

## Annual Report 2015-2016



**“I think the work YTAS does is SO crucial and there’s no doubt in my mind that as a sector, we would be far less connected, ambitious and resilient without YTAS and its dedicated team” – YTAS member**



Youth Theatre Arts Scotland continued to lead, support and develop a dynamic youth theatre sector throughout 2015-16. The company and its projects both showed healthy signs of growth and development throughout the year in response to the needs of Scotland’s young theatre makers and the professionals who work with them. New CEO Kenny McGlashan completed his first year in post during Summer 2015, steering the organisation into the first year of its new YTAS Business Plan and regular funding from Creative Scotland.

### OUR MISSION

Transforming lives through youth theatre by developing inspiring participatory opportunities for young people, and connecting, supporting and training the professionals who work with them.

### OUR VISION

That youth theatre in Scotland is the creative crucible where young people choose to come together and prepare for a positive future.



## OUR VALUES

- **Intelligence and Support** - The young people and professionals we support are a connected and reflective community. We advocate for their collective knowledge to assure the greatest impact in the work we do together.
- **Access and Participation** - We are passionate about sharing the work of our organisation and our community. We strive to find new and exciting ways to let people in and deepen their engagement.
- **Collaboration for Development** - We support a multi-age, multi-arts network from across Scotland; made up of young people and professionals engaging in multiple levels of provision and development together. Our motivation and talents grow from working together and sharing our achievements.
- **Excellence and Experimentation** - We celebrate and encourage ambition, innovation and progression, taking responsibility for improving pathways through our sector and striving for quality in all that we do.

## OUR OBJECTIVES AND OUTPUTS

- Through **Information and Advocacy** we will support Scotland's youth theatre arts sector by providing membership support, networking and information opportunities, targeted impact and capacity building services and a variety of research, resources and digital platforms.
- Through **Youth Theatre Arts Projects and Services** we will deliver and develop our national partnership projects and establish new youth engagement and audience development initiatives for the sector.
- Through **Training and Professional Development** we will support regional development, establish national progression and quality frameworks and evolve our national training projects.
- We will target **Developmental Sustainability** for the organisation and network by growing and improving our income streams and fundraising potential, assuring we have efficient resources and processes to achieve impact, and addressing the sector's local, cultural, financial and ecological responsibilities.



## THE COMPANY

YTAS received a positive first Annual RFO Feedback Letter from Creative Scotland in December 2015, based on its first six months of activity. Creative Scotland assessed YTAS progress as 'on plan' across all areas, and that our Funding Agreement was a 'low' level of risk. As part of its RFO responsibilities with Creative Scotland, YTAS also established a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Action Plan and an Environmental Policy and Action Plan.

In recognition of its commitment to key areas of employment, YTAS also received a Good Practice Award from Investors in Young People during 2015-16 and was also accredited as a Living Wage employer by The Living Wage Foundation and Poverty Alliance.

Partnership working became an increasingly important aspect of YTAS role in 2015-16 as the company set out longer-term plans for its development activity. The CEO established number of regular and strategic relationships with regional, national and international agencies. YTAS looks forward to continuing to develop cross-sectoral initiatives with these organisations, and many others, in the years ahead which benefit the company and wider youth theatre sector in Scotland.

YTAS Patron, actor Sam Heughan, continued to be an important advocate for YTAS work - assisting with promotions around the new Chrysalis festival and galvanizing fan groups to support the organisation and the benefits it brings to young theatre makers across Scotland. YTAS Board would like to say a special thanks to Sam and his fans for their incredibly generous time and support.

## YTAS TEAM

The small core team continued to work well in YTAS administration office in Summerhall. The success of significant new projects in 2015, such as Chrysalis and Young Arts Leaders, alongside a new CEO, new Business Plan, new office and maintaining YTAS other year-round events and services, is a ringing endorsement of the team's commitment to the sector.

