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ANNUAL REPORT


THE ARTGROUND



THE ARTGROUND

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CORPORATE OVERVIEW

Who is The Artground?

THE ARTGROUND is nurtured and managed by The Ground Co Limited which was set up in late 2016. Inspired by the poem, *The 100 languages of children* by Loris Malaguzzi which refers to the many ways children have of expressing themselves, The Artground believe that a child is intrinsically curious and naturally creative.

*The child is made of one hundred.
The child has a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking of playing, of speaking.
a hundred, always a hundred
ways of listening of marvelling, of loving
a hundred joys for singing and understanding
a hundred worlds to discover
a hundred worlds to invent
a hundred worlds to dream.
The child has a hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)*

Vision

To let art do, what art does.

Thus art-making, in its many ways of being, allows the child to discover and delight in each experience. We aim to be an epicentre for artists, parents and children to co-play and co-create meaningful experiences together. In fact, studies have lauded the benefits of arts education and engagement for a generation of socially progressive citizens. It is because of so that we firmly believe that accessible art experiences need to start with the young, not so much because children need to be taught about Art but that artmaking keeps us thinking, questioning, exploring, appreciating and discovering, throughout our entire life. As Picasso once said, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain one when we grow up."

Hence, we aspire to create an arts play space, through our indoor and outdoor programming, that will encourage curiosity for all children under 12 years old and their parents, educators, and artmakers alike. We believe that the intrinsic nature of artmaking and process of inquiry allows the child to explore the many different ways of being, and discover the world. We aim to provide those opportunities in an un-hurried manner so that each child can be in the "here & now", to imagine, to explore, to innovate and to create.

Years of research show that [art is] closely linked to almost everything that we as a nation say we want for our children and demand from our schools: academic achievement, social and emotional development, civic engagement, and equitable opportunity.
<http://www.edutopia.org/arts-music-curriculum-child-development>



31,234
Visitors for The Artground

PROGRAMMES

450

Ticketed Workshops

3,127

Ticketed Workshop Participants

1,166

Learning Journey Participants

ARTISTS

830

Local Artists

2

Foreign Artists

INVITATIONS

5

invitations to participate in conferences/seminars/forums

Singapore Drama Educator Association
Conference Speaker:
Children's Theatre Panel, 'Space of Play: Engaging with Young Audiences in Contemporary Global Cities (London, Japan, Singapore)'

National Museum Singapore Focus Group
Discussion on "Playgrounds of our Future"

