

Putney Arts Theatre: Charitable Incorporated Organisation

(Registered number 1157481)

MINUTES OF THE 9TH PAT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – TUESDAY JUNE 27TH AT 8.00PM

Carrie Cable, Chair of the Board of Trustees, welcomed everyone to and chaired the 9th Annual General Meeting of Putney Arts Theatre.

Apologies for absence were received from Bryan Raven, Kathie Arundell, Simon Crump, and Laura Jackson.

Zoe Copley, Danielle Capretti and Jeff Graves attended the meeting via Zoom.

1. Minutes of the 8th Annual General Meeting held on 19 October 2021

The minutes of the 8th AGM were agreed and approved as a true record.

2 Chair's Report – Carrie Cable referred the meeting to the Annual Report which provided a comprehensive overview of the year (see 7 for link).

3 Treasurer and Financial Report – Perry Kitchen presented the financial headlines for the year ended 31 March 2023 which are reproduced below.

Of the three constituent parts of the PAT accounts, PTC had made a contribution of £46K (2022: £25K) during the year, Group 64 £30K (2022: £6K), and the PAT net outflow was £83K (2022: £29K). The building capital fund was £3K in surplus (2022: £12K deficit), so the net result was an outflow of £4K. (2022: £10K surplus)

In more detail, PTC subs and other activities contributed £8K (2022: £7K), with £38K (2022: £18K) from production surpluses. Several shows made around £5K. Great Expectations made £6K, closely followed by A Midsummer Night's Dream and Nell Gwynn.

Group 64 drama class subscriptions totalled £68K (2022: £58K), with £8K (2022: £6K) from productions, £16K (2022: £13K) from holiday projects, £12K (2022: £3K) from education outreach and £20K (2022: £4K) in grants and donations. This all represented an increase in activity, with costs (including staff) of £94K. (2022: £78K)

PAT trading income from theatre lettings, and the car park, plus the continued giving scheme, amounted to £18K (2022 £9K), and Theatre Tax Relief was £5K (2022 (£1K)). In 2022 we had received £53K from the Cultural Recovery Fund (of which £50K was allocated to PAT general funds and £3K to the building capital fund), and also £21K from Wandsworth Borough Council. There was no such government support in 2023. Overheads (including staff costs) of £106K were £9K higher than 2022, mainly because of increased gas and electricity costs.

The building capital fund was holding £4K which had been raised for the bar fund. Another nearly £2K had been raised in April/May 2023.

Bank balances at the year-end were £65K, (2022 £72K) plus the £4K held for the bar fund. Net assets were £50K (2022: £53K)

Perry thanked Veronika, Nicola, Stacey and all the Group 64 team for their hard work and ingenuity in finding out about possible grants and making applications.

The accounts for the year to 31/3/23 had been independently examined and signed by Elliot Fielding of Sampson Fielding Ltd, Chartered Accountants.

Perry thanked Bryan, Carrie, Ajay, and Tom for their valued help on the finance committee. He would be stepping down as trustee and treasurer next year, in accordance with the constitution, and the finance team was seeking more familiarity with the theatre's financial systems, with a view to allocating specific tasks and responsibilities to a number of people. Perry suggested that the single most important individual to find at this time was somebody with financial experience to be at the centre of the financial operations.

4 PAT General Manager's Report - Veronika Wilson presented her report which is reproduced in full below:

The financial year ending 31st March 2023 was a flurry of adjustment and activity with change in the G64 team and new Artistic Directors for PTC. It is also our first financial year end where Covid restrictions were not part of the equation since the start of the pandemic, although sadly the energy and cost of living crisis have had an impact on us. We've had several new members join the Board of Trustees and we are in a good position to grow, develop and experiment.

Over the last year, we had an increase in daytime use and currently have activities running in the Front of House areas 4 mornings a week. The flower stall opened next to us just as the financial year ended and should hopefully be a useful extra revenue stream for us. We welcomed back Baked Beans and Cygnets as regular annual hires and began hosting a new comedy night run by G64 alumnus, Ted Milligan, all of which have brought an additional and different audience into the theatre. We also hosted the Wandsworth Creative Youth Summit in December which went towards helping to develop the borough's Cultural Strategy. We've also been taking part in a needs analysis of the Voluntary Community Sector with Wandsworth Borough Council, with the final few sessions and learning being presented at the start of July.

