HOW TO ART

Accessibility Resource

This resource is designed to help the audience prepare for attending the show, *How to Art*. Using pictures and text, this resource has all the details about the show, including the sights, sounds, and story.

It includes:

- Details of what to expect
- Accessibility of the space and accessible programmes
- A short synopsis
- Photos of the cast
- A full show summary, which includes pictures and more detailed descriptions of the whole show.

About this resource

What the show is like

How to Art features elements of clowning, which means the actors will interact and improvise with the audience directly, react in unpredictable and comedic ways, and explore large emotions and unconventional narrative structure.

The show also features acrobatic elements, and the actors perform stunts and tricks, which they have rehearsed carefully to stay safe. There is a lot of dancing, moving around and high-energy action, including lots of funny moments and moments of drama and tension.

Audience Interaction

There is a lot of audience interaction during the show. The characters will come into the audience sometimes, and audience members will be invited onstage during the show. Interaction is optional- if you don’t want to interact, that’s ok. The audience will laugh, cheer, and clap, and can get pretty excited and noisy.

Lighting and sound

Most of the show takes place in plain white light. The lights will also change colour, flash, and go dark. A bright screen on the stage will show a moving video and other images.

Music and sounds play during the show, including a loud, bass-filled techno beat and a voiceover. The actors will also yell and project their voices very loudly, which might be startling.

Accessibility

The space

How to Art is presented at the Festival Hub: Trades Hall - Meeting Room.

Trades Hall is wheelchair accessible and has accessible toilets available. Service animals are welcome inside the venue. There is also accessible parking located in the car park at the rear of our venue. The entrance to the venue is on Lygon St. You can head up the front stairs and through the main doors, and from there, head right to get to the Loading Dock. Continue straight through the loading dock and into the Victoria Street Building, where the Meeting Room will be on your left.

If you need step-free access, there is a lift at the main Lygon St entrance. This can be operated by one person, or if you need assistance while the lift is unattended, please call the phone number attached to the lift, and a staff member will come to assist. You can then enter the doorway, turn right, and continue down the hallway towards the Loading Dock. Continue straight through the Loading Dock and into the Victoria Street Building, where the Meeting Room will be on your left.

Volunteers will be available along the route to assist you if needed. Please don't hesitate to ask for help

Accessible programmes

Our Low Sensory show is on Wednesday, 15 October. During this show, the audience lights will be left on low, and the sound will be turned down a little. There are no changes to the story, action, characters, or design- it’s our standard show, but more relaxed. Audience doors will be kept open, so you can come and go if you need to.

You are welcome to use headphones, silent fidget toys, sunglasses, and other comfort items on any night. If you need to take a break during the show, an usher can help you exit safely and return when you are ready.

The Festival Hub will host a dedicated Quiet Space for Neurodivergent attendees to take a break from the festival’s hustle and bustle. The Quiet Space will be available every night the Festival Hub is open, from 5:30-10:30 pm each night (4:30-9:30 pm on Sundays). It will be opened for additional Relaxed Performance dates held on Saturday matinees – specifics yet to be announced.

Ok- spoilers ahead! If you want the show to be a surprise, don’t read any further.

Short synopsis

Two bananas wake up duct-taped to the wall of a prestigious art gallery. They discover the audience, music kicks in, and they playfully dance their way off the wall, tearing off their duct tape. They notice each other, and their lives are forever changed. They bunch and dance together, having found their person, their twin. It is joyous, loving and cheeky.

Through interactive and comedic games, they get to know each other, getting stuck together in different acrobatic positions as they try to reach the audience. They want to share their joy with everyone and initiate some playful audience interaction. Some audience members are invited onstage to create live artwork.

The bananas also meet their maker through a voiceover heard through a pair of headphones hanging on the wall.

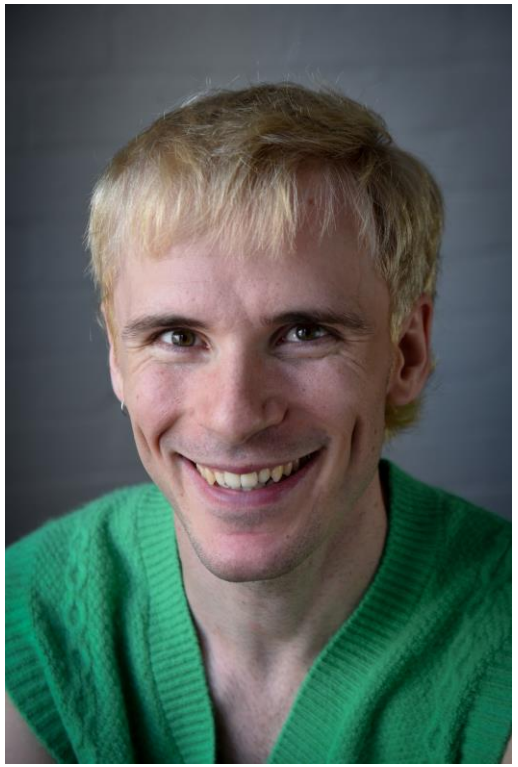
Throughout the play, the gallery attendant comes in and out with red stickers of varying sizes to declare objects in the room as ‘sold’, including art pieces, props, and members of the audience. Our bananas move between a desire to enjoy the moment and ‘bunch’ with the audience, and a drive to make sense of their existence as artworks.