Playeum Content Creator #4 speaker

Invited to Australian Performing
Arts Mart as a Singapore delegate
Brisbane 2018

Invited to attend Singapore –
Australian Cultural Leaders Forum
Adelaide 2017

VISITS

2

visits or trainees/interns
from local & overseas

FINANCE



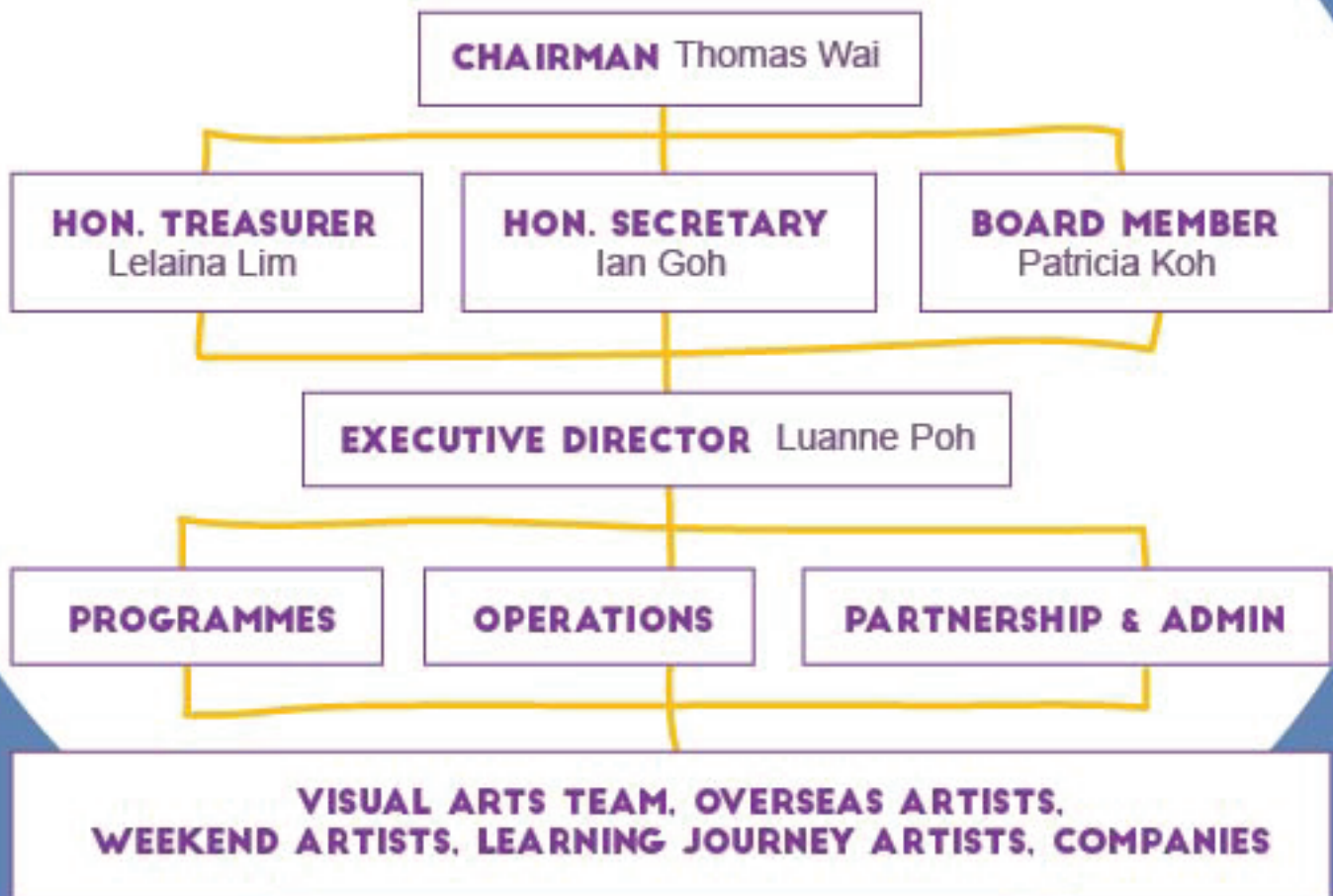
\$ 97,308
Income

\$ 967,651
Expenditure

\$ 949,944
Funding

This included contributions from individuals through cash donations and corporate entities, and grants from the National Arts Council (NAC)

ORGANISATION CHART



GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

Luanne Poh

Executive Director and Board Member

Luanne is the brainchild behind The Artground. This head honcho has a big heart with a soft spot for little ones. Luanne's creative nature inspires the team to challenge boundaries, and fosters a culture of intrapreneurship within the team as she believes in empowerment for every individual, old and young alike.



GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS



Thomas Wai
Chairperson

With an eye for quality, nature and beautiful things, Thomas takes a keen interest in The Artground's programmes. Coupled with his strong business acumen, it is no wonder that Thomas holds the key to the strategic direction of The Artground.

Lelaina Lim
Honorary Treasurer

Lelaina appreciates the finer things in life, in particular paintings and performances. She is a highly committed volunteer who not only openly shares her financial expertise with those whom she mentors, but also gives a lot of her time through her active participation in the arts programmes.



Ian Goh
Honorary Secretary

Ian brings a people-centric perspective into our policies and processes, for the board and our organisation. A dreamer at heart, he stands by the possibilities of curiosity in each and every moment.



Patricia Koh
Board Member

Patricia, a social worker by profession, enjoys engaging in social outreach and community development causes. Patricia's warm-heartedness naturally makes her the ideal person for matters relating to beneficiaries and inclusivity.