Our fundraising focus has shifted to replacing our existing theatre lantern stock with LED equipment, as our current stock becomes obsolete and as an environmentally sound move. We're currently taking part in the Mayor of London's Business Climate Challenge and hope that the data and information provided will help us build a persuasive argument. It's an ambitious target and will need backing from the whole organisation.

Looking ahead, we've recently started working with Katherine Low Settlement, Wandsworth Sanctuary and Care 4 Calais to provide space and activities to asylum seekers and refugees currently housed in Putney and hope to keep exploring this line of work. Also, Wandsworth Council have now announced that we're putting in a bid to be London Borough of Culture in 2025, so do please lend your support to this when and where you can, and we look forward to updates on the campaign.

Thanks go to all our volunteers, Trustees, the PTC Committee, Barney, and Cait and the G64 team.

5. Group 64 Theatre for Young People Report: Nicola Sterry and Stacey Burt presented their report which is reproduced in full below:

We have had a very busy and exciting year at G64. With lots of classes, holiday projects, productions and education work happening both in the building and in the local community.

Recovery from Covid

We have spent the year looking at how we have recovered from the pandemic, and how our membership has grown since. In Summer 2019, our membership numbers were 252 G64 members, this dropped down to 130 in Summer 2021 and has since steadily grown to 222. Obviously, this is not quite at the levels that we were at before the pandemic but we are seeing the numbers of our young members grow especially in our teenage classes.

Productions at G64 this year

From March 2022 G64 has produced seven productions with 137 young people aged 8-19 years old. These productions included -

- March 2022 - *This Changes Everything* by Joel Horwood
- July 2022 - *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevens. Adapted by Stuart Paterson

- August 2022 - *JOY* performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, devised by the cast.
- November 2022 - Young Directors: *Brainstorm* by Ned Glasier, Emily Lim and Company 3 and *A Beautiful History* by John Douglas.
- December 2022 - *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. Adapted by Karen Louise Hebden. They also performed at the Putney Christmas Light Turn On with Putney BID.
- February 2023 - *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare.
- March 2023 - National Theatre Connections: *Strangers Like Me* by Ed Harris (also performed at the Lyric in Hammersmith)

We also offered 8 young people technical theatre skills in lighting and sound this year.

Our productions saw 1070 people come to G64 performances over the year and give lots of really wonderful feedback. This year we gave 59 complimentary tickets to local schools and youth groups so that their young people could come and see our performances.

Education projects this year

We have worked with 10 Wandsworth schools this year, being able to help drama departments, heads of year, and primary schools to deliver creative classes to more young people in Wandsworth. Some of the education work that we have done is;

- Wandsworth Prep School Upper Production
- Sheen Mount Play in a Day
- St Josephs, Ronald Ross, Brandlehow Primary Schools - Happiness workshops (funded by Coop Community Fund)
- The Skills and Inclusion Project - Secondary Schools - St Cecilia's, Ashcroft, Fulham Boys School, Richmond Academy (funded by the Jack Petchey Reignite Fund)
- Wandsworth Prep - The Nativity Project
- Wandsworth Prep - Lower School Play in a Day
- Ronald Ross School - Poetry Workshops
- Griffin School - Play in a Day
- Heathmere Primary - Alton, a place I call home

We engaged with approximately 2000 young people in schools and in the local Wandsworth area. Over the year we worked with approximately 3.8% of the total population of Wandsworth's 0-17 year olds.

Impact Report

This year G64 created an impact report to look at how our work impacts the young people that we come into contact with. This gave us some really interesting statistics such as

- 25% of our membership are on a Pay What You Can Afford place or on a scholarship place.
- We trained and worked with 12 young people as class assistants over the year to work with members and to also assist those who need one to one support.
- About 7% of our membership would describe themselves as Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority Groups
- About 11% of our membership have a disability, neurodiversity or mental health condition.

- G64 staff spent an average of 650 hours supporting mental health at Group 64 this year whether that was sitting and having a chat with young people or their adult about mental health, providing support materials to parents, or developing sessions for schools.
- 3% of our membership have a mental health condition.

Upcoming Years at G64

For the future of G64 we have set ourselves a set of goals that we would like to achieve which are

- Become a champion for young people's mental health within the arts
- Work with arts professionals to continue developing a varied performing arts programme and develop young people's skills and confidence.
- Reach more young people by engaging with local schools in the Wandsworth Area.
- Continue to provide varied opportunities for young people including shows, classes, holiday projects, and assisting.
- Expand our Pay What You Can Afford Scheme by applying for core-cost funding
- Re-look and re-design G64 Committee to hear more of a youth voice within the company.

