

Company registration number: NI601058

Charity registration number: 101876

Bruiser Theatre Company

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

Bruiser Theatre Company

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Bruiser Theatre Company

Reference and Administrative Details

Trustees	Miss Rosie Timoney (Resigned 31 December 2022) Mr Adam Boughton Knight Mr Joseph Rea Mr Aidan Kearney Miss Le-Ann Campbell Ms Aoife Browne Miss Laura Johnston Miss Marie O'Donoghue Diana McKeown Miss Ella Griffin (appointed 17 July 2022) Mr Colin Morelli (appointed 16 February 2023) Ms Kirsten McGarrity (appointed 16 February 2023)
Secretary	Lisa May
Principal Office	83 University Street Belfast Antrim BT7 1HP The charity is incorporated in Northern Ireland.
Company Registration Number	NI601058
Charity Registration Number	101876
Independent Examiner	Baxterworld Ltd Chartered Management Accountant Unit 3 Dargan Industrial Park 60-84 Dargan Crescent Belfast BT3 9JP

Bruiser Theatre Company

Strategic Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

The trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, present their strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023, in compliance with s414C of the Companies Act 2006.

Financial review

Income in the year was £262,012 and expenditure totalled £202,303 giving a surplus of £59,709. Total funds at the end of March 23 were £184,569. Restricted funds totalled £79,456, unrestricted and designated funds totalled £105,113 at the close of the period.

Policy on reserves

It is the view of the Board of Directors that Bruiser operate prudently and effectively within the parameters of the financial resources which were available.

Bruiser's Trustees were particularly mindful of the need for efficiencies and financial prudence given the probability of growing competition in funding rounds, limitations to box office potential and limited venue operations, in the wake of Covid-19. In 2016/17 Bruiser established a policy of building company reserves to a minimum of three months operating costs and we were pleased to achieve this once again in 2022/23. With this in mind, the Bruiser Trustees have agreed to increase the designated reserves policy to a minimum of four and a half months operating costs going forward.

Principal funding sources

Bruiser was supported by Belfast City Council, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, the National Lottery, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the Future Screens NI fund, Queens University and the Victoria Homes Trust during the year.

The strategic report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 13 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Joseph Rea

.....
Mr Joseph Rea
Trustee

Bruiser Theatre Company

Trustees' Report

The trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, present the annual report together with the financial statements of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Trustees

Miss Rosie Timoney (Resigned 31 December 2022)

Mr Adam Boughton Knight

Mr Joseph Rea

Mr Aidan Kearney

Miss Le-Ann Campbell

Ms Aoife Browne

Miss Laura Johnston

Miss Marie O'Donoghue

Diana McKeown

Miss Ella Griffin (appointed 17 July 2022)

Mr Colin Morelli (appointed 16 February 2023)

Ms Kirsten McGarrity (appointed 16 February 2023)

Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

Founded in 1997, Bruiser aims to produce innovative live performance combining text and physical theatre techniques.

Bruiser Theatre Company strives to be recognised as Northern Ireland's leading Physical Theatre Company delivering inspiring and uplifting theatre and equipping the next generation of performers with the skills and know-how to work effectively within the industry.

Bruiser's Principal Funder in 2020-21 was Belfast City Council, the National Lottery and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and as such contributes to:

- Promoting the Value of the Arts
- Strengthening the Arts
- Growing Audiences and Increasing Participation

Bruiser takes a professional and ethical approach to the management and governance of the company to deliver quality productions, education and training work.

In pursuit of this Bruiser aims to:

- treat all of its stakeholders with the highest level of integrity and gain the respect of all those individuals and organisations with which it interacts
- be challenging and courageous in designing and developing the artistic programme
- provide an entertaining and enjoyable experience for its audiences

Bruiser Theatre Company

Trustees' Report

Artistically Bruiser's aims are to:

- to use minimal set for maximum impact
- to further explore the notion of the actor, enforcing him/her as the central mechanism of performance
- to streamline and explore the relationship between the essential dynamics of theatre, the actor, the space and the audience
- to encourage an environment for the exchange of ideas and collaboration between arts practitioners in production
- make a commitment to touring, workshop development and teaching to encourage a greater access to theatre
- to produce a consistently high quality product

Public benefit

The Trustees are committed to providing a public benefit, and have taken into account the Charity Commission's guidance in this area.