CORPORATE INFORMATION

Board of Directors: Appointment from 1 November 2017 to 31 March 2020

The Ground Co Limited (Registration No.: 201632916C), public company limited by guarantee, was incorporated under the Companies Act, Cap 50 on 2 December 2016. It named the business The Artground (Registration No.: 53351458D), which was also incorporated on the same day. The business address is at 90 Goodman Road, Goodman Arts Centre, #01-40 Singapore 439053.

Three persons were appointed as Members of the Company – Mr Wai Chun Yip Thomas, Ms Lim Siew Li Lelaina and Ms Poh Hwee Yen Luanne, and they carry out all business at the Company's Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings, including the appointment of directors, adoption of accounts, and approval of resolutions. As a registered charity, The Ground Co Limited strives to align its governance practices with the principles set out in the refined Code of Governance issued by the Charity Council.

This report describes the Company's activities and structures that were in place during the financial year ended 31 March 2018 which are in accordance with these principles. The Company will submit the online Governance Evaluation checklist together with the audited accounts for the year.



EXTERNAL AUDITOR
One Partnership PAC

COMPANY SECRETARY
KC Corporate Solutions Pte Ltd

PRINCIPAL BANKER
DBS Bank Limited

CORPORATE INFORMATION

Board Meetings

Board meetings are held on a quarterly basis to review the results and performance of the Company, and its strategic plan. To facilitate attendance, Board meetings are scheduled at least a year ahead. At the last meeting of the financial year, the Board will also approve the annual budget for the following year. As part of good governance, key matters requiring decision are reserved for resolution at Board meetings to facilitate discussion, rather than by email circulation. The Chairperson ensures that Board meetings are held as and when necessary with optional meetings convened when there are pressing matters requiring the Board's consideration. The Secretary assists the Board with the preparation of meeting agenda, administers, attends and records minutes of Board proceedings in a timely manner to ensure good information flow within the Board.

Conflict of Interest

The Company's constitution documents state that whenever a member of the Board in any way, directly or indirectly, has an interest in any transaction, project or matter, the member shall disclose the nature of his interest before the discussion and should not participate or vote on the matter. He should offer to withdraw from the meeting and the Board shall decide if this should be accepted.

Additionally, The Ground Co Limited also has in place a policy for conflicts of interest for the Board as well as for staff to ensure that all parties act independently and in the best interests of the Company and avoid ethical, legal, financial or other conflicts of interest which may impede or compromise their responsibilities. As a general rule, they must not place themselves in a position where their duties and interests may possibly conflict, whether perceived or actual. Where a director or staff has personal interests that may conflict with his duties to the Company, he should make disclosure to the Company as soon as possible and obtain the approval of the Board or management. All directors and staff have to make an annual declaration that they have read and understood the policy and whether there are any present or potential conflicts.



THE ARTGROUND

90 Goodman Road,
Goodman Arts Centre,
#01-40 Singapore 439053

FROM THE CHIEF WORM...

When we first imagined *The Artground – A Curious Place To Be*, we envisioned a free access arts space where it would ignite novel ways to create aesthetic experiences and engage young minds. Through these age-appropriate and designed experiences, the space would encourage curiosity (in both children and artmakers) because we believe that this will drive a self-directed motivation to discover and innovate, not just about the arts but a genuine curiosity about the world around them.



We worked with Lekker Architects to design a blank canvas and a whitebox that allowed us to programme a myriad of indoor and outdoor activities that appealed to children from birth to 12 years.

Besides the performing arts, we also included literacy arts and gardening-inspired programmes so that our digital natives will continue to engage with Mother Nature and the beautiful biodiversity that she offers. We are heartened that in our first 9 months of operations, we opened our doors to all children across all communities and presented 450 ticketed activities which engaged 31,234 visitors through our tiered levels of engagement.