Johnny Douglas and Sophie McGrath addressed the meeting talking about their experiences in being part of Group 64.

6. Putney Theatre Company Report – Cait Hart Dyke presented her report which is reproduced in full below:

This report relates to the period 5th April 2022 – 31st March 2023.

PTC Productions

4-7 May 2022

NEW WRITING FESTIVAL

From the 350 script submissions the New Writing Team - led by Rebecca Marangos, selected four brand new plays to form our 2022 New Writing Festival: *Human Resources*, *Making It Up As We Go Along*, *The Cold Room* and *Flat Earth* directed by Craig Legg, Perry Savill, Loetitia Delais and Bradley White, respectively.

21-25 June & 2-3 July

CYRANO DE BERGERAC

By Edmund Rostrand

Adapted by Glyn Maxwell

June and July saw a rescheduling of *Cyrano de Bergerac* with performances on both the main stage and outside at the Old Burial Ground. We witnessed swashbuckling swordsman-poet Cyrano attempt to win the heart of Roxanne in Edmund Rostrand's rollicking epic of adventure and romance. Directed by Stuart Watson.

"...a highly-polished and atmospheric production of a much-loved but also technically challenging play. It comes highly recommended for a wonderful evening of entertainment."

Mark Aspen

Thursday 15 - Saturday 17 September

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

By William Shakespeare

Based on an abridged version by Roger Warren

The Hurlingham Festival and the main auditorium played host to our ensemble production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Set in an enchanted forest filled with fairies, sparring lovers and a group of hard-handed amateur actors rehearsing a play, audiences were caught up in a heady mixture of mischief, magic, and a healthy dose of fantasy. Directed by Barney Hart Dyke.

"A well-integrated cast have brought out all the play's humour in a successfully entertaining production." It is very impressive and admirable how remarkably well the cast keep the energy in the story going to create a memorable evening's entertainment."

Mark Aspen

4-8 October

ULSTER AMERICAN

By David Ireland

The first of our studio productions saw the London premiere of David Ireland's *Ulster American*. This blackly comic thriller examined issues of cultural identity, abuse of power, and male privilege. Directed by Stuart Watson.

"... expertly directed by Stuart Watson who has brought out every element of this clever piece of writing and it runs along at great pace. The trio of actors work seamlessly together."

Mark Aspen

8-12 November

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

By Charles Dickens

Adapted by Neil Bartlett

Back on the main stage we were treated to a series of strange and thrilling encounters courtesy of Neil Bartlett's adaptation of *Great Expectations*. From its famous opening on the Kent marshes to its dramatic conclusion at Satis House, secrets of the past and strange twists of fate were revealed as Pip unravelled the truth behind the mysterious financial bequest that makes him a gentleman. Directed by Ian Higham

"Putney Theatre Company's Great Expectations is an atmospheric, entertaining and highly enjoyable production of a refreshing version of a Dicken's classic."

Mark Aspen

6 -14 January 2023

DICK WHITTINGTON

By the PTC Writing Team – Kirsty Harrison, Simon Herd, Lizzie Iredale & Tim Iredale

Music by Simon Herd

We joined our hero Dick Whittington (and his trusty cat!) as he sought fame, fortune, and happiness on his journey to become Lord Mayor, in our January panto.

Guided by the magical Fairy Bow Bells, Dick set out on an adventure that sent him from London town to the High Seas, headed for Kathmandu. But did Dick outwit the evil rodent King Rat, free the city from his team of revolting rodents and win the beautiful Alice's hand in marriage? Of course, he did. It was panto after all...! Directed by Barney Hart Dyke.

21-25 February

KINDERTRANSPORT

February gave us the sold-out studio production of *Kindertransport*. Diane Samuels' seminal play is widely considered a modern classic about one woman's struggle to come to terms with her past and the audience were fully engaged in an emotionally powerful production. Directed by Diana Denton-Barker.

14-18 March

THE LAST OF THE HAUSSMANS

Our final main stage production - *The Last of the Haussmans* examined the fate of the revolutionary generation and offered a funny, touching and at times savage portrait of a family full of longing that's losing its grip. Directed by Frances Bodiam and Theo Lennard.

"The direction by Frances Bodiam, was brisk and well-paced and the placement of the characters was excellent and varied." "...the interaction between the three generations made for an entertaining evening..."

