

# Charitable Choices: Kat Single-Dain of Dusty Flowerpot Cabaret

At its core, Dusty Flowerpot Cabaret aims to seamlessly intertwine diverse artistic genres of theatre on its stage and beyond. The non-profit organization has no trouble keeping busy, its unique establishment in the City of Vancouver's own Artiste Building in Mount Pleasant, hosting a weekly Swing Out event with a bar and a live band, on top of other various workshops. The pinnacle of the cabaret's annual calendar is the Parade of Lost Souls, a truly iconic event that brings a mesmerizing spectacle of ethereal costumes, inspired makeup, and unique group performances, to the streets of Commercial Drive. We had the opportunity to sit down and speak to Kat Single-Dain, the Artistic Executive Director of Dusty Flowerpot Cabaret, to find out more.



## Describe your charity/non-profit/volunteer work in a few sentences.

We're not a registered charity, but we are eligible to become one as we sit at charity status. We run low-barrier workshops and festivals, including our annual Parade of Lost Souls on Commercial Drive. We run workshops that are free to the public and they lead up to any musical production we create. In 2010 I directed a show that I wrote as a feature film script, *Hard Times Hit Parade*, and with other members of the Dusty Flowerpot, we transformed it from a film into a whole interactive musical comedy and back into a film again (keep an eye for this out soon). I was officially named the Artistic Director in 2013, and it is important to me to continue directing shows with a collaborative, spontaneous and inclusive spirit. We've done roughly 7 original musical theatre productions, so we average one every two years, run on small grants and donations, so they're really big to put together. We just put on *Disco Inferno* back in April. The shows are interactive, and immersive, with tons of multidisciplinary artists and comedic values included. That's why we're called a Cabaret. There's a little bit of everything in each of our productions. We operate a city studio in the Artiste Building that also works as our venue. Our unit is owned by the City of Vancouver, and we are very fortunate and grateful for the City's support throughout all our work.

## What problem does it aim to solve?

We do aim to be relevant to keep our doors open and don't get operational funding of any kind so we rely on the public. The *Disco Inferno* show had ¼ of the budget covered by a single grant and the rest came from ticket sales. We aim to really fill a niche. We want people to be invested in being cast and crew! We have a 21-person cast, a mix of professionals all the way to amateur performers. Our Cabaret aims for societal engagement, fun, and community building. All our shows are an artistically expressive experience.

## When did you start/join it?

2010 I got the title of Artistic Director, but we founded Dusty Flowerpot in 2007.

## What made you want to get involved?

This company started when my friends and I got together and wanted to make something of our own individual skills. This project was a different way of creating theatre than I had ever seen happen before and it was really exciting. There were new forms of theatre that were happening, so I was gaining education while doing what I was trained in (choreography and writing direction), but I hadn't been training in mask work, physical comedy, and stuff like that. Overall we had a skill share happening and we were learning from one another.

## How has it changed since?

It's changed a lot. It started in 2007 as a collective. 2010 was when it all really started. We took the *Hard Times Hit Parade* on tour to six different cities, we ran it for a whole month, it was always sold out, and turned into a feature film. From that point, we became an official non-profit in 2013 and a studio in 2014. We set down a lot of roots in our years and have a greater ability to host many varying artists, and we have several different individuals and groups involved.

**What more needs to be done?**

Bigger production team... we are currently seeking out a producer to come on board! We're always catching up on things and we always are in need of a bit more help. We would be able to have more programs this way and a better operation as a whole.

**How can our readers help?**

Please apply within! We are looking for an up-and-coming producer, it's a really exciting role with the opportunity to work around the province. Come out to our events! We run a weekly dance called the Swing Out every Tuesday at our space. We have a live band every week, and during that time we run some theory if our guests want to learn some dancing. It's a speakeasy feel, so there's no pressure. You can come and have a drink at the bar and enjoy the band too.

**Do you have any events coming up?**

**The Parade of Lost Souls** is every year around Halloween, so there is a big call to action for that. It's a roving group performance where you can channel whatever you feel, a lot like Burning Man. If any readers are interested, **contact me**. We are also looking to book our new production, Call Me CC, in 2024.

**Where can we follow you?**

[Website](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)

**PAY IT FORWARD: What is an awesome local charity that you love?**

One of our main values is sustainability, so Sierra Club Canada comes to mind. Any non-profits doing environmental work.