

## KINETIKA BLOCO

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Date	2011+
Region	London
Artform(s)	Music
Number of participants	100 members of the community and 20 professional artists
Annabel Jackson Associates Ltd role	We wrote the evaluation system, helped Kinetika Bloco to apply it, analysed the data and wrote up the annual reports
Methodology	Registration, feedback and follow up forms for trainees and participants

### Background

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Kinetika is an arts organisation that spun off its annual music carnival, Kinetika Bloco, as a separate charity in 2010. Kinetika Bloco has created a London carnival sound combining brass and woodwind, drumming, steel pan and dancing all in costume. The performers are all young people, who are trained by professional tutors. Kinetika has a strong performance record, for example the group represented London as part of the 'Beijing 2008' Olympic Cultural Festival, as well as performing at the London Jazz Festival, Thames Festival, The South Bank and at the Unveiling of the Nelson Mandela Statue at Parliament Square.

### Description

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Kinetika Bloco has three elements:

- **The trainees.** The trainees are recruited for a year and work on the Summer School and some of the other workshops through the year. Trainees are young people who have been in the Bloco before and seek to develop their leadership skills, experience and responsibility.
- **Summer School.** Kinetika Bloco Summer School takes place over two weeks in August. Participants take part either as drummers, dancers, or brass/woodwind players to create a show that they then perform at venues such as the Southbank Centre, Southwark Youth carnival and Thames Festival.
- **Youth workshops.** Kinetika Bloco trainees lead other workshops with schools. For example trainees from 2011 led two workshops with special needs students at Beormund Primary School, teaching them drumming pieces to create a short performance for their Christmas show. All participants were new to the activity. In 2011 a Kinetika Bloco trainee led an after school drumming club in Highshore Special Needs School including a final workshop with them with a few other Bloco people and some students from Peckham Academy. Trainees also led a workshop in drumming, dance and brass/woodwind with participants from the Kinetika Bloco.

In 2010-2011 there were 150 participants ranging in age from 12 to 25 with a concentration around 16. Some 91% of participants were from ethnic minority backgrounds.

## Impact

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In 2010-2011 there were ten trainees, aged from 19 to 23. Five trainees were male and five female. Seven trainees were Black/Black British, two of mixed ethnicity, and one White. When they started the training, five trainees were NEET. Trainees said they particularly enjoyed seeing the participants grow and develop, being able to help other participants, developing leadership skills and being in a position of responsibility. Bloco generally made trainees feel valued, supported, good about themselves, and able to ask for help should a problem arise. They were slightly less positive about the clarity of their roles. Trainees said the Summer School made them more disciplined, better at listening, more confident, more ambitious, more interested in working in the arts, more interested in learning, and more interested in volunteering in the community.

**Kinetika Bloco leading Our Greatest Team Parade, photo: Hajley Petein Photography**



“Kinetika is my life, Bloco is my heart. Being a part of Kinetika makes me whole, because I learn new skills and also teach new skills of my own to others.”

“It has empowered me to know I had a positive influence on others and presented myself to be a role model and be someone others can turn to.”

“I really enjoyed working

with the new participants and being able to mentor the more vulnerable participants.”

We surveyed trainees six months after the Summer School of 2010. Only one trainee was NEET at this stage. Six were in education and four were in employment. All respondents said that their current work was directly or indirectly motivated by being a trainee with Kinetika.

“Kinetika helped me have a constructive debate and taught me how to give and take constructive critique.”

## Good practices

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Arts organisations such as Kinetika are masters at increasing motivation and responsibility. These are some good practices illustrated by Kinetika Bloco:

- **Avoiding any form of labelling or stigmatising of young people.** Participants include disadvantaged people but also non-disadvantaged people.
- **Organising around an existing interest and passionate activity for young people.** Taking part in an arts activity is exciting, emotional and increases rather than depletes energy. Learning takes place in a highly positive environment.

- **Building on participants' strengths.** Kinetika Bloco provides different activities – music making, dancing and costume making - where participants can use and build on their existing skills.
- **Encouraging team work.** Performance self-evidently requires strong accommodation to, and respect for other people, as well as giving a unique opportunity for self-expression.
- **Giving role models.** Trainees, and participants who have previously taken part in Bloco, help to support new recruits.

Kinetika Bloco leading Our Greatest Team Parade, photo: Hajley Petein Photography



- **Providing a loose structure for progression.** Trainees tend to come back to Kinetika.
- **Encouraging young people to support each other.** As illustrated by the quotes, one of the main strengths of the project for trainees is that they are able to mentor other young people.

Taking responsibility in this way makes young people feel good about themselves, which is quite different from an approach that makes them feel like victims or failures.

- **Concentrating on soft skills (and artistic skills).** The trainees develop leadership skills, confidence, motivation and discipline, all of which help them make more positive decisions in the future.
- **Providing a vivid form of learning.** Arts activities give a different way of learning that does not consist of sitting in a classroom.
- **Organising inspiring experiences.** Performances, such as those to the South Bank, are explicitly designed to raise aspirations and broaden participants' and trainees' horizons.