The play finishes with a live auction where they are auctioned off to an audience member, who is given a limited-edition show merch t-shirt to take home. The bananas learn they are to be separated, and dramatically end the play holding each other close.

The cast

Katie Burson

Kevin (banana)



Georgie Llewellyn

Kevin (banana)

Bronwyn Ensor

Gallery Attendant

Show Summary

The show summary has text and photos from a past show to share all the details of the show. This is a live show, so some things may be different when you attend.

The stage is set up like an art gallery, with artworks hanging from a white wall or sitting on blue plinths. As the audience enters, the two performers dressed as bananas are on stage. The bananas are taped to the gallery wall, still and silent as the audience sits down. The gallery attendant talks to audience members about the upcoming art auction as they enter.

The show begins with groovy music fading in softly, and bananas beginning to bop and dance. They dance their way off the gallery wall with a ripping sound as the tape comes unstuck. Gasping, they discover that they are taped together.

They move, flip, and stretch comically until they rip free from the tape, to their delight.

The bananas communicate in a silly, made-up language that sounds like long, stretched-out English words mixed with giggles and exclamations. As the show continues, their language sounds more and more like English.

The groovy music returns and the bananas dance, jive and roll together around the stage. They lift and carry each other, balancing and pulling against each other’s bodies to contort in hilarious positions, all while babbling in their funny language.

Suddenly, the bananas discover the audience in the room. Excited and bashful, they explore the audience and go into the seats, marvelling at all the people.

The gallery attendant strides in, talking sharply to an unseen gallery worker, Simon. The bananas scramble back onto the wall and go still. She slams the door and dramatically dons white gloves.

With a flourish, she pulls a sheet of red stickers from her handbag. She puts a sticker dramatically on an art piece, proclaiming, “Sold.”

She sternly tells the audience, “Don’t touch the art.” She points to a set of headphones mounted on the wall near the bananas and tells the audience to ‘listen at their leisure’.

Noticing the duct tape on the floor, she sticks it back onto the wall over the bananas. She taps her foot by a sign on the floor that reads ‘do not touch’ and leaves.

With a huge breath of relief, the bananas burst free from the tape and off the wall.

They spot the pair of headphones high up on the wall, out of reach. One banana approaches the crowd and gets an audience member to come on stage and help them reach the headphones.

The bananas are delighted, and the crowd may cheer for the helper, who then returns to their seat.

The bananas listen to the headphones. A loud, confident voice-over plays; it is the voice of the artist who created the artworks, talking about his work. The description is nonsense, but the bananas are amazed.

When they are finished listening, they ask an audience member to come onto the stage to help them hang up the headphones.

The bananas repeat the gallery attendant's words, "Don't touch the art." Goofily, they approach the audience, pretending to be an art connoisseur, and, after much dramatic and silly hesitation, touch an audience member on the shoulder before dissolving into hysterics.

They repeat the silliness, admiring the audience members like art works and pretending they are going to touch them, but they stop each other.

They pretend to get stuck shoulder to shoulder with an audience member, and bring them up on stage. They bring several more audience members onto the stage by “sticking” to their shoulders, and they gather in a line by the gallery wall.

The line of people holds up the duct tape, and then all freeze as the gallery attendant returns. The bananas hide. She pulls on her gloves and places a new sticker on another artwork, reminding the audience not to touch.

She spots the audience members and bananas holding the tape, and thinks it’s a new artwork that’s just arrived. She tells the audience about the artwork and sticks a large red “Sold” sticker onto one of the audience members. She leaves.

The bananas unfreeze and quickly hurry the audience members back to their seats, keeping the ‘stickered’ one on stage.

They peel the large red sticker from the audience member and try to stick it to their bodies. In giddy panic, they stick it to the floor, proudly proclaiming that the floor is sold!

They scamper, dance and hop around the stage together, bouncing up onto a blue plinth and examining a bowl of fruit art piece. One of the bananas becomes sad, the other notices, and puppeteers a cherry to counsel them. They talk about the origins of their name, ‘Kevin’ and their associated feelings of lack of agency.

They discover a small banana from the fruit bowl, cradling it like a baby. It has the word ‘Simon’s’ written on it. Pretending it’s a telephone, they hand it to an audience member to have a conversation. The small banana passes around the crowd.