We believe that producing high quality, engaging work that attracts traditional and non-traditional theatre-goers, diverse in age and background, enhances our audiences quality of life, as well as fostering a more general appreciation of the arts.

By working extensively with Northern Ireland's next generation of talent, we are also creating a legacy from which many other theatres, and the sector at large, will benefit.

Bruiser's Annual Funding was cut by The Arts Council of Northern Ireland by 100% in 2018. With a healthy reserves policy, and strong leadership from the Bruiser Board and Artistic Director, Bruiser continues with vigor, passion and determination

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of section 3 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

Bruiser Theatre Company

Trustees' Report

Our work in 2022/23 includes:

Productions

Mojo Mickybo by Owen McCafferty
All Ireland and UK Venue Tour
March/April 2022

In April 2022, Bruiser completed their UK and ROI venue tour of Mojo Mickybo. This production was funded by ACNI National Lottery Fund and Culture Ireland. The tour included a one week run in The Union Theatre, London, before returning to Northern Ireland for a homecoming run at The MAC, Belfast.

CAST

Michael Condron - Mojo
Terence Keeley - Mickybo

CREATIVE TEAM

Lisa May -Director
Owen McCafferty -Playwright
Stuart Marshall - Set Designer
Garth McConaghie -Music and Sound Designer
James C McFetridge -Lighting Designer

PRODUCTION TEAM

Produced by Bruiser Theatre Company
Lisa May - Producer
Peter Heenan -Producer
Stephen Quinn -Production Manager
Ronan McManus -Assistant Production Manager
Anita Gibney -PR & Marketing
Liam McMullan - Tour Booker
Jim Carson -Scenic Construction

TOUR SCHEDULE

The Garage Theatre, Monaghan
The Old Courthouse, Newtownabbey
Marketplace Theatre, Armagh
The Playhouse, Derry
Watergate Theatre, Kilkenny
An Tain Arts Centre, Dundalk
The Source Arts Centre, Thurles
Dean Crowe Arts Centre, Westmeath
Union Theatre, Southwark
The MAC, Belfast

Bruiser received excellent critical and audience feedback, with 4* and 5* reviews across the board.

Bruiser Theatre Company

Trustees' Report

SAMPLE REVIEW - Everything Theatre - Union Theatre

Mojo (Michael Condron) and Mickybo (Terence Keeley) are nine year-old boys who become friends in Belfast in the summer of 1970. The setting foretells all you need to know about how this friendship is to be affected by events, which are totally out of their control.

There is a really clever introduction to the young boys, which gets revisited towards the end: they almost sing-song their names and change the order to "Mickybo Mojo" or "Mojo Mickybo". For me, this had two strong aspects. First, it really entwines the boys; together they are Mojo Mickybo, and you can imagine them always both being underfoot. Secondly, it shows that these youngsters are the same. No matter their background, no matter the tradition in which they have been brought up, they are just two lads growing up in the same place, interested in the same things; wanting a hut to live in and to eventually grow up to be like Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, riding off to Australia.

The play tears along, thanks in no small part to the sharp direction of Lisa May, and also the sheer energy coming from the two actors. Each of them plays multiple roles; scenes and characters change with a literal twirl. An exaggeration of body language works to great effect, showing the small young lads compared to the bigger, older bullies (well named as Gank the Wank and Fuckface), and this culminates in a spectacular fight, where it's hard to believe there are only two actors on stage. The physical theatre, the comic timing, the choreography behind this is absolutely top notch. On top of that, the ease with which Keeley transforms into Mojo's mother and Condron into Mickybo's father is hugely impressive, moving from childhood innocence and games into world - and specifically Northern Ireland - weary adulthood. Suffice it to say, both Condron and Keeley are superb.

From the start it is clear that the actors are going to take us on a journey, and we need to pay attention to their physicality and their language; to learn some Northern Irish dialect as we go along. The play, direction and delivery all help, but it's clear that an audience prepared to put in a small amount of work will get a little more from the show, and the production trusts and respects its audience to go with this. I felt very invested, and found myself getting really tense as the play went along. Even as I laughed (and boy did I laugh a lot - the play is genuinely funny), there was a troubling sense of dread throughout, and then sadness when the inevitable result of sectarianism finally occurred.

