

the play's
the thing



business plan 2020-2023

“Shobu Kapoor gave a masterclass in storytelling. Superb”

Audience Member

THE GREAT ESCAPE by Shobu Kapoor

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The Great Escape (Photo: Jane Russell)



The business plan contains

- 1 An assessment of the current state of the organisation
- 2 Clarification about the organisations role and aims
- 3 An ambitious, co-ordinated programme of development for the next 3 years

Purpose

The Business Plan aims to provide:

- 1 Agreed criteria and an overall direction for decision-making by the board and lead team
- 2 Guidance and objectives for everyone involved in developing The Play's The Thing's reach, impact, and sustainability
- 3 Information and opportunities for partner organisations and funders to engage with The Play's The Thing

“Predictably, The Play’s The Thing continue to show what they are exceptionally good at – producing high quality productions of relevant and classic plays .”

Female Arts ★★★★★

ENTERTAINING MR SLOANE by Joe Orton

Executive Summary

The Play’s The Thing is at a pivotal point in its development as an organisation.

The Play’s The Thing (PtT), is a successful professional theatre company based in Milton Keynes. We have an excellent reputation within our region, and we also run Pepper’s Ghost, which is an inclusive community theatre company. PtT is held as an example of excellence by MK Community Foundation and MK Council’s Arts Service. As a result of our lobbying, the producing house model was included in the future arts strategy for Milton Keynes – and this ambition is a key part of our current developmental plans.

Further to this, we have a commitment to sector development. We will seek to continue providing events, forums and platforms to explore issues of importance for the sector and stimulate and facilitate dialogue and knowledge exchange. We champion the role of the arts in supporting a cohesive and healthy society.

Entertaining Mr Sloane (Photo: Simon Raynor)



This plan outlines our ambition to deepen our role within our home community, extend cultural opportunities to all, and to develop our role within the national arts ecology. Through innovation in creation, and building networks and partnerships, we seek to establish a producing model that can invest in artists, create work across platforms (not just the stage) and tour work and engagement activity to the regions across the UK.

We can only achieve this plan through the hard work and aspirations of our core team and associates and through a commitment to diversity and inclusion that will always promote cultural opportunity for all. This plan puts organisational development as one of its cornerstones to delivery, and we will focus on building a meaningful, impactful, and forward-thinking sustainability plan to ensure the company can meet the needs of its activities. This will in turn enable and drive change.

“Great discussion. Inspired. I enjoyed hearing more about the creative process. I valued the discussion on how to deal with rejection. How this may be seen as recognition of complex work. For me ultimately it is to find a language to give expression and meaning to experiences.”

Comment on Mental Health Panel

TAKING THE STAGE

The Play’s The Thing Theatre Company

PtT is led by Rosemary Hill - an experienced theatre & film director, actor, teacher and former BBC producer and director. She has served on the theatre committee for MK Theatre, the Board for Stantonbury Arts and Leisure Trust and is a founding member of Grid Arts.

We are a professional theatre company in Milton Keynes committing to producing thought provoking and exciting theatre and providing cultural opportunity for all – both within our own community and further afield.

Our work often deals with difficult subjects. Our belief is that it is the theatre that gives us time to think about, discuss, understand, and perhaps make some sense of the darker aspects of human existence and experience. This can be achieved in many ways and it is often through comedy and dark humour that we can find coping mechanisms. As well as providing Milton Keynes with excellent theatre experiences, the company also tours.

Photo: Jane Russell



We are also seriously committed to training, community engagement, professional and artist development and education. We run regular workshops, master classes and acting courses which are open to professional and non professional actors. We offer training for business people using role play, forum theatre, voice coaching and creative thinking. We also plan and facilitate bespoke corporate training days, or we can provide actors for role play for events already planned. Our education department provides sessions for GCSE, A Level and the International Baccalaureate on set texts and key practitioners such as Stanislavski, Brecht, Grotowski, Artaud and Boal. We also provide sessions on Theatre of the Absurd, Commedia dell’Arte and devising new work.

“Shocking statistics! Men need to realise and women need to believe.”

Comment on Gender Pay Panel

TAKING THE STAGE

How Did We Get Here?

The company was established in 2008 as a response to the then Milton Keynes Arts Strategy. There was no professional company at the time in Milton Keynes which specialised in serious and straight drama – that is classical works from the canon and cutting-edge new work from up and coming writers.