During 2015-16 the core staff team consisted of:

- Kenny McGlashan – CEO (full time)
- Helen Bain – General Manager (part time)
- Clara Bloomfield – Training and Engagement Manager (part time)
- James Coutts – Communications & Marketing Manager (part time)
- Abigail Harte – Projects Co-ordinator (part time)

As well as these permanent posts YTAS managed a number of fixed term contracts to support the delivery and development of its events and services. These contracts included YTAS Bookkeeper since 2013, Karen Calliaud (of Keeping Account), NFYT 'Amigos' Volunteer Coordinator, Amy Watt, and Research Expert, Ruth Stevenson, (of Ruthless Research).



During 2015-16 the company supported a series of placements and internships with the core team:

- Stephanie Seeley was YTAG Digital Projects Assistant supported by Third Sector Internships Scotland. Upon completion of her internship, YTAG offered Stephanie a fixed term contract to support the National Festival of Youth Theatre marketing and following her work with YTAG went on to secure a full-time job.
- Viviane Hullin was the Chrysalis Festival Producer supported by a Federation of Scottish Theatre bursary. Viviane took on additional administration and marketing contracts for YTAG and following the completion of her Producer bursary, Viviane secured a full-time General Manager job with Fire Exit theatre company.
- Anastasia Cavina was YTAG Projects Assistant on placement from Queen Margaret University's MA in Arts, Festival and Cultural Management. Anastasia helped the team to forward plan the move of NFYT in 2017 and carried out a feasibility study on YTAG training and professional development activities.
- Clare McVey was a Volunteer Marketing Intern with YTAG who joined the team to learn from and support YTAG marketing and comms activities. Clare went on to secure a full-time job following her time with the company.

The CEO and General Manager prioritised updating all the staff policies and Company Handbook throughout the year ready for sign off in 2016-17.

## THE SECTOR

In 2015 YTAG conducted more comprehensive Sector Mapping research than the scope of its normal annual Sector Review. YTAG wanted to capture a broader picture of youth theatre activity in Scotland as well as confirming the progress that had been made by the company since 2002, when similar research was commissioned by Creative Scotland (Scottish Arts Council at the time) and led to the formation of YTAG in 2004. The full Sector Mapping report was published on YTAG website.

The data from the Sector Mapping survey was compiled into a new database that YTAG will continue to update moving forward. The map and data gathered on YT groups in Scotland provides YTAG with much more comprehensive information to grow and develop the sector in the years ahead with key stakeholders.





In total the Sector Mapping recorded 341 youth theatre venues operating across the country in 2015, managed by 265 organisations.

- 28,500 young people are involved in youth theatre each year with 59% attending on a weekly basis.
- 1800 people currently work in youth theatre, 50% are staff and 50% are volunteers.

These figures are based on the 215 venues that responded to YTAS Sector Mapping survey. A further 126 venues were partially entered into YTAS database as known but non-responding groups. As a result, we can estimate that figures outlined above could be increased by a further 45% to account for all known groups.

The data also captured a picture of what typical youth theatre activity looks like across the Scotland in 2015:

- Participants are 66% female and 34% male.
- The majority of activities are provided for school-aged children, although a fifth of groups deliver activities with early years children (0-4) and a third of groups deliver activities with young adults (19-25).
- The majority of sessions are delivered for a fee of under £5 to participants but a third of YT venues provide them for free. In addition to this a quarter of YT venues offer participants financial support.
- The most common focus of group activities was 'scripted work' and 'devising'. A fifth of respondent's main focus was musical theatre. Improvisation and physical theatre were other popular areas.

The financial data from groups highlighted how self-supporting youth theatre in Scotland is, with the top three 'most often stated' sources of income coming from participation fees, box office and fundraising events. Funding for youth theatre groups followed on afterwards coming from local authorities, grants and trust funds, donations and Creative Scotland. However, the second most frequently stated 'main' source of income for almost a quarter of respondents was from their local authority.

There are other interesting comparisons in the Sector Mapping report and database. By reviewing the percentage of youth theatre venues, participants and YTAS members compared to the local youth population in each area it can provide a much richer insight into regional trends than ever before. This will inform YTAS approach to regional development and strategic partnerships in the years to come.



## MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

Following the completion of the Sector Mapping research YTAS went on to conduct a review of its Membership Scheme with past, present and potential members. This was designed to inform planned developments to the Scheme in 2016 and more broadly to YTAS' role, activities and services on behalf of the sector.

