

Summary Annual Report

→ 2013-2014



We are always inspired by Scotland's Youth Theatre sector because it is so big, there's so many groups and the quality of the work is so impressive. I've been following this for ten years and you can really see the stages and the quality is something to aspire to.



Carl Jorn Johansen of Rogaland Teater, Norway, speaking on BBC Radio Scotland Culture Café, July 2014



The Project Year 2013-2014

THE ORGANISATION

In October 2013 the organisation completed a rebrand process, which included changing our name from 'Promote YT' to 'Youth Theatre Arts Scotland' (YTAS). The new name and visual identity reflects the growth in Scotland's youth theatre sector over the past 10 years and will assist us in representing the sector better by communicating more clearly what we do: showcasing talent, nurturing potential and developing professional expertise.

In September 2013 Director/CEO Colin Bradie was seconded to Creative Scotland to assist with the implementation of the new National Youth Arts Strategy. The recognition of the skills and abilities of our CEO by the leading arts body in Scotland, and our primary funder, gives ringing endorsement to the reach and impact that the organisation has achieved. YTAS Projects Manager, Helen Bain acted up into the CEO role from September 2013.

Colin Bradie later resigned as CEO and Director of YTAS on March 31st 2014 to take on the role of Youth Arts Programme Manager at Creative Scotland. Colin is thanked for his many years of service to the organisation and the rich legacy he left behind for Scotland's youth theatre sector.

2013-14 also saw the completion of our 2011-14 Business Plan and beginning the first year of activity outlined for our *Projects Forming a Programme of Work* funding from Creative Scotland. These projects included The National Festival of Youth Theatre, Interchange, RE:LOCATION and Chrysalis.

Beyond these projects that we received funding from Creative Scotland to deliver, Youth Theatre Arts Scotland also provided additional sector development activities and services including;

- Delivery of our Youth Theatre Sector Symposium in November 2013
- Delivery of the SPARK Collective peer-to-peer training sessions in December 2013
- Administration of 2013/14 Membership Scheme for groups, individuals and associated organisations
- Administration of information services through our e-newsletter, website and social networking platforms
- Representing Scotland's youth theatre sector at numerous meetings and platforms including the Federation of Scottish Theatre, Scottish Drama Training Network and Artswork.



With Time to Shine and Creative Hubs being set up, there feels like more communication between different youth theatres and other youth arts organisations. It has felt, in part due to events organised by YTAS and Creative Scotland, that the discussion around this has opened up more potential partnerships and also raised awareness of other organisations work.

Youth Theatre Organisation



THE SECTOR

Our annual Sector Review highlighted the strength and engagement of our network, with 43 youth theatre organisations and 17 freelancers responding to the survey. This year we conducted two separate surveys to capture the unique perspectives of these groups on current youth theatre practice across Scotland.

The youth theatres told us their work takes place across all 32 local authorities engaging 23,000 young people each week. Their participants are 35/65 male-to-female with 27% coming from areas of multiple deprivation and 12% that have additional learning requirements. A fifth of the youth theatres' delivery is free to participants with a further three-fifths costing less than £5 a week. The majority of groups also provide financial support or bursary.

The majority of groups consulted their young people more than three times a year; predominantly through evaluation over creative and planning decisions. Nearly all groups reported having participants go onto study in the creative industries via Further or Higher Education in the last year, totalling 171 in Scotland and 31 beyond. There was also an increase in youth theatres touring work and engaging in international projects and the majority also saw an increase in audiences for their work.

Participation fees remained the principal income of groups followed by box office, local authority, grants, trusts and foundations support. The majority 60% of youth theatres described their financial status as 'acceptable' over 20% 'secure' and 20% 'precarious'.

Half of the freelancers that responded to the survey were under 30 years old with a fifth in their 30s and a fifth in their 40s. Nearly all have higher education level qualifications and had engaged in professional development training in the last year.

For three quarters of the freelancers, youth theatre work was not their primary source of income and paid an average rate of £24/hour, including planning time. They found work via Creative Scotland's opportunities site, word-of-mouth, via our monthly newsletter and by employers contacting them directly. Over half didn't actively market themselves but only a fifth had seen their amount of work decrease, with all the others reporting their level of work staying the same or increasing over the past year.

SECTOR AND YOUTH SYMPOSIUM

In 2013 we held our first joint Sector Symposium and Youth Symposium at Scottish Youth Theatre in Glasgow. 75 professionals and 25 young people came together to discuss the challenges and opportunities for youth theatre across Scotland.