Down The Rabbit Hole play space

Dye patch at our Good Garden

IΦ With My Little Eye play space

Besides audience development, The Artground is equally vested in artists' development. We conducted an Open Call in Nov 2017 for our GroundBreakers programme, an initiative by The Artground to provide resources, space and market research & development for new ideas. In fact, from day 1, we have been committed to developing and presenting novel experiences for our local artists and audiences from as early as birth. We opened The Artground with Baby Space, a non-verbal immersive production for babies and their carers. Its emphasis on the experiential and 'felt' experience that are beyond words opens up new avenues for audiences to experience the arts. In terms of artists development, we brought in Baby Space choreographer Dalija Acin Thelander to audition, devise and train local dancers for our local staging. She also worked with local musicians to compose an original music score for Baby Space (Singapore). Baby Space and its re-stagings has become a pivotal point for both audiences and artists growing in this area. As parents continue to look to The Artground for quality performances and experiences, artists can centre their developmental efforts around our programmes, space and the artistic developmental opportunities that we provide.



Baby Space



*Colours from the Garden
Learning Journey Workshop*



In just under one year, The Artground is fortunate to have been garnered the support of schools, families with young children and the local arts community to play this crucial role in the content creation of this new emerging field of Theatre for Babies and Young Audiences. As a new arts charity organisation, we will look to private and public philanthropy to help us keep our doors open so that we can continue to chart pathways for more innovative experiences to develop within the different age groups, and to develop a more curious and socially progressive society.

Come visit and play with us!

Chief worm,
Luanne

HIGHLIGHTS

JUST OPEN:
*The Artground, a no-rules
art centre for children
aged 12 and younger*

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"If you're curious, then you will want to do something about it. And that attitude towards playing and learning might cascade into other parts of your life."

Luanne Poh



For more information, do check out our media room

<https://theartground.com.sg/media-room/>

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

We have translated our vision into a “4SA” *Strategic Development Plan* which is a continuous journey for us. The 4S are namely *Society, Schools, Service and Seeding*. These form the core basis of our target reach. The 4As are *Availability, Arts Learning Journey, Accessibility for All and Artist Incubation which is genre agnostic*. These form the basis of our development plans.



DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Availability

These programmes will be consistently available to the general public (society), enabling free access to the facilities, throughout the year. On top of that, The Artground will also have scheduled weekday and weekend programming which will have admission fees to manage venue capacity.

Arts Learning Journey

We welcome organized groups of school-going students, and homeschoolers to the centre on the weekdays. We work with educators to create age appropriate resource materials for these young learners, as well as pre/post programme materials for the teachers/carers.

On top of that, we will also actively seek to introduce skills development to equip and (hopefully) inspire the teachers to continue the arts engagement back in the classrooms. These can be done on-site at the artground through artists/ facilitators-led workshops.



Accessibility

We focus on introducing initiatives that encourages equitable opportunities and inclusive programmes for children with all abilities and needs. These initiatives allow the community to take a more active role in private philanthropy through the arts. We hope to eventually introduce the idea of 'reversed inclusion' by having an additional operational day, eg, "relaxed Tuesdays" for our community with additional needs.

On the other end of this service spectrum, we also have plans to work with the under-served communities so that they can play a functional role in the artground. We believe when we create a vibrant arts environment that empower abilities instead of social standing, we can level up the playing field of these under-served communities and allow them to actively participate in the artground (and our society) in a meaningful way.

Artists Incubation

We will work with local artists to seed original new works at the artground, as well as seek opportunities to create networking and capabilities development in the field of Theatre for Young Audience (TYA) with our international partners. This is an investment into the local artistic eco-system and we are mindful that not all seeds will germinate. However, it is important that we provide the space for artists to try, and to imagine.



PROGRAMMES FOR FAMILIES

4SA

SOCIETY:
Availability

On the weekends, including some public holidays and school holidays, we programme 30-minute drop-in programmes for families with young children. These workshops are chargeable at \$10 per child and this is the 2nd tier of arts access for these families. Besides enjoying the free arts play space, they can also choose to engage further with an artist-led workshop which range from storytelling, to music, to dance and even gardening-inspired workshops.

We also provide experiences with higher touchpoint opportunities and greater engagement with the artists and facilitators, which can include baby yoga classes, masterclasses with our permaculture designer in our Beyond Gardening programmes as well as ticketed performances in our WhiteBox.