The Membership Review identified the most 'useful', 'satisfactory' and 'influential' elements of YTAS' current membership scheme were 'application / project opportunities' and 'discounted training events'. The highest rated potential new elements were 'a CPD bursary', 'a catalogue of scripts', 'listing funders' and 'a directory of expertise'.

The Review also captured the different roles that YTAS members said the company plays on behalf of the sector: 'Umbrella', 'Curator', 'Thought Leader', 'Trusted friend', 'Link', 'Promoter', 'Informer', 'Resource' and 'Expeditor'. YTAS will use this as a guide to inform its new Membership Scheme, developments to YTAS' marketing and comms and developments to YTAS' training and professional development activities in the years ahead.

## SECTOR AND YOUTH SYMPOSIUM

YTAS fifth annual Youth and Sector Symposium was held in the Festival Theatre Studio on 6 November 2015 before the launch of Chrysalis.

The theme of this year's Symposium was 'Challenging Perceptions of Youth Theatre'. The day included a keynote speech by Manchester's Contact Young Company, a panel discussion, breakout focus groups and sector Shout-Outs, all designed to evolve and inspire a united sector. The 'Youth Symposium' pathway at the event supported young people to share their opinions through participatory workshops. YTAS gratefully acknowledges support from Creative Scotland and the Festival Theatre in delivering the Sector and Youth Symposium 2015.





## NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF YOUTH THEATRE 2015



**"This festival changes lives and sews the seeds for social transformation that has ripples long after the weekend itself."** - NFYT 2015 Leader



In July 15 groups, 159 young people and 38 leaders all joined us at Rothes Halls and Falkland Estate to be part of NFYT 2015. A further 100 young people also took part in the outreach project with Fife Schools and Community Learning and Development groups.

The participating groups at NFYT 2015 included:

- Aberdeen Performing Arts Youth Theatre (Aberdeen)
- Argyll Youth Arts Hub (Argyll and Bute)
- Caithness Young Company (Highlands)
- Cumbernauld Youth Theatre (North Lanarkshire)
- Firefly Arts (West Lothian)
- Kildare Youth Theatre (Republic of Ireland)
- Lab Station, Platform (Glasgow)
- Nairn Youth Theatre (Eden Court Creative)
- Perth Youth Theatre (Perth and Kinross)
- Ryan Youth Theatre (Dumfries and Galloway)
- Scratch the Surface (East Lothian)
- Shazam Act (Aberdeen)
- Shell Engage Outreach Company (Fife)
- Tea PaP (Sweden)
- Toonspeak Young Peoples Theatre (Glasgow)

Developments to the event in 2015 included; a new campsite 'marquee' venue, a new volunteer coordinator role, targeted outreach with Fife Community Learning and Development groups, a new 'Scratch' collaboration programme, Critical Response Process sessions after the shows and hosting an NFYT Open Day for key stakeholders.

When asked about the impact of NFYT 2015, 89% of young people said it 'made them feel more confident' and 'made them want to take part in more theatre', 81% said it 'helped them to better understand what it means to live and work together'.



**"NFYT 2015 was a fantastic experience and showed me a wide variety of styles from groups across the country and beyond. I also feel more connected with my youth group and definitely have friendships for life!"**  
- NFYT 2015 Participant



YTAS gratefully acknowledges support from Creative Scotland, Shell, Fife Cultural Trust, Falkland Centre for Stewardship, the Kingdom Shopping Centre and Moffat Charitable Trust in delivering NFYT 2015.



## YOUNG ARTS LEADERS



**“I applied for this programme just hoping to meet like-minded young people and potentially spark an idea for how to engage with young people interested in making theatre in Ayrshire. I have left with many professional connections, friends, a support network, the ability to speak up for what I believe in, the confidence to follow my dreams and my own brand new company”** – Colleen Garrett, Young Arts Leader 2015



Throughout 2015-16, YTAS delivered the Young Arts Leaders programme. This innovative project offered a new pathway for Scotland’s aspiring young arts leaders to realise and harness their potential within their own communities. Funding for the programme was awarded from CashBack for Creativity, which is part of the Scottish Government’s CashBack for Communities redistribution of the proceeds of crime, with funds managed by Creative Scotland.