Over the last few years, it has been successful in gaining momentum and traction in the wider funded arts sector.

In 2016, PtT was a founding partner of Grid Arts – a multi-disciplinary arts collective dedicated to bringing together professional artists and local communities together through creative projects.

In 2017, PtT secured Arts Council England funding to produce ‘Austerity’ by Mike Elliston. This brought together artists and community participants to research, develop, and stage a new play that explored the issues of austerity from an historical and contemporary perspective. This production was staged in partnership with MK Library.

In 2018, PtT delivered, with the support of the National Lottery, Arts Council, and other partners, ‘Shoulder to Shoulder’. This brought together community and arts organisations to deliver 5 inclusive creative theatre projects across Northamptonshire, MK, and Oxfordshire. The stimulus for the project was women’s suffrage.

Photo: Jane Russell



In 2019, PtT delivered, with the support of a £27K Arts Council grant, and support from MK Gallery, “Taking The Stage” - Women in the Performing Arts. This event, held at the gallery, celebrated the role of women in the performing arts and showcased 5 scratch pieces from female theatre makers, talks, workshops and films and the premiere of a new play “Three Sisters” by Julia Pascal.

In 2020, PtT secured funding to support its activities during the Coronavirus pandemic. This funding has helped us to not only digitise strands of our work, but also to invest further in the artists we work with. Through this fund, we are not only supporting a female playwright to develop her first touring show, but also innovating the producing model by working with a range of artists to adapt the work into other mediums – including illustration, podcast, film and an interactive twine. We seek to become creators across platforms, to hold the importance of storytelling at the heart of our work and use theatre as the starting point for artists to tell their stories.

Further to this, the project also features the same creatives working with community groups in Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire and exploring the theme of being ‘invisible’ in society – what drives that and how does that make us feel?

The development of these projects and works over the last 5 years has helped shape our future thinking and plans.

“The play itself felt extraordinarily perceptive about the pressures and coping strategies of the upcoming generation, offering sex and politics in alternate scenes of tenderness and shock, as the psychologically flailing characters attempt to make sense of themselves and the world. The whole effect was aided by a trio of terrific performances.”

ArtsGateway MK

PRISTINE IN BLUE by Neil Beardmore



Pristine in Blue (Photo: Simon Raynor)

Participation And Cultural Opportunity Is An Essential Part Of Our Mission

Providing cultural opportunity is a core driver and purpose of our vision. We have always been committed to inclusion and providing rich experiences to communities. For 16 years we have run ‘Pepper’s Ghost Community Theatre Company’ – an open access theatre company based in MK. Pepper’s Ghost gives performance and development opportunities to individuals regardless of their experience or background. We regularly connect with less engaged communities, and those from disadvantaged or challenging backgrounds, as well as providing opportunity for those with disabilities and complex needs.

Diversity and relevance to our audiences and participants is critical to our mission, and over the period of this plan, we will seek to strengthen our ties across communities. Our work is and will continue to be very inclusive across gender, class, age, sexual orientation, race, and disability. The importance of ‘seeing yourself’ on stage, in print and online, whoever you are, cannot be underestimated and we have a commitment and responsibility to ensure that representation of modern Britain can be achieved in all our work.

We have a strong track record of working with young people – both in formal and community settings and never cease to be amazed by the imagination and desire of young people to tell their stories in various forms. We seek to ensure that our work can create the environment for transformative experiences for all our participants.

Our work inspires participants to explore their creativity and pursue a career in the arts, and we will create an evolving and inclusive Participation Programme to achieve this.

We have forged local partnerships to reach disadvantaged young people and provided worthwhile opportunities including placements and volunteer positions working with and alongside our professional teams on our creative projects. We seek to utilise this learning to support our plans to widen our participatory activity further afield – building on the success of recent partnership programmes with organisations in Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire.

“More opportunities like this please. Women writers, directors, curators, performers. On themes that speak to the issues. How great to have a curated programme of drama on such a topical and relevant theme. Well done indeed!”

Audience Member

TAKING THE STAGE

Our Ambitions

Through this plan, we are setting a course to widen our reach, deepen our impact and cement our reputation as producers of quality theatrical experiences and providers of meaningful and transformative cultural opportunity.