Mark Aspen

MEMBERSHIP

Current numbers stand at 279 –an increase of around 30 from last year.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Throughout the year the PTC Committee organised a range of social events for the membership, including:

- PTC Quiz Night: 23rd September
- Bar Evening: 21st October
- Songs of the Shows – Karaoke Evening: 29th October
- Quizmas – PAT Quiz Night: 14th December
- PTC Christmas Party: 17th December

- New Season Launch: 11th February

AUDIENCE NUMBERS AND MARKETING

We've made significant inroads into increasing our audience numbers with our studio production of *Kindertransport* selling out. From September onwards our main stage productions hovered around the 70 mark for most performances, with *Great Expectations* achieving very impressive audience numbers of 134 for the Friday performance, 98 for the Saturday matinee and 112 for the final performance.

The increase in our audience numbers is clearly reflected in our box office revenue.

PODCAST

August saw us launch our PTC podcast – *Light's Up*. Designed to showcase our forthcoming productions, this has been a powerful tool in our marketing arsenal, and we have now reached almost 1000 downloads. Special thanks to Nick Wells who has tirelessly recorded, produced, and edited each episode.

YOUTUBE

We've also achieved a major surge in views on YouTube with over 2,600 since 25th February. This is up from less than 900 in 2022. Again, thanks to Nick Wells for spearheading our video campaigns for our productions.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We've seen a massive hike in our social media following:

TikTok: 3560 likes since June 2022 - 187 followers

Instagram: 1,881 followers

Twitter: 906 followers

FB – Friends of PTC: 451 members

A huge thank you to the PTC Marketing Team who have worked so hard to reach new audiences and create interesting and captivating content for our social media platforms.

INITIATIVES

The foyer has been transformed and now showcases forthcoming productions from PTC and Group 64 along with rehearsal photos for the current production. This has been extremely well received from both members and external audiences. Accompanying the A0 posters in the foyer will be 12 wooden frames containing photos from previous productions, which will be displayed in both the foyer and the bar area. These will be put up over the summer months.

A very special thank you to Steve Lippitt who has kindly taken most of our production photos and for providing such incredible images that we have been able to use in all our marketing activity.

September will see the launch of our Friends of Putney Arts Theatre scheme. This is a new initiative designed to encourage audience members to support their local theatre. Full details and how to join will be shared over the summer months.

Spring/Summer 2023 Productions

- **The Welkin:** 25th – 29th April
- **Mayfly:** 16th – 20th May
- **Sense & Sensibility:** 20th – 24th June
- **The Canterbury Tales:** 30th August – 2nd September during the Hurlingham Festival and 9th & 10th September at St Margaret's Church, Putney

Autumn/Winter 2023-4 Productions

- **The Hound of the Baskervilles:** 26th – 30th September
- **Apologia:** 17th – 21st October
- **Amadeus:** 14th – 18th November
- **My Fair Lady:** 13th – 22nd December
- **The Children:** 20th – 24th February
- **Scandaltown:** 19th – 23rd March

7 Approval of the annual statement of accounts and trustees annual report

The Chair invited the meeting to approve the annual report.

Proposer: Kim Dyas

Secunder: Mike Cooke.

Approved by a show of hands of members present.

https://putneyartstheatre.wildapricot.org/resources/Documents/Putney%20Arts%20Theatre%20Annual%20Report%202023_DIGITAL.pdf

8 Independent Examiner

Elliott Fielding ACA were reappointed as Independent Examiners.

Proposer: Alan Housden

Secunder: Sarah Jillings.

Approved by a show of hands of members present.

9 Appointment of Trustees

The following appointments/re-appointments were proposed:

The re-appointment of **Caroline Cable** for a third term of office

Proposer: Perry Kitchen

Secunder: Kim Dyas

The re-appointment of **Amanda Benzecry** for a second term of office

Proposer: Bryan Raven

Secunder: Martin Jessop

The re-appointment of **Sarah Jillings** for a fourth term of office

Proposer: Tom Sainsbury

Secunder: Sarah Kitchen

Confirmation of the appointment of **Ajay Shah** who joined the Trustees on 10th January 2023

Proposer: Amanda Benzecry

Secunder: Zoe Copley

Confirmation of the appointment of **Jamie Hannon** who joined the Trustees on the 11th April 2023.

Proposer: Carrie Cable

Secunder: Caroline D'Arcy

Ajay and Jamie introduced themselves to the members present.

All approved by a show of hands of members present.

10 PAT Vision and Strategy – Tony de Vizio, Vice Chair, presented the report:

Over the past year, the trustees have had a number of conversations to discuss the future direction of PAT and its resident companies. This has involved both extensive internal consultations and meetings with external parties that have gone through a similar process.