The project supported a small group of young people to design targeted projects for young people in their area. The seven selected young Scots developed their knowledge, confidence and ability by undertaking high quality training that increased their creative, advocacy and engagement skills. The Young Arts Leaders progress was recognised through formal and informal processes; including accredited awards and sharing best practice with peers and professionals.







The seven young Young Arts Leaders were supported throughout the programme in a mentoring role by experienced arts professionals to create and deliver their own innovative regional projects:

- Chris Patrick (23) from Inverclyde worked in partnership with the Beacon Arts Centre to establish a new training platform for young and emerging writers from Inverclyde.
- Colleen Garrett (23) from North Ayrshire worked in partnership with Largs Youth Theatre and the Ayrshire Youth Arts Network to establish a new young company in North Ayrshire that addressed a gap in provision for 16-25 year olds.
- Fraser Morrison (18) from North Lanarkshire worked in partnership with Stirling Council & Kippen Primary School to develop a creative project that helped primary schools address challenging, contemporary issues around internet safety.
- Josh Ford (16) from Fife worked in partnership with Blue Parrot, the Scottish Drama Training Network and Fife Youth Arts Hub to establish a new platform in Fife for young people interested in Technical Theatre to help them gain experience and access training and the industry.
- Kirsty McKay (19) from Perth and Kinross worked in partnership with Horsecross Arts to explore new approaches to making intergenerational theatre with young people
- Rosie Reilly (16) from the Scottish Borders worked in partnership with Scottish Borders Council and Interest LINK Borders to establish a new dance group for disabled young people in the Borders.
- Stephanie Boyle (24) worked in partnership with Glasgow Youth Arts Hub to develop a series of events for emerging artists who felt 'in limbo' after their training to help them network together.

YTAS gratefully acknowledges support from the countless partners and professionals who supported the project and Young Leaders during the 14-month project.

## **SCOTTISH DRAMA TRAINING NETWORK - GRADUATE TRAINING PROGRAMME**

In June and July 2015, YTAS was delivered sessions as part of the Scottish Drama Training Network's Graduate Training Programme in Ayr, Aberdeen and Dundee. The week-long masterclasses link recent FE graduates with leading industry professionals and organisations at a key stage in the career development. YTAS unpacked the skills, experience and benefits of working in youth and participatory settings, sharing recent developments in youth arts, and identifying key people, organisations and events to help develop their graduate careers.



## CHRYSALIS 2015



**“Scotland's newest theatre festival is changing the face of youth performance. Combining the vitality of innovative youth performance with the polished production of the professional theatre, Chrysalis promises to be a landmark showcase of the British theatre's most promising new artists.” – The List 2015**



Chrysalis is a brand new mini-festival delivered in partnership with the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh. It addresses a gap in high-profile performance platforms in Scotland that champion creative work by young emerging artists. It aims to raise the aspirations of young theatre-makers, positively enhance the public perception of creative work by young people, attract new public audiences to youth theatre arts, and stimulate critical discussion around artistic excellence and quality in performance by young theatre-makers.

At the end of the performance selection and viewing process in June, the Chrysalis (programming) Consortium only felt that two of the shortlisted pieces had met the selection criteria and festival aims. The two pieces were *Southside Stories* by the Citizens Young Company (Glasgow) and *Headz* by Twenty Stories High (Liverpool).

The Consortium asked the CEO and Chrysalis Producer to invite two additional pieces alongside these selected works based on the unique aims and ambitions of the festival. The Contact Young Company (Manchester) were invited to bring their critically acclaimed production of *Under the Covers* and Junction 25 (Glasgow) were invited to restage their production of *Rather Humble than Hero*, in recognition of their significant CATS award (Critics' Awards for Theatre in Scotland) achievement earlier in the year.

The first full Chrysalis festival was piloted in November 2015 and the team were proud with how well the first event ran. The following evidence demonstrates the impact of Chrysalis in its inaugural year:

- Media coverage included features on Scottish Television, and articles in The List, The Skinny, The Guardian and The Scotsman.
- Overall sales of 77% of capacity, with Traverse 2 sold out.
- In our post-event audience evaluation 81% of responders agreed that Chrysalis 'positively enhances public perception of creative work by young people'. 84% agreed that Chrysalis 'inspires and raises aspirations of young people' involved in theatre and performance.
- The Traverse Theatre said "The Chrysalis festival has established a new level of ambition and momentum for young theatre-makers. As part of our commitment to new work and new talent the Traverse recognises how vital this event is for the future."