Stuart Marshall's set design is deceptively simple. Before the show begins, it evokes menace from a barricade constructed on the streets of Belfast, the design wordlessly and effectively setting the scene. Garth McConaghie's sound is used to great effect throughout, but in particular as the boys play-act as cowboys. Additionally, the show offers a really slick digital programme, available through scanning a QR code, and delivered by email shortly afterwards. It is one of the better programmes I've seen in a while, providing a lot more than a listing of cast and crew. It includes sections about the theatre company, about the play itself and a really interesting Director's Note.

This play is an enjoyable, thoughtful production; smart, funny and ultimately sad, with superb acting. I loved every minute spent with Mojo Mickybo. *****

Bruiser Theatre Company

Trustees' Report

AWARDS

Bruiser received two nominations from the Irish Times Irish Theatre Awards for their production of Mojo Mickybo:

- 1) Best Director - Lisa May
- 2) Best Ensemble

The judges cited their criteria as:

“Excellence: brilliance, superiority, distinction, quality and merit. Innovation and risk must come into the equation as theatre is all about creativity and therefore inventiveness, resourcefulness, vision, imagination, inspiration and originality.”

A very high bar. These nominations put Bruiser in the company of Ireland’s very best theatre despite the unprecedented times for the industry and the challenges Bruiser itself has faced. Bruiser subsequently won the Best Ensemble Award which was the only award given to a Northern Irish Company in 2022.

Friel Reimagined April 2022 - March 2023

Throughout the year, Bruiser worked in partnership with Queen’s University, Belfast on Friel Reimagined. Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and The Steel Charitable Trust, this is a unique drama research and engagement project based on the work of acclaimed Irish playwright Brian Friel (1929-2015).

Led by Dr Paul Murphy, the project worked to digitise a selection of Friel’s papers held at the National Library of Ireland, and open them up to connect diverse audiences with the legacy and writings of Friel. The project was based at the School of Arts, English and Languages at Queen’s University, who worked with Bruiser in the design and delivery of the outreach aspect of the project.

Over the course of the year we:

- brought participatory drama workshops and courses to the following post-primary schools across Northern Ireland: Sacred Heart Grammar School, Newry; Hazelwood Integrated College, Belfast; Dominican College, Portstewart; Coleraine Grammar School; St Joseph's College, Belfast; Belfast Boys Model School; and local schools in Derry as part of a public exhibition of archival papers at The Guildhall, Derry.
- Worked with four groups from Hydebank Wood College and Women’s Prison on themes and issues relevant to them, explored in the works of Brian Friel.
- Held a series of public workshop courses in Belfast, Derry, Portstewart and with immigrant/migrant communities in Dungannon.
- Delivered a Summer intensive exploring five Friel plays in five days, for young people at The Brian Friel Theatre at Queen’s University, Belfast.
- Developed a series of video resources to help teachers and community leaders explore the works of Brian Friel practically, beyond the lifetime of the project.

In our practical workshop sessions, participants got to try out physical theatre (often for the first time), explore the themes of Friel's plays, devise their own creative ideas and share their work with the group. Bruiser's approach involves everyone, so participants didn't need prior acting experience or knowledge of drama to enjoy the workshops.

Feedback from workshop/course participants included:

- “I learned how sitting down doing a play can be so fun & funny. I got confidence to act and read in front of people. I couldn't ask for better teachers... I am going to miss the class and people. We had a good group. Thank you so so much. I hope to be part of another class.”

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- “Enjoyed this much more than what I thought I would. Got to know other people better and it boosted my confidence.”
- “I wasn't sure about joining though once I did I really enjoyed learning about the play and I had a great laugh with the guys, great people!”
- “A fantastic four weeks - Delving into the themes of the play and the ‘red thread’ that connects us all was insightful and at times very emotional.”