As well as hearing about Youth Theatre Arts Scotland's new identity and plans for 2014 the sector also welcomed a presentation on 'Time to Shine' the National Youth Arts Strategy by Creative Scotland and the objectives set out for the nation. Together the sector recognised the profile and opportunities that would arise from this new strategy, along with the research and investment that will inform future planning.

The Youth Symposium was led by Youth Theatre Arts Scotland with Scottish Youth Theatre and the Scottish Drama Training Network. Youth delegates had a chance to hear about what 'Time to Shine' meant for them as well as finding out more about training pathways through Further and Higher Education. Finally they joined the professional delegates to feedback to the breakout group discussions and to share their comments and questions on the year ahead.



An amazing journey which I shared with great pleasure with so many different and unique people. An experience I will never forget.

RE:LOCATION 2014 Participant.



THE PROJECTS

NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF YOUTH THEATRE

The National Festival of Youth Theatre (NFYT) 2013 took place from 5-8 July 2013 at Rothes Halls, Glenrothes and Falkland Estate, Fife. Event partners and funders included ON at Fife, the Kingdom Shopping Centre, the Fife Strategic Events Investment Programme, the Birkdale Trust for Hearing Impaired, the Turtleton Trust and Shell UK Ltd. The festival was opened by the Provost of Fife, Jim Leishman and gained press coverage in Scotland on Sunday, Fife Free Press, Central Fife Times and the Glenrothes Gazette.

The event welcomed 517 festival participants, including 13 Scottish youth theatre groups representing 11 Local Authority areas, 2 Non-Scottish youth theatre groups (representing Ireland and France), 108 Fife schools outreach participants (representing 4 Fife High Schools), 22 temporary festival staff and 7 volunteers.

New for NFYT in 2013 was the Young Critics programme facilitated by Scottish theatre critic Gareth K. Vile and designed to develop our young people's capacity as creative thinkers, NFYT Scratch was a performance-creation opportunity facilitated by recent graduates of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, the NFYT Amigos volunteer scheme allowed senior youth theatre members and past festival participants to join our staff team to gain valuable leadership experience, and the NFYT Group Leaders' workshop programme which offered them the chance to develop skills and network.

For the third consecutive year, NFYT welcomed Glasgow's Deaf Youth Theatre and assured the festival was completely deaf accessible by providing full deaf awareness training for all festival staff, an introduction to deaf awareness for all festival participants, British Sign Language interpretation of 12 performances and communication support workers to assist in artistic workshops.

Feedback for the event was very positive, highlighting how the event objectives were being met. For example 88% of leaders said the festival plays a vital role in promoting access and the diversity of participants and 64% of young people said that being a part of the festival helped them move towards a career in theatre / performance.



RE:LOCATION 2014

The development strategy for RE:LOCATION was revised to run in conjunction with the NFYT at Rothes Halls, Fife, as opposed to its planned original location of St. Andrews. The decision to move the project location was taken for a variety of strategic reasons. It provides the opportunity to reduce the overall project cost by making use of the existing NFYT infrastructure (i.e. accommodation and venue). It will showcase the RE:LOCATION performance to a large existing peer audience of NFYT participants; as well as showcasing the wider RE:LOCATION project to youth theatre groups attending NFYT and inspire them to become involved in similar exchange and performance projects. RE:LOCATION's international artists can deliver workshops for both young people and youth theatre group leaders as part of NFYT and the international participants will receive a richer creative and festival experience by attending NFYT.

The international partners involved in the project were; Scotland - The Mitchell School of Drama, Inverurie, Norway – The Rogaland Teater, Stavanger, Denmark – Filuren, Aarhus, Sweden – Västerås Kulturskola, Västerås, France – Le Grand Bleu, Lille, Germany – Junge Akteure, Bremen, Ireland – Kildare Youth Theatre, Co. Kildare. Artistic facilitation team currently includes; Director – Nathalie Forstman, Germany, Assistant Director – Morna McGeoch, Scotland, Dramaturg – Carl Jørn Johansen, Norway, Creative Co-ordinator – Claire Bloomfield, Scotland. Project partners and funders include ON with Fife Cultural Trust, The National Theatre of Scotland, the European Union's Youth in Action fund and Fife Council.

An Advanced Planning Visit was scheduled from 31 March – 2 April 2014 in Kirkcaldy, Fife, to introduce international partners and gain detailed understanding of what the project involves, to explore the project's theme and reflect on the artistic methods and to establish working guidelines and rules for the project.

