

BRIGHT UMBRELLA DRAMA COMPANY LIMITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2024

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 May 2024.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)' (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016).

Objectives and activities

Purpose of the charity

The charity exists to advance the arts in Northern Ireland and further afield particularly through:

- The performance of plays and other dramatic works including improvised works, poetry and prose readings;
- Educational activities in respect of drama and the theatre such as theatrical performances, classes, talks and workshops in schools, colleges and other settings; and
- The involvement of the public in drama and theatrical works through enrolling them as actors, technicians and backstage crew.

Principal activities

The principal activity of the company continued to be the production of classical dramatic works, involving several mediums.

How our charity benefits the public

Our activities provide benefit to the public by:

- Providing opportunity for engagement in the arts;
- Providing opportunity for learning and training;
- Providing opportunity for employment;
- Co-operating and networking with other theatre groups in NI and beyond;
- Improving wellbeing and citizenship by dealing with the disadvantaged; and
- Working to create a more inclusive society by performing dramas that challenge concepts around racism, sexism, sectarianism and other societal issues.

Achievements and performance

The company produced a varied and exciting programme of theatre and events during the period in pursuit of its charitable aims including comedy, classical drama, new writing and work in schools.

Highlights include:

- 'The East Laffs': Our monthly comedy club continued to be highly popular and is now firmly established on the Belfast and NI comedy circuit. The event attracts a regular audience and often sells out. The standard of stand-up comedy on offer remains high but the club places emphasis on providing a stage for younger and up and coming comedians as well as established acts.
- Visiting productions: As well as producing our own shows, we received a number of visiting shows with guest companies reporting a high level of satisfaction with the facilities on offer. These included, 'Prudence and Promiscuity'; Ricky Warwick, 'In the Arms of Belfast Town', 'The Good Women', 'The Robert Herdman Hypnosis Show', 'Danny Tango', 'Monster' and a concert from local artists Anthony Toner and Ken Haddock.

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- The Macbeth Project: This Bright Umbrella production and associated workshop sessions played and at The Ardhowen Theatre, Enniskillen in August and The Sanctuary in September 2023. The production visited 14 schools from August 2023 to March 2024 including Parkhall Integrated School, Antrim; St. Killian's College, Carnlough; Antrim Grammar; St. Joseph's, Creggan, Derry; Omagh High; and Wellington College.
- One Act Festival of New Writing: In November 2023, we held our second annual two-day festival of one act plays by new writers.
- Around Christmas we presented 'Shirley Valentine' by Willie Russell. The production represented a move into more 'mainstream' theatre production and was a great success with excellent audience feedback.
- In April we presented 13 sold out performances of the newly written play, 'Stuck in the Middle with You', the tale of 5 police officers stuck in a riot in East Belfast in the 1970's. Audience feedback was outstanding and we plan to tour the show in 2025.

A number of improvements to our premises took place during the year, including the building of a new stage in the main performance area.

Lease arrangements

Our building, known as 'The Sanctuary Theatre', is leased from the Trustees of Mountpottinger Non Subscribing Presbyterian Church on a 50 year lease basis. The lease was signed on 16th November 2023.

Grant aid

We are grateful for the support of the following funders during the period:

- Belfast City Council
- FinTrU Ltd
- Future Screens NI
- The Weston Foundation
- The Foyle Foundation

Financial results

The results for the year are set out on pages 8 and 9. The company returned net incoming resources for the year of £33,656 (2023 - £4,411). At 31 May 2024 the total funds of the charity amounted to £89,278 (2023 - £55,622) comprising unrestricted income funds of £75,831 (2023 - £29,297) and restricted funds of £13,447 (2023 - £26,325).

Reserves policy and going concern

The Trustees recommend that the surplus of £33,656 be added to the total income funds brought forward. The relevant fund now has a balance of £89,278.

The Trustees consider that with the continued support of its bankers, the reserves retained by the company are sufficient for its ongoing needs.

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Plans for the future

- The continuation of the monthly 'East Laffs' comedy club.
- A monthly 'Scratch Night' where performers present theatrical 'works in progress'.
- Continuing performances of 'Macbeth' at The Sanctuary and in schools.
- A quarterly series of rehearsed readings.
- Major theatrical productions including, 'Me Oul Segocia' by Stewart Love, 'Ulster American' by David Ireland and, as our Christmas show, 'The Magician's Nephew'.
- A programme of musical events and performances from visiting artists and companies.

Taxation

The company is a charity (Charity No NIC109332) and is recognised as such by HM Revenue and Customs for taxation purposes. As a result, there is no liability to taxation on any of its income.

Structure, governance and management

Bright Umbrella Drama Company Limited continues to operate as a not-for-profit charitable organisation with Company Limited by Guarantee status. The organisation is governed by a Board of Trustees, comprising of 9 in total. The Board administers the charity and normally meets bi-monthly.

Pay and remuneration for staff is reviewed annually and remuneration is based on scope of responsibilities and market value. Comparisons are sought within the wider community sector in Northern Ireland with reference to NJC salary scales.

New Trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the committee and decision-making process, the strategic priorities and recent financial performance of the charity. They are free to discuss any issue with other current Trustees or employees. Trustees are encouraged to attend any appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. This provides an understanding of what Charity Trusteeship entails and the responsibilities and duties that go with that position. We facilitate an examination of direction, with a view to strategic sustainability and succession on a regular basis.

In May 2024 we appointed a Joint Artistic Director, Patsy Montgomery-Hughes, to work alongside our present Artistic Director and full-time volunteer, Trevor Gill.

The registered office of the company is Sanctuary Theatre, Castlereagh Street, Belfast, Co Antrim, Northern Ireland, BT5 4NE. The company registration number is NI669814.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2024

The Trustees, who are also the Directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Ms H Chesney	
Mr J Cordner	(appointed 3 January 2024)
Mr R Dane	
Mr T Gill	
Ms L Gordon	(appointed 6 September 2024)
Mr M Grimes	(appointed 13 September 2024)
Rev J Herron	(resigned 6 September 2024)
Mr S Robinson	
Ms L Shaw	(appointed 6 September 2024)
Mr G Spratt	(appointed 6 September 2024)

In addition, Mr Adrian Moir of Mountpottinger Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church (our Landlord) serves as a non-voting observer on the Trustee Board.

Appointing of Trustees

Appointment of Trustees can be effected by a decision of the existing Trustees, and termination of the role of Trustee can be effected by a Trustee submitting a written resignation or being determined no longer capable or allowed by law to continue in the role.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of our Trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a Trustee or senior manager of the charity with any related parties must be disclosed to the full board of Trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year any such related party transactions are reported in note 22 to the accounts.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also Directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing the accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principals 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 accounts; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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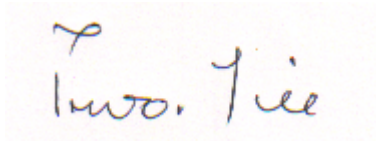
TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2024

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Statement as to disclosure to our Independent Examiners

Each of the Trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the independent examination, but of which the Independent Examiner is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the Independent Examiner is aware of such information.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Trevor Gill". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Trevor Gill
Chairperson

5 November 2024