We plan to:

- Establish a producing model for touring work at small and mid scale venues across the UK which will support emerging theatre makers and artists to create new work and explore new ways to tell stories
- Inspire communities to embrace cultural opportunity and through this be an advocate for the power of the arts to change lives
- Deliver a progressive and contemporary education offer that provides pathways to young people to take up a career in the arts
- Champion the revival of lost works and re-imagine classic texts for new productions
- Position PtT as a leading light in bringing our industry together, placing knowledge exchange, peer-to-peer learning and promoting best practice at the heart of our activities through a programme of symposia, festivals, and events
- Build a community of like-minded supporters, friends, associates, and ambassadors who will champion our work and our ambitions

Shoulder to Shoulder (Photo: Simon Raynor)



“Very impressed with the use of BSL interpreters, I think the production company should be commended on their inclusivity”

Audience Member

TAKING THE STAGE

Why We Do It

- We want to explore new ways of telling stories and engaging with audiences
- We want to challenge ourselves and our collaborators to not be constrained by form, rather to be liberated by the freedom to explore the best way to tell and present the work
- We want to play our part in inspiring and supporting a new generation of theatre makers, helping to shape the future of our industry
- We want to shine a light on the people, communities and stories that can often be overlooked – amplifying their voices and perspectives to the contemporary narrative
- We want to be impactful on all those who engage with our work

Haste workshop with young people's group for "Taking The Stage"
(Photo: Jane Russell)



Vision And Values

- We believe that art has the power and potential to change and transform lives
- We believe art must be available and accessible as broadly as possible
- We believe that collaboration and the power of long-term relationships with artists and communities can create powerful outputs and outcomes that far exceed an artist working in isolation.
- We believe in critical dialogue in the creative process, promoting a fair and equitable environment to create work, respecting all collaborators' voices and contribution.
- We believe in fair and equal pay
- We believe in the value of structures and a supportive culture to allow artists to ensure they can be challenged and take risks without fear of failure
- We believe in the value of knowledge and the importance of sharing knowledge in a democratic and open way encouraging all to contribute.
- We believe in young people's potential to change the world and their right to be seen as a significant part of that world
- We believe in the importance of all communities to 'see themselves on stage' and the power that this representation can have for all.
- We believe in stories and the power of sharing stories with others, and how this can encourage and promote greater understanding and empathy amongst us all
- We believe in connecting people

Assessment Of Current Situation (SWOT Analysis)

Strengths

Quality of our work and commitment to excellence and innovation

- We are viewed as achieving and promoting excellence in the performing arts by our peers and our local community
- Our work has been validated by the major funding bodies that support our work
- We champion excellence in others and have challenged our collaborators to innovate and explore new ways of working
- We have a highly skilled management team with a strong track record in creating work of the highest quality in the performing arts and other media

Participation work is an exemplar and woven into the DNA of the organisation

- We have a long history of delivering participation work in communities, and from this experience we can be ambitious and inventive in our future planning
- Our commitment to community strengthens our business and generates a positive impression of our organisation with partners, communities, and our industry colleagues
- Participation is an integral part of our work, and can inform the content and delivery of professional work as well as exist for its own merits
- Our team of freelance practitioners who deliver creative experiences and programmes are highly skilled at empowering participants to challenge themselves and explore their artistic voice in a safe and constructive environment

Partnerships underpin the success of our projects and productions

- Partnerships of all kinds are key to our success. We have strong relationships with public and private funders, venues, festivals, educational institutions, local authorities, community organisations and sector specific networks.
- Current and recent funding partners have included: Arts Council England, Milton Keynes Council, National Lottery Awards for All, Milton Keynes Community Foundation, South Oxfordshire District Council.
- We have strong relationships with several venues we work with on a regular basis including MK Gallery, Stantonbury Theatre, Cornerstone Arts Centre, Royal & Derngate & MK Theatre
- We work regularly with educational institutions in our region at primary, secondary, further, and higher education levels.

Flexibility – organisation is nimble, dynamic, and able to adapt course if required.

- Our management team embrace change and opportunity and are well suited to managing the organisation through a challenging time for the industry
- We have very little fixed costs, and do not have the burden of property to manage or oversee. Our team are predominately freelance, allowing the company to grow or contract its workforce to match the demands of any project or period
- We see the increasing diversification of our activity as key to future success and resilience

Marmeladas (Photo by Karen Kodish)



“We now need a mixture of interventions. Good measurement and monitoring for venues. Public commitment from venues. Also education in schools to encourage girls to take risks.”