INTERCHANGE

Youth Theatre Arts Scotland's professional development conference, renamed 'Interchange', took place on 21-23 March 2014 at The Lemon Tree, Aberdeen. Event partners and funders included Aberdeen Performing Arts, North East Scotland College and Aberdeen City Council. The event welcomed 104 delegates, including 57 from arts organisations in Scotland, 10 Scottish freelancers, 9 delegates from arts organisations out with Scotland (4 out with the UK), 8 facilitators, 19 young performers from the Tron Young Co. and Aberdeen Performing Arts Youth Theatre, and 1 marketing intern from Napier University.

The artistic facilitation team at Interchange included Professor Jonathan Neelands – University of Warwick, Paul Gorman – Freelance Theatre Maker and Arts Practitioner, Julia Samuels and Bradley Thompson – 20 Stories High (Liverpool), Thomas Small – Smallpetitklein, Robert Softley Gale – Birds of Paradise Theatre Co, Helen Cadbury – Artsworld (England) and Lesley Wood – Artsworld (England).

New for Interchange in 2014 were keynote speeches by Colin Bradie, Youth Arts Programme Manager, Creative Scotland and Jonathan Neelands, Professor of Creative Education, University of Warwick, a Civic Reception hosted by the Lord Provost of Aberdeen, and a pilot 'Chrysalis @ Interchange' event to explore the development of this platform with sector input.



CHRYSALIS

This 'research and development' phase of the Chrysalis project at Interchange included the first meeting of the Chrysalis Programming Consortium to test the structure and purpose of the group and two performances of 'Subject to Change' by the Tron Young Co. and 'Grey Matter' by Aberdeen Performing Arts Youth Theatre. These were examples of work, which demonstrated an innovative approach and high-quality production, and were used as stimulus for the Consortium and panel discussion. The discussion and an evaluation process allowed delegates and key stakeholders in Scotland's youth theatre sector to help shape the development of Chrysalis and gather evidence of support for future funding.

The development strategy for Chrysalis evolved considerably since 2013. Through our initial work to develop a strategic plan for Chrysalis, we realised the project could be much more significant for Scotland's youth theatre sector than we had originally anticipated. Rather than simply providing a new performance platform to showcase emerging talent and develop new audiences, we came to understand that Chrysalis has the potential to bring about a significant culture change within the wider theatre sector.

One of our organisational aims is to establish youth theatre as a valid art form within the wider theatre landscape. In order to achieve this, we understand the need to develop audiences and engage theatre critics with the work and contribution of youth theatre arts to the wider sector. This will require a culture change and a shift in perceptions of what youth theatre is and can be. It is our ambition to guide our sector through this process of culture change and we know that this will take time. In order to do this effectively, we have decided to dedicate more time to researching and developing Chrysalis in order to ensure the best possible outcome. The impact of these developments has resulted in a revised project plan with the inaugural event now planned for Autumn 2015.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Youth Theatre Arts Scotland's record of financial management over the past 9 years has been excellent with considerable impact achieved with modest resources. We have set and delivered balanced budgets, attracted significant external funding from a range of sources and gradually developed reserves in line with our board's Reserves Policy.

In 2013/14 Youth Theatre Arts Scotland generated £202,000 income. This was made up of 48% support from Creative Scotland, 35% from Grants, Trusts, Foundations, Sponsorship and In-kind support and 17% Earned Income from our projects and services.

In 2013/14 we expended £189,000 with 29% going directly on the delivery of our Youth Theatre Projects and Services, and 9% directly on the delivery of sector Training and Professional Development. The remaining expenditure covered our core sector development role, activities, overheads and non-project costs.

Contact details

Youth Theatre Arts Scotland
Out of the Blue
36 Dalmeny Street
Edinburgh EH6 8RG
0131 538 0591
www.ytas.org.uk
info@ytas.org.uk

Patron: Sam Heughan
Youth Theatre Arts Scotland is a registered
Scottish charity No. SC 035765.

Acknowledgements



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Youth Theatre Arts Scotland additionally acknowledges the following partners and funders for their support over the project year 2013 – 2014:

Shell UK Ltd, Kingdom Shopping Centre, Rogaland Teater (Norway), Festival City Theatres Trust, West Lothian Council, Cashback for Creativity, Call to Create 2015, The Educational Institute of Scotland, Fife Strategic Events Investment Programme, The Mary Leishman Foundation, The Souter Charitable Trust, The Sylvia Waddilove Foundation, British Council: Youth in Action.