It is clear that in order to fulfil our charity objects and to continually make sure that our charity continues for many years to come, we need to be much more strategic across our development plans going forward.

Our strategy is still a work in progress; however, we have pulled our thinking into three strategic pillars, namely our:

Audiences

- To reinforce and grow the participation of our audiences & members.

Building

- To explore options through which we maintain, expand, or move our current home to ensure the extended life of our charity.

Community

- To fully contribute to our local community so that we are recognised as a centre of creative excellence and a place for group activity.

We are working on plans to build upon these pillars; however, it is unsurprising that a majority of our effort will need to focus on the future of our home. Not only have we hoped for best for many years, but it is also that there will be increased demands on our building in the future, especially as we need to ensure improved utilisation and revenue growth to support our increasing running costs.

In terms of next steps, we are going to explore and consult further across a number of options for the building. These options may include:

- Continuing as we are,
- Redeveloping while maintaining our current capacity,
- Redeveloping and growing our capacity, or,
- Moving elsewhere to secure better facilities

No option is currently preferred and the trustees will be completely transparent with its members and stakeholders in terms of findings and possible options for PAT going forward. This will likely involve a number of open consultation sessions so that we all agree the best future for PAT.

By means of some initial steps, the trustees will be looking to address the following. In the next:

3-6 Months	6-12 Months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines of cost options for the building’s future • Launch of Friends of PAT Scheme • A New Patron • Increase in External Hires • Re-branding of our Resident Cos • Further Cost Savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear plan for Building • Formal Fundraising activity in place • Investigation of a New Resident Co. • Increased building utilisation • Wider partnerships explored • An updated Constitution to reflect future strategy

11 2023/2024 Fundraising Appeal – Martin Jessop and Amanda Benzecry presented their report which is reproduced below:

Putney arts theatre is facing a serious challenge. The ability to light our productions in the near future is under threat.

The ability to source tungsten lamps (bulbs) for use in stage lighting fixtures is proving to be a growing and therefore significant problem.

Some years ago, the European Union took the decision to disallow the manufacture of such lamps - a decision that was made with the best of intentions - principally to save energy - but without proper consideration of the consequences. As a result, companies, such as Philips, closed their European factories.

While that decision for the moment has effectively been reversed, the manufacturing capabilities have not been reinstated. And although a handful of manufacturers in China originally agreed to continue mass production of stage lamps to keep the global industry supplied, Covid meant that that demand fell overnight to almost zero and the Chinese factories too were closed.

Hence the current problematic situation, where many performance venues are competing to get hold of the remaining and increasingly scarce stocks of tungsten stage lamps.

And this competitive situation will only get worse over time (eventually it will be impossible to purchase tungsten lamps anywhere) as professional venues continue to replace as quickly as they can their tungsten lamps and fixtures for LED versions.

At Putney Arts Theatre, while we still have some usable lanterns, there is an urgent need to replace the real workhorses on the main stage – those which are in use for every show, presentation, and event.

On a positive note, the change to our LED rig would result in:

- 65-70% reduction in energy usage.
- The ability to light in any colour at any time giving much more scope to offer a wide range of 'looks' to any production.
- No lamps (bulbs) to replace - the average life of a tungsten lamp is around 150 hours, while the average life of an LED light is around 50,000 hours.
- No colour gel costs.
- Greater likelihood to attract new technical talent.

So, our specific immediate requirements are as follows:

COLORSOURCE SPOT V PROFILE, 23-50 LENS	12 @ £1920 = £23,040
CHAUVET OVATION F915-FC + BARNDOOR	8 x @ £1584 = £12,672

Therefore, the total fundraising target is £35,000.

The following fundraising support mechanisms were tabled:

- posters
- flyers
- local door drop
- Insert/reference in show programmes
- social media coverage (PAT, PTC and Group 64)
- announcement at end of performances (principal character)
- branded collection boxes/buckets
- grants

12 Member Proposed Resolutions

There were no member proposed resolutions.

13 Any Other Business

None

14 Special Thanks

Special thanks were given to Sarah Jillings, Jeff Graves, Cait and Barney Hart Dyke, Kim Dyas, Martin Jessop, Veronika Wilson, Hattie Kemish, Lauren Tranter, Nicola Sterry, Stacey Burt, Perry Kitchen, Tom Sainsbury, the PTC Committee, Group 64, and all volunteers associated with the resident companies and Putney Arts Theatre.

Special thanks were also given to Rosie and Peter Gent for their support.

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