Commission: Die Hard
December 2022 - March 2023

In December 2022, Bruiser secured funding from ACNI National Lottery's Commissioning Programme to develop a stage adaptation of the cult classic 'Die Hard'. Bruiser commissioned playwright Gary Mitchell to work alongside Bruiser's Artistic Director Lisa May in the development of this new piece of work. The research and development of this production is scheduled to continue into 2023/24, with plans to programme the show once complete.

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Arts Academy July - August 2022

The Bruiser Arts Academy, our annual series of professional development courses for young people and emerging artists returned for Summer 2022. Through this project, Bruiser delivered three courses for participants of different ages and abilities:

- **START Academy** - a week-long entry level course is designed for young people who love the idea of performing, but may not have had the chance to be on stage before. This course aims to build confidence through performance and is open to referrals from teachers and community leaders to help reach young people who would most benefit.
- **Summer School** -an intensive ten-day professional training course for young people with a passion for the performing arts. This course is designed to inspire and challenge young actors, providing them with the building blocks required to further pursue their acting ambitions. The Bruiser team are joined by a range of local industry professionals to coach and guide participants, holding them to a high standard of practice and providing essential experience and insight into the working world.
- **Graduate Academy** -an intensive twelve-day training course for young adults with a passion for the performing arts, who are serious about their career. The Graduate Academy is aimed at actors aged 18+ who are preparing for Drama School, are attending further education, have graduated or are professional actors wanting to enhance their skills. The course culminates in a showcase performance for local industry professionals.

The Bruiser Arts Academy was delivered in partnership with Queen's University, Belfast who provided in-kind space for both course delivery and showcase performances. Further collaboration with Queen's University included the engagement of their undergraduate Drama students as project interns - students of QUB gained hands-on experience in workshop facilitation and project planning/management.

Participants worked with local professional theatre practitioners on acting, singing and dancing -delivered as a 'crash course' aimed at boosting confidence/self esteem, as well as developing their performance skills.

We specifically targeted participants from areas of disadvantage and those who may experience barriers to arts engagement, in an effort to improve access and diversify our audience/participant base. In doing so, we delivered drama workshops to schools/community centres to aid recruitment and encourage participation from young people with little-no previous experience. Bursary places were also offered to young people through schools, community groups and charities working with young people. These included Action Deaf Youth Northern Ireland, Cara Friend (LGBTQ+) and local schools, community centres and youth groups. This helped raise our profile, developing new relationships within the wider charity sector.

In delivering the project we were able to offer training opportunities for entry-level young professionals, as well as involve volunteer interns in our work. This enabled young people to gain work experience in workshop facilitation and project management -two areas of the arts that are hard to break into without prior credits or a high profile amongst the sector.

Participant feedback from The Bruiser Arts Academy 2022 included:

- “(My favourite part was) getting to perform in a real theatre and have such a dynamic range of pieces to learn; even pushing myself out of my comfort zone with dancing and singing has been a real great opportunity.”
- “Thank you so much for giving me this incredible opportunity and being so friendly and kind. I’ve loved every second of this experience and hope I’ll be able to do things like this in future too.”

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- “I’ve learned more in the past two weeks about acting and the industry than I have in my life... I am immensely grateful for everything I have learned and feel more confident in where I can go from here to continue learning and improving.”

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Vital Connect

September 2022 - March 2023

With the support of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Bruiser launched a year-long pilot of Vital Connect in September 2022 –our most ambitious education project to date. Vital Connect offered four partner schools a physical theatre “shot in the arm”, aiming to boost resilience and liberate the imaginations of young people in disadvantaged areas.

Over the course of the year we delivered bespoke workshops, inter-school engagement, mentoring, in-school performances and access to on-demand digital educational resources. The result: high quality arts provision across Northern Ireland.

For the year-long pilot, we partnered with: St. Catherine’s College, Armagh; Limavady High School, Limavady; Glastry College, Newtownards; and St. Ronan’s College, Lurgan.

“The Arts & Education panel members are particularly pleased to support this work because of Bruiser's track record of working with schools, and the potential for this project to have a wide and positive impact on drama education in Northern Irish secondary schools.”