Audience Member

TAKING THE STAGE

“Director Rosemary Hill and her team at The Play’s The Thing Theatre Company do not shy away from its strong message, instead embracing the depth and range of emotions it evokes. The result is impressive and moving.”

Stage Reviews ★★★★★

A WEDDING STORY by Bryony Lavery

A Wedding Story (Photo: Simon Raynor)



Weaknesses

Constraints on capacity to develop through lack of core funding

- Core funding is increasingly difficult to secure and not keeping pace with the required expansion of the business.
- Reliance on project funding means it can be difficult to invest in the core functions of the business, making strategic development either slower, or something that our core team are having to commit the time and resource to without necessarily financial recompense

No dedicated administrator

- Having no dedicated administrator means we have a drain of resources on our staff who could be better employed on strategic matters
- The conflict for time between admin and management currently can have a detrimental effect on getting the systems in place to ensure our organisation can grow successfully with a solid base from which to build

Heavy reliance on Artistic Director fulfilling too many roles (inc admin)

- Our current operations put too heavy a workload on our Artistic Director. Although there is support in various functions from a Producer and PR Officer, these posts are predominately project funded and we do not have the current resource to expand their support

Reliance on public funding for project and development work

- Much of our recent output has been through public funding, and we need to increase the % of our revenues from earned income and private funding to provide more resilience to the organisation at a time when public funding is becoming more stretched and challenging to access

“As always, the set and costume from designer Kevin Jenkins are simply astonishing. The detail is something else, from Engstrand’s weathered leather coat, to the rusting and water stained architecture of the Alving house, to the plump velvet cushions Oswald hugs to his chest. The care and attention to it all is just wonderful, and Jenkins provides an appropriate playground for the festering sores of the story to open on. The very house itself seems to be suffering under the weight of Captain Alving’s sins, rotting away to nothing.” **Female Arts ★★★★★**

GHOSTS by Henrik Ibsen

Ghosts (Photo: Simon Raynor)



Opportunities

New audiences and creative partners

- We have been successful in building new and meaningful creative partnerships, especially within our home region. We will be seeking to take the learning from these successful partnerships to explore new, impactful partnerships outside of our home region in the coming years alongside our touring activity
- A constant flow of new work will mean a constant flow of new audiences and participants to engage and connect with. This is the lifeblood of any performing arts organisation and we will nurture these relationships with new audiences (and our existing audiences) with the aim to establish a strong friends and members network
- New creative partners also can lead to new funding and revenue opportunities, and we will work closely with partners to highlight such opportunities that suit the work we develop

Development of work across the wider regions of the UK

- Building from our base in Milton Keynes, we will be widening our reach through UK touring to small and mid-scale venues
- Alongside touring, we will be developing associated creative learning programmes in the regions we tour to, and in turn, start to develop new partnerships and relationships with stakeholders in these locations

Professional development and training

- Due to the expertise of our team, developing a cohesive professional development and training programme is a significant opportunity for the organisation to generate earned income and reduce reliance on public funding
- Linking with non-arts organisations and partners to leverage money from outside the sector (eg Business Improvement Districts, Local Enterprise Partnerships)
- Arts funding is increasingly a challenge, but there is tangible opportunity to work with partners outside the sector to access other sources of income - both from corporate and commercial avenues and other public-based funding.
- We have strong business acumen within our team, as well as strong experience of local government and economic regeneration initiatives. We will advocate and champion the importance of the arts in economic and social impact terms – in turn promoting our organisation as a progressive force well situated to meet the priorities of the wider social agenda as well as the development of the arts itself.

*“Very good. Versatile. Thought provoking.
So well acted. Unusual way of reflecting the
complex story line”*

Audience Member

THREE SISTERS by Julia Pascal

Three Sisters (Photo: Simon Raynor)



Threats

Post COVID-19 landscape – in terms of funding, partnerships, and industry resilience

- This common threat to the economy is the greatest challenge the performing arts industry has ever faced in terms of its sustainability and business model. We believe that through diversification of our activities and revenue mix, coupled with an innovative and dynamic approach to creating work, we can strengthen our resilience to the challenges ahead.

Working in new geographical locations where breaking new ground is challenging

- Touring performances and creative learning programmes in new geographical locations is a risk. Establishing new partnerships and audiences takes investment in time and resources to succeed. Touring requires solid preparation work and research to highlight locations and regions that are more likely to be receptive to our work.