"Great activities and space to bring the family on a weekend. Gardening, playground, story-telling & even origami. Folks working there were full of smiles! Highly recommended for a fun-filled day and bonding session with the kids"

Sue, Parent





The Artground is such a fantastic place for my 3 kids aged 9, 5 and 2. Even mummy loves it. It's the best place for them to roam free and be creative. It's big enough for them to run around yet small enough for easy monitoring and supervision. Depending on the art installation, they can easily move and climb around to be active and work on their motor skills. There are many programmes involving art & craft, gardening, dance, storytelling, sciences, etc as well, which my children love. What I appreciate is they are flexible enough to allow parents and young children to sit in even when they are not participating. This is the best part for me as I usually am the only adult bringing them out and have to monitor all 3 of them. Kudos to the staff, facilitators and volunteers who are ever so friendly and helpful. Thank you Artground we will always be back!"

Joys, Parent



Art Grows Learning Journey Workshop

PROGRAMMES FOR SCHOOLS

We started with three programmes for our Learning Journeys, and have since expanded the programming repertoire to 6 programmes to include more art forms and genres. Besides the diversity offered to schools, Learning Journeys also give The Artground another opportunity to work with artists to create age-appropriate arts programmes within an educational framework. For instance, we started with programmes for 2.5 years and up. However, now together with local fusion music group Kulcha Pop, The Artground now offers a music programme Baby Beat for audiences as young as 8 – 36 months to appreciate live music as well as explore movement within the WhiteBox. The availability of programmes that caters to the infant care and playgroup (i.e. under 4 years) also means that the pre-schools are able to maximise their excursions by taking more children out and provide more opportunities to expose them to the arts from young.



"Thank you for having such great place for the children and teachers. We have enjoyed ourselves so much that the kids just can't stop discussing what they have learnt and seen. This is one of the most enjoyable and meaningful excursions we have been to. I will definitely recommend to my friends. Hope The Artground will develop new programmes and so we can consider to visit yearly."

Kinderland Educare @ Siglap

We are forging partnerships with relevant stakeholders e.g. ECDA, Early Childhood Institutions such as Ngee Ann Polytechnic and SUSS to increase our reach into the pre-school sector.

"As an intern, The Artground has provided me an opportunity to grow as an early childhood educator. I was given the chance to hone on my skills such as creating activities for home-school partnership for the activity booklet and also finding ways to incorporate a craft kit that is best suited for the exhibitions and children. One thing that I'm glad to have achieved at the end of this internship was the joy of communicating with children and parents. I used to have the phobia of approaching parents, but now it's an easy task for me to do. Lastly, I am fortunate to have been exposed to many different workshops that aids me in lesson planning and observation skills."

Afika, Intern from SUSS



Worms Love Coffee Learning Journey Workshop

INTERACTIVE VISUAL ARTS PLAYSPACE

4SA

SERVICE
Accessibility for all




Down The Rabbit Hole play space

10 With My Little Eye play space


The intention of these tri-annual core exhibitions is to draw families with young children to The Artground and to encourage exploratory and free play. This is the first essential step in our tiered levels of engagement to ensure accessibility.

The theme of each of these exhibitions has been designed to highlight the space's overarching objective of encouraging children to learn from their environment, and to encourage their innate sense of curiosity in the environment around them.

We work closely with the artists to create a safe space that allows children to "climb through, over and under" – this simple philosophy allows the children to build their confidence in uninhibited exploration, as well as allow for self-directed learning while developing their gross and fine motor skills, all of which are important aspects in developing a holistic individual.



For us, this first step in creating an environment that is accessible and developed with early childhood sensibility is an important one in order to establish our position as a dedicated arts centre for children that is that is inclusive and carefully thought-out.



“The great thing about The Artground’s open-plan playground is that it caters to the whole family. Visitors of all ages can hop, skip and crawl around and explore the interactive art installations and discover something different with each visit.”

Review from Mummyfique, Sept 2017



To date, we presented two exhibitions since our opening in July 2017 to March 2018 and welcomed 31,234 children with their families over these 9 months.

PROGRAMMES FOR ARTISTS

4SA

SEEDING
Artist Incubation

We work with local artists to develop, test and present aesthetic experiences during our weekday and weekend programmes.

