us



Nearest tube: Old Street (Northern Line)
Buses: 55, 35, 47, 135, 243