**“If YTAS's goal with this festival is to open new audiences to the work of young companies, and in turn to open these young companies to new audiences, it's hard to see how these four shows could fail to impress, to spark discussion, or simply to entertain.”** – The Skinny, 2015



Simon Hart (of Puppet Animation Festival and Manipulate Festival) and Tony Reekie (previously of Imagine) volunteered to peer review the event for YTAS. Their experience, insight and support was greatly appreciated and informed the debrief and forward planning with the YTAS team and Consortium. Priorities identified for Chrysalis in the years ahead include:

- Securing funding and sponsorship to ensure the event model is sustainable and that essential Producer and Marketing budgets can be maintained.
- Refining the Consortium programming processes.
- Establishing a new access programme which supports companies to showcase their work in development alongside the four selected festival productions.
- Developing the surrounding events programme including; young critics opportunities, networking and social events for young theatre makers and audiences, developing links with YTAS Sector Symposium, developing ways to maintain engagement with the companies selected at Chrysalis.
- Forward planning the potential growth and development of the festival.
- Developing ideas for earlier promotion of festival and continuing to target influential VIPs at the festival and launch.

YTAS gratefully acknowledges the support of Creative Scotland, Traverse Theatre, Federation of Scottish Theatre, Turtleton Trust and Call to Create in delivering Chrysalis 2015.



**“A vital, risk-taking festival. There was so much energy and the work was very exciting. It also shed a light on the emerging history and current shape of contemporary youth theatre.”** – Chrysalis 2015 audience member





## TEENEXTERS

In November, YTAS offered four aspiring young theatre-makers and critics the opportunity to travel to France to take part in TeeNEXTers. This annual international youth exchange project uses artistic collaboration to enhance young people's ability to express their opinions and is designed to develop new creative and critical skills.

TeeNEXTers was hosted by YTAS long-term international partners Le Grand Bleu, a children's and young people's theatre in Lille. TeeNEXTers was linked to the regional cross-border performing arts festival 'NEXT' offering young people from Scotland, Ireland, France, Belgium and Spain the chance to discover and respond to innovative and avant-garde performance. The four participants, who represented YTAS member organisations, were:

- Dominic Gallo                      Collision (Fife)
- Callum Bell                         Toonspeak (Glasgow)
- Rachael Keiller                    Tron Young Company (Glasgow)
- Libby Taylor                        APA Youth Theatre (Aberdeen)

As well as attending performances at the NEXT festival, the mixed-nationality group of TeeNEXTers participated in critical workshops led by professional international artists. Using writing, sound, video and movement the participants explored their ideas and feelings about the shows and created critiques, reviews or responses to them. The participants experience was shared via YTAS social media channels and news item.





## INTERCHANGE 2016



**"93% of delegates said they would attend Interchange again and the event was 'relevant to their professional practice', provided 'value for money training and networking' and was 'important to the advancement of Scotland's youth theatre sector'."**



Interchange took place at the Beacon Arts Centre in Greenock on the 12-13th March 2016. 73 delegates attended, including 13 bursary places. The weekend masterclasses at Interchange included:

- Mentoring the Next Creative Generation by Helen Le Brocq from Artsworld (England)
- Creating socially conscious theatre with and for young people by Ava Hunt from Hull Truck Theatre and Shared Experience.
- Child's play – approaches to devising performances for and with children and young people – by Matt Addicott from the Platform.
- Risky business – safely investing 'ourselves' in performance by Nathaniel Hall from 20 Stories High and Contact
- Just don't call it dance! by Gail Sneddon the Dance Development Officer for Inverclyde
- Directing is directing is directing by Andy MacGreggor from Largs Youth Theatre, Beacon Youth Theatre and Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

The Saturday evening included a series of youth theatre performances by Beacon Youth Theatre and a Q&A discussion with practitioners around the practice and context of their work. This was followed by a networking and social event with live music provided by local young musicians through the Inverclyde Place Partnership.