-The Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Feedback from participating schools included:

- “A wonderful experience. It has enriched the learning of the students beyond anything I thought possible. They are more engaged, committed and enthused by the experience. I could not recommend Bruiser highly enough.” - St. Catherine’s College, Armagh
- “Working with Bruiser has given pupils the opportunity to see that performance work is made and produced here... Working with NI practitioners shows them that these roles are possible for them and gives them achievable aspirations. The facilitators have all engaged and enthused our pupils... I can see this in practice in class already. This has been such a worthwhile experience.” - Limavady High School, Limavady
- “Vital is such an apt name as you have been a brilliant support to our drama department.” - Glastry College, Newtownards
- “I have worked in Northern Ireland as a drama teacher for 17 years and the constant creative support provided by Bruiser has been invaluable to the teaching of Drama for my GCSE and A-Level students.” - St. Ronan’s College, Lurgan

Through Vital Connect, Bruiser onboarded a full-time Education Officer. The increased capacity puts us in a strong position to continue our long standing reputation as Northern Ireland's leading theatre company working within the education sector.

Bruiser in a Box - Teechers by John Godber
September - October 2022

In October 2022, we delivered a ‘Bruiser in a Box’ tour of Teechers by John Godber to fifteen post-primary schools across NI. Bruiser has a long-standing commitment to arts education, and this project is crucial for promoting the engagement of young people in the arts.

CAST

Nuala McGowan - Lillian ‘Hobby’ Hobson
Catriona McFeely - Gail Saunders
Eugene Evans - Ian ‘Salty’ Salt

Bruiser Theatre Company

Trustees' Report

CREATIVE TEAM

Lisa May - Director
Emma Copland -Assistant Director/Education Advisor
James C McFetridge -Lighting Designer
Louise Dunne -Set & Costume Designer
Katie Richardson -Music and Sound Designer

PRODUCTION TEAM

Produced by Bruiser Theatre Company
Lisa May -Producer
Peter Heenan - Producer
Ronan McManus - Production Manager
Anna Royle --Arts Administration
Noora Helin -Development Officer
Cheryl O'Dwyer -- Education Officer
Robert Crawford -Drama Facilitator
Emma Copland -Education Advisor

Fast-moving, inventive and highly entertaining, Teechers is John Godber's brilliant take on life at a modern Comprehensive. Through their hilarious end-of-term play, three Year 11s exuberantly sketch the new drama teacher's progress through two terms of recalcitrant classes, cynical colleagues and obstructive caretakers. Disillusioned, he departs for the safe waters of a private school, and leaves behind his students, whose youthful irreverence gives way to despair. Brought to the stage by Bruiser Theatre Company with high energy, break-neck comedy and breathtaking ensemble performances, Teechers is a modern classic with something vital to say about education for the 'haves' and 'have nots'.

Teacher Feedback

- 100% of teachers rated the performance and post-show elements 5/5.
- 50% of the teachers rated the cost 5/5 (The other 50% rated the cost 4/5).
- 100% of teachers reported that the event fully met their requirements/expectations.
- 90% of teachers reported that they would be interested in booking a Bruiser workshop again in the future. 10% reported that they might. 0% reported that they would not.

Teacher Comments

- "Absolutely brilliant choice of play!"
- "Difficult to teach transitions but my class just got it after your work. Great to have live theatre back."
- "Showing the students what they can achieve in their own performance space was a great eye opener for them."

Student Feedback

- 64.5% of students rated the show 5/5 stars.
- 30.3% of students rated the show 4/5 stars.
- 54.5% of students surveyed had not previously seen a Bruiser show before.
- 98% of students surveyed reported that they would see a Bruiser show again.

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Further Feedback

- “Congratulations to all at Bruiser on the production of Teechers ... it was like a masterclass in physical theatre. Brilliant directing, acting, and production made it all the more authentic in the school assembly hall setting.” -Flowerfield Arts Centre
- “Many thanks for such an enjoyable performance, a most relevant piece which was funny and real. A strong cast who energetically moved effortlessly through a series of characters, their pace, timing and delivery were excellent. Congratulations to everyone.” -Marie O’Donoghue, Education Authority

Bruiser Theatre Company

Trustees' Report

A Day With Bruiser

January - February 2023

In January 2023, we returned with our annual NI tour of 'A Day With Bruiser' - a full-day crash course for Drama students across Northern Ireland. This is an opportunity for students of GCSE, AS, A2 Level and BTEC Drama, Performing Arts and Theatre courses to get to grips with Bruiser's unique physical theatre style.