The bananas take the small banana back and go back to cradling it. It absurdly starts feeding from their breasts, which hurts, and after a tussle, they accidentally rip it right in half. At first, they are devastated. Then they hungrily eat the delicious banana.

Suddenly, the screen on the gallery wall comes on, and loud music with a fast beat plays. The screen shows rapidly scrolling footage of an art gallery. The bananas are seemingly possessed and dance furiously, their bodies vibrating and contorting until suddenly one of the bananas is flung out of the space.

The banana returns with a bundle of cloth and a water bottle labelled ‘Simon’s’. They create their own artwork with their findings. They remember the remains of the small banana they ate. They try to revive its remains, but when that doesn’t work, they add the small banana pieces to their artwork and auction it off to the audience. They are sad to see their small banana go.

The bananas turn a plinth on its side and stand on top of it. A white light illuminates their torsos, and they put on a skit to cheer themselves up with their hands as characters both called ‘Simons’.

During their skit, they discover their own and each other's G-strings. They joyfully rip them off, discovering barcodes in their crotches.

The gallery attendant enters, telling off an unseen Simon. The bananas hide underneath a cloth. The gallery attendant hands an audience member a giant red sticker as she slyly dons her white gloves.

She sticks the giant sticker onto the front of the audience member. Turning to go, she spots the cloth covering the bananas. Picking up the fruit bowl artwork, she balances the bowl on top of the cloth-covered bananas.

The gallery attendant tells the audience that she's an artist of the spoken word. She shares a poem with the audience. Slowly, the bananas peek out from the cloth and grab the fruit basket, without the gallery attendant noticing. She does spot the water bottle with the banana pieces. Stating that it's Simon's morning tea, she brings over a bin and throws the bottle and banana out.

Fully exposed now, the bananas gasp, and the gallery attendant hears and walks over to them.

They stand frozen as the attendant slowly reaches out a hand to touch them- and suddenly they all scream loudly and the bananas spring off the sideways plinth, flinging cloth and art pieces. The gallery attendant chases the bananas into the audience, where they try to hide among the audience.

The attendant forces the bananas back onstage and orders them to get back on the wall- but they pelt her with fruit and chase her offstage. The sound of a toilet flushing is heard.

The bananas scramble back onstage and put the duct tape across the doorway. Lights dim to a slow, flashing red and orange, and dramatic music from “She Had It Coming” from the musical Chicago plays.

The bananas dance dramatically. A voiceover discussing the modern art movement interrupts the bananas dance. Still in the dramatic red light, with the voice and music continuing to play, the bananas suddenly realise they are naked and try to cover up. One of the Banans gets so embarrassed that they reach for a light switch and turn off the lights. The theatre goes black and the music stops.

One banana dons a head torch and finds the other. They cheer each other up, and search inside the gallery attendant’s bag that they stole. Pulling out a large piece of paper, they try to read, but it’s too dark, so they switch back on the lights.

Two audience members are brought onstage to help read the writing on the paper, which says ‘REVIEW’ on the back. As they read, a thumping musical beat slowly fades in. The bananas hear and slowly back out of a stage door. Lights fade as the audience members finish reading and go back to their seats, and the bananas come back in.

Donning shoulder bags and sunglasses, they dance and take art pieces off the wall. The audience may clap along, and the voice-over returns over the music. As the voice over finishes and the bananas slow their dancing, the lights start to cycle slowly off and on.

The bananas open the bin and discover shreds of banana skin costumes. Examining their bodies under their costumes, they see bruises. Horrified, they run about screaming as the beat continues to thump and the lights start to flash faster.

Suddenly, the soaking wet, angry, and toilet roll-covered gallery attendant, wearing a huge sticker on her chest, returns. She forces a smile and rolls a rack of T-shirts against the wall.

The music stops and the lights turn on as she orders the bananas back onto the tipped-over plinth and starts the art auction to sell the two bananas along with a T-shirt.

The audience members bid, increasing the total higher and higher. They might whoop and cheer as the price rises, and clap when someone finally wins the auction.

At the end of the auction, the gallery attendant reveals that this auction was only to sell one of the bananas- she's going to split them up. She starts the auction for the other banana, but the bananas are hysterical to be separated.

She accidentally pulls part of the outer skin off one of the bananas, which seems to injure the banana badly. She does the same with the second banana after an altercation. They cry and stumble around, shedding their yellow outer skin costumes as they eventually fall into each other's arms as the gallery attendant flees.

They collapse together onto the sideways plinth.

The voice over returns, and the bananas slowly sit up to listen. The voice-over reveals that the bananas in the artwork are replaced each day. The bananas share a horrified look, and then the lights go out. The show is finished.

The lights come on again, and the actors bow as the audience claps and cheers.