Artist Incubation: GroundBreakers

The Artground – A Curious Place to be aims to be a space where all artists, young and younger, can be curious about discovering new ways of artmaking, and create works that are delightful for our audiences. We believe that all children deserve aesthetic experiences that are thoughtfully designed and considered. The Artground provides that space, literal and figurative, for artmakers to conceptualise, to devise, to test and to design these experiences over a yearlong period in order to break new ground in this field.

In November 2017, we conducted an open call which attracted 7 proposals which targeted babies to 12 years olds. We recruited a children panel consisting of 9 children aged from 6 – 11 years and all 9 proposals pitched their ideas to the children's panel. The top-scoring 3 proposals were selected and have been breaking ground at The Artground.



Thank you so so much for giving us the opportunity to keep practicing our craft and to learn “on the job” and to interact with kids and parents and artists. The very fact that you have let us rehearse and perform has been integral to our growth.

Melissa Quek
Artist, Kueh Tutu

The GroundBreakers platform is a very important aspect of The Artground’s programming initiatives. We are committed to support the development of content for young audiences with our local artists in order to develop the sector beyond mere presentations. While we understand the fruits of these incubation efforts need time to mature, we have developed a framework around these incubation efforts to scaffold its growth. Developed in tandem with our weekend activities for families, these work-in-progress programmes not only give artists an opportunity to inform and enhance their creative processes, it also broadens the perspectives of “performing arts experiences” for our children and their carers. In time, families with young children will be more receptive to new and more abstract ideas of presentations. We believe that it would also strengthen their appreciation of local artists and their works.

We have presented three work-in-progress showcases in March with one of the GroundBreakers collectives, The Kueh Tutus, and will continue to develop the ideas with the rest of the GroundBreakers artists throughout the year.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

We produced and staged *Baby Space* as part of our opening in July 2017, and it was, to our knowledge, the first professionally staged theatrical production for babies in Singapore. Since then, we have observed a growing pool of new parents who are keen to expose their babies to these non-directive aesthetic experiences at The Artground and have also witnessed a growing traction in the sector's awareness and development in this area in a relatively short period.



Baby Space

For instance, local artists Maya Loke and Ellison Tan took part in the audition workshops for *Baby Space* with choreographer Dalija Acin Thelander and attended the performances. While they were not involved in the production itself, it fuelled their interest in this area to devise and develop their own content in baby theatre. The Artground then supported their development for *You Can Reach the Sky*, a work for pre-walking babies, by providing venue support and critical feedback for their development and presentation in Dec 2017. They have since gone on to create a touring version of the production and will be coming back to The Artground to hire the venue to present a ticketed version of *You Can Reach the Sky* in Dec 2018.



*GroundBreakers
Children Panel*

SPECIAL PROGRAMMES

Venue Sponsorship

The Artground strongly believes in giving back to the community, and acts as a venue sponsor for arts programmes. Examples include supporting arts students' showcase such as those from the School of the Arts (SOTA).

*British Council "Knowledge is Great!" Lecture with Bamboozle 22 Sept 2017
SOTA Theatre students' showcase*

Inclusivity

Every child has a right to high quality arts experiences. The Artground seeks out sponsors and curates performances that cater to children with special needs. "Extra-Special Day" is part of The Artground's programme offerings, the visual arts interactive exhibitions are often planned with children's varying mobility needs in mind.

*A Little Raw, an inclusive dance company for teens
An Extra Special Day at The Artground, sponsored by Kiddet*



"Knowledge is Great!" Bamboozle Lecture



SOTA Theatre students' showcase



An Extra Special Day

OUR HEARTFELT THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

It would also not have been possible for the programmes and exhibitions to happen if not for the 66 dedicated volunteers we had from since our opening on 7 July 2018 to March 2018 who gave so much of their precious time to support us.

Volunteering at The Artground has provided me with opportunities to practice my communication and negotiation skills between parents and children. More importantly, it requires me to constantly think on my feet as I help artists during workshops and as a facilitator with the children. Creativity is endless here!

Trixie, Volunteer





WWW.THEARTGROUND.COM.SG