A Day With Bruiser consists of three workshops delivered by Bruiser's team of expert facilitators, and a showcase performance/Q&A session at the end of the day to bring all the learning together. Course content is specifically tailored to the requirements of all major exam boards and devised according to consultation with post-primary school teachers across Northern Ireland.

TOUR SCHEDULE

The MAC, Belfast
The Playhouse, Derry ~ Londonderry
The Market Place Theatre, Armagh
Strule, Omagh
Down Arts Centre
Island Arts Centre, Lisburn
Royal Grammar School, Enniskillen
Newry Town Hall

FEEDBACK

100% of teachers said they would be interested in attending another day hosted by Bruiser.

75% of teachers said that the course completely met the expectations.

100% of workshop facilitators said that they received the necessary information.

100% of workshop facilitators said that they would want to work with Bruiser again.

- "All 3 sessions and their practical nature were engaging and very interactive."
- "Every workshop was linked and valuable towards performance. The exercises were focused and provided pupils with starting points (something that they really needed)."
- "The Bruiser team had a fantastic relationship with the students working to make them feel comfortable in the space."
- "Excellent energetic facilitators who handled the different group dynamics with confidence and professionalism. Adding performance at the end of the day to show how techniques are used by the professionals was very valuable."
- "All the facilitators were excellent. Full of energy and positivity! The students responded so well to the planned workshops and became increasingly confident in the ensemble as a result."

Digital Educational Resources

April 2022 - March 2023

Bruiser continued to develop their range of digital education resources on offer to post-primary schools throughout 2022/23. As of 31st March 2023, our portfolio included:

- The Bruiser Cinema Club - access to educational resources from past Bruiser productions. Selected titles include a student resource pack on the play, a podcast interview with a member of the creative/production team and archival footage to aid the study of each play.
- The Bruiser Digital Handbook - a selection of pre-recorded lectures and workshops to aid the study of Bruiser Theatre Company as a chosen practitioner, as well as a host of additional educational resources (Worksheets, lesson plans, schemes of work) on offer through three tiered packages: Excite, Engage and Inspire.

Bruiser Theatre Company

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- How To Demo Videos - a selection of videos giving students an insight into the wider roles within theatre. Each topic contains a series of educational videos on a range of areas: Set Design; Costume Design; Multimedia; Sound Design; Theatrical Make-up; and Lighting Design.

Brave & Bold - Monologue and Duologue Competition

April - May 2022

Monologue and Duologue competitions for ages 12-18. All applicants received personalised feedback and the winners received a full bursary place on the 2022 Arts Academy.

Bruiser Theatre Company

Trustees' Report

Bruiser Development Ambassadors Programme

April 2022 - March 2023

Bruiser's Young Development Ambassadors Programme engaged in analysis and discussion to generate creative ideas and help shape the future of Bruiser's educational, community engagement and professional development activities. The Bruiser Development Ambassadors Programme was developed as a method of communicating with our key stakeholders on a personal basis. We wanted to know what more we can be doing to ensure that Bruiser can continue to provide the young people of Northern Ireland with relevant, high-quality training and development programmes.

The project was open to anyone over the age of 16 - innovative and creative thinkers whose experience and understanding of the Northern Irish Arts industry had prepared them to comment on future project proposals and offer insight and suggestions for further development in the key areas of education and professional development.

Bespoke Workshops

Bruiser continued to offer bespoke workshops to schools and community groups across Northern Ireland throughout 2022-2023. Informed by our expansion into digital delivery during the Covid-19 pandemic, we continued to offer online/virtual Q&As and workshops to broaden our reach and connect with new audiences.

Facilitator Training

Bruiser continued to offer free quality training and development opportunities in all areas of our creative work. In January '23 we hosted a full day of practical training in drama facilitation, led by our Artistic Director, with the aim to increase skills, expand our own pool of facilitators and ultimately, job creation.

