

Case Study: Incite Arts - *stArts with D Performance Ensemble* “Selfies” Residency

The *stArts with D Performance Ensemble* is a group of 11 people with disability, based in Alice Springs, Northern Territory. The group was formed as a response to feedback from the acclaimed 2011 production ‘Close to Me’ directed and mentored by Kat Worth. Some performers wanted to continue as a group to build skills, create and perform self-devised performance theatre.

Supported by Incite Arts; a performing arts program was initiated assisting people with disability to build skills, create, collaborate and show self-devised performance art. A key goal of the program was to nurture and support relationships between mentoring artists, performers and disability service providers. The quality and quantity of time spent together has forged strong bonds of trust, creating a space in which to share stories and connect deeply with others.

Since 2012 Incite Arts and *stArts with D Performance Ensemble* have worked with local and national performing arts mentors including Kat Worth and Michelle Ryan / Restless Dance telling stories of home and their lives in both theatre and film through sound, dance, movement, props and visuals.

In 2015 *stArts with D Performance Ensemble* were introduced to creative writing as a means of expressing ideas through written word. Delving into the world of language and communication, participants explored the notion of ‘self-portrait’ in a 5 day of creative writing residency with visiting poet Katie Keys.

Through a combination of group-writing exercises, poetry worksheets, collage and recording of spoken responses, participants created 77 poems under the title: ‘*SELFIES*’.

The writing and photographs taken by participants were then turned into memes, creating an exciting new way for individuals to express themselves and their perceptions about themselves and of each other.

The memes were published online and shared through a social media campaign reaching an audience of thousands across the world from their remote home town.

All image credits: Incite Arts ‘*SELFIES*’ Writer in Residence program with ‘*stArts w D*’ Ensemble and Katie Keys 2015.