The atmosphere and feedback at the event remained as strong as ever:

- 95% of delegates rated the content of the sessions, the experience of the facilitators and quality of the workshops as either 'good' or 'excellent'.
- 83% said the continuation of the annual event was 'vital'.

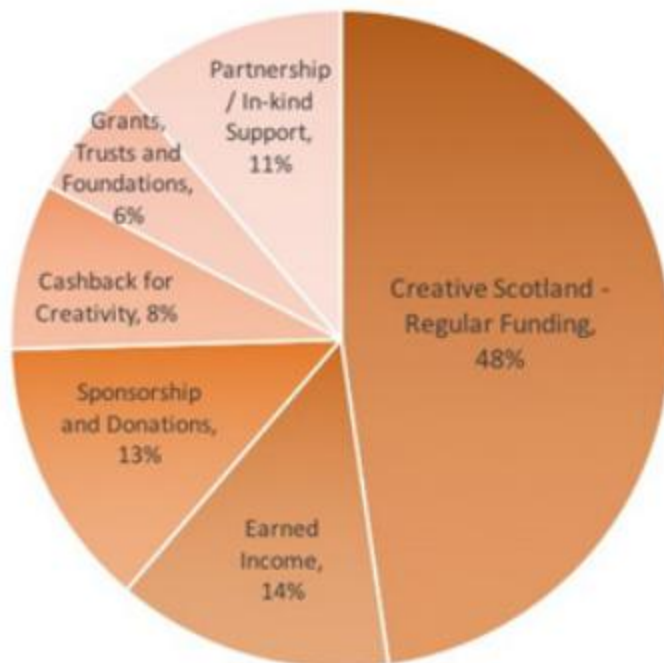
YTAS gratefully acknowledges support from Creative Scotland, The Beacon Arts Centre and Inverclyde Council in delivering Interchange 2016.



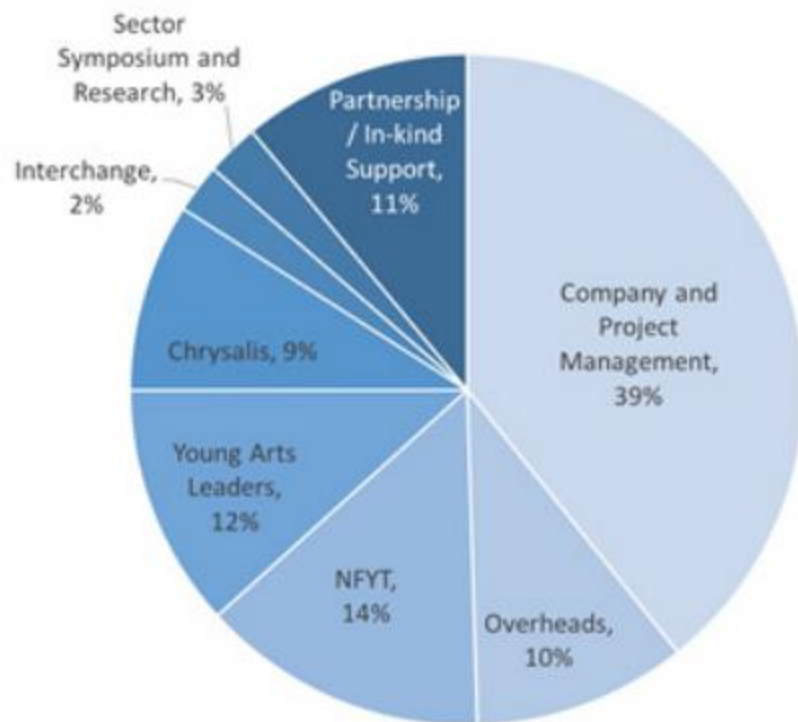
## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

YTAS record of financial management over the past 12 years has been excellent; setting and delivering balanced budgets, attracting significant external funding from a range of sources and gradually developing prudent reserves. A detailed breakdown of YTAS 2015-16 Annual Accounts is available for review from Companies House.

In 2015/16 Youth Theatre Arts Scotland generated **£292,822 income**



In 2015/16 Youth Theatre Arts Scotland expended **£299,501**



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