Operational Growth and Development

April 2022 - March 2023

- **Belfast City Council: Cultural Multi-annual Grant Scheme** - In March 2022 Bruiser was successful in securing Cultural Multi-annual Grant Arts & Heritage funding from Belfast City Council for a period of two years. Bruiser benefited from the support of this grant throughout 2022-2023.
- **JobSTART** - Committed to professional development, Bruiser successfully applied to the JobSTART Scheme, to employ and train an Arts Administration Assistant to support the delivery of our annual programme and offer an entry level opportunity to a young professional interested in a career in arts management. The part-time Arts Administration Assistant came onboard in June 2022 and worked with Bruiser for a period of six months.
- **Artwork Scheme** - In March 2022, Bruiser was awarded funding from Future Screens NI and the Department for Communities NI through the Art Work Scheme. The grant of £60,326.16 over a period of three years will be used to employ an entry level Development Officer to work across Bruiser's annual programme in 2022-2023.
- **Blueprint** - Bruiser continued to participate in Blueprint with Arts & Business NI up until the end of June 2022. Blueprint is a pioneering financial growth programme enabling small to medium- sized cultural organisations in Northern Ireland to take a more long-term approach to income generation. Blueprint is about investment in long-term growth and finding the route to greater financial security and artistic freedom. As participants of Blueprint we benefited from three full-day training sessions and bespoke mentorship support in the 2022-2023 financial year.

Bruiser Theatre Company

Trustees' Report

Structure, governance and management

Nature of governing document

Bruiser is a company limited by Guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 9th August 2011 (amended). It is registered as a charity with the Charities Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI).

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Directors are elected at the AGM by the Members present. A Director shall hold office until the next AGM following his/her appointment at which point they must retire. A retiring Director shall be eligible for re-election.

The Directors shall:

Have the power at any time and from time to time to appoint any person to be a Director to fill a casual vacancy. Any Director so appointed shall hold office only until the next following Annual General Meeting and shall then be eligible for re-election. Have the power at any time to appoint as additional Directors up to but not exceeding a number equivalent to one third of the elected Directors for the time being. Directors so appointed shall hold office only until the next following Annual General Meeting and shall then be eligible for re-appointment.

Induction and training of trustees

All newly appointed Directors meet with the Chair and Artistic Director to discuss the roles and responsibilities of a Director and also to audit specific skills and areas of interest they may be able to bring to the role, as well as any relevant areas of training they may be interested in undertaking. They are also presented with an information pack on the Company.

The Board of Directors, which has no maximum number but shall not be less than 5 Directors, administrates the charity. The board meets quarterly. An Artistic Director is appointed by the Directors to manage the day to day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations the Artistic Director has delegated authority, within the terms of delegation approved by the Directors, for operational matters including finance and employment. The Artistic Director has delegated authority for artistic performance related activity.

Financial instruments

Objectives and policies

Risk management and Internal Controls

The Board of Directors has established a system on internal controls, designed to provide reasonable, but not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss. They include:

- Regular consideration of the financial position of Bruiser by the Directors
- Ensuring at least one Director has the necessary skills to interpret and analyse Bruisers financial records and reports
- Delegation of authority and segregation of duties
- The contract of an external company to prepare financial statements

Bruiser Theatre Company

Trustees' Report

Credit risk

The charity's principal financial assets are bank balances and cash, trade and other receivables, and investments. The charity's credit risk is primarily attributable to its trade receivables. The amounts presented in the balance sheet are net of allowances for doubtful receivables. An allowance for impairment is made where there is an identified loss event which, based on previous experience, is evidence of a reduction in the recoverability of the cash flows.

The credit risk on liquid funds and derivative financial instruments is limited because the counterparties are banks with high credit-ratings assigned by international credit-rating agencies.

The charity has no significant concentration of credit risk, with exposure spread over a large number of counterparties and customers.

Liquidity risk

In order to maintain liquidity to ensure that sufficient funds are available for ongoing operations and future developments, the charity uses a mixture of long-term and short-term debt finance.

Further details regarding liquidity risk can be found in the Statement of accounting policies in the financial statements.

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 13 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Joseph Rea

.....
Mr Joseph Rea
Trustee

Bruiser Theatre Company

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Bruiser Theatre Company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the trustees of the charity on 13 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Joseph Rea
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Mr Joseph Rea
Trustee