Education sector being less able to engage with activity outside of core curriculum

- Before COVID-19, the education sector was increasingly difficult to connect with due to internal funding, demands on time and resources in the institutions and a lack of flexibility to explore opportunities outside of the core curriculum. COVID-19 will have made these demands even more challenging. We will need to work with existing partners to help shape our future plans, to better understand where external support can best help our education providers and lead from the front in terms of the funding models to make the work happen

Political decisions making affecting the distribution of arts to and within the regions

- With the UK’s economic outlook post COVID-19 looking challenging for all sectors (and especially the performing arts), the impact of the political response to public funding for our sector will be a crucial factor in future planning. If the current government’s vision of ‘levelling up the country’ does turn into reality, and funding matches that ambition, this may provide opportunity for organisations such as ourselves. If those funding priorities do not emerge in this manner, we need to be resilient enough to ensure our revenue streams from other sources can meet the requirements of our development.

“I had heard of the Magdalen Laundries, but hadn’t realised the immense cruelty and humiliation suffered. So moving”

Audience Member

DIRTY LAUNDRY by Wallis Hamilton Felton

Specific Plans (2020-23)

Our Ambitions (2020-23)

PRODUCTIONS AND EVENTS

Establish the company as a producer and commissioner of quality and sustainable small and mid-scale touring work to UK venues

Creating meaningful productions and events that engage artists and audiences with important themes relevant to contemporary society

Bridge the different disciplines and platforms of storytelling, but always with theatre-making at the heart of the process

Expand the company’s reach beyond its local region into a fully national footprint

Make work that reflects modern Britain and that can reach communities less engaged and harder to reach

Develop our digital footprint to ensure the creative process can fully benefit from the freedoms and opportunities afforded by the digital world

Be a champion for the heritage and future of theatre, and show proven commitment in our output to classic work from the canon, lost works, and cutting-edge new work from the contemporary theatre-makers of today

Dirty Laundry (Photo: Jane Russell)



PARTICIPATION AND LEARNING

Cement our role as a provider of quality participatory arts activities and training opportunities for young people and emerging artists, ensuring pathways to future development in the Arts sector are clearly signposted and accessible

Enshrine the connection between communities and artists in the provision of cultural opportunity – developing our ethos that such collaborations enrich all those who participate

Provide platforms for a diverse range of communities to share the outputs of their creative activities in a supportive and positive environment

Develop a strong partnership network of artists, creators, and practitioners to help scale-up the reach, impact, and profile of our participatory work programmes

Establish a strong programme offer for the formal education sector – working alongside schools, universities and colleges to provide engaging cultural provision that challenges and inspires whilst remains rooted in the needs and expectations of the curriculum and outcomes required by the sector.

“It is an incredible feat to pull off an interesting and nuanced production and The Play’s The Thing has done just that. Director Rosemary Hill finds the darker threads lurking in the text and gives us a production which is enjoyable and wicked.” Female Arts ★★★★★

ABIGAIL’S PARTY by Mike Leigh



Abigail's Party (Photo: Simon Raynor)

REPUTATION AND SECTOR INFLUENCE

Becoming a leading example of modern day producing and commissioning in the performing arts sector – showcasing an alternative, more holistic approach to the production of work and developing creative ideas

Building a strong artist development programme that works with theatre makers and creators over the long-term to best support growth, discovery and ultimately the sustainability of newly created work

Building our influence and reputation across the sector as a facilitator and enabler of important dialogue and conversations around issues critical to our industry.

Being known for the provision of sector-specific conference, symposia and forum tackling important contemporary issues and providing meaningful networking and partnership building for delegates and contributors

Build our role as an advocate for change in the industry, to work with both the sector and the wider policy framework of government to contribute to making the case for arts subsidy by inspiring, evidencing, provoking, networking and demonstrating the transformative power of art.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Cement our role as a strong leader and critical player in the Milton Keynes arts ecology, shoring up our home base to ensure we have a resilient and sustainable bedrock from which to build all our operations

Develop the quality and diversity of our governance structures to reflect modern day Britain and our community

Build a network of friends, members, and benefactors to support our ongoing operations; to not only directly impact on funding revenues, but also to act as ambassadors and advocates for our work within their own networks

Create a sustainable, robust, and flexible business model with mixed income that suits the way we work and allows us to not be too exposed to the successes, failure, or market fluctuations of any one area of our work.

Achieve enough core funding to support the level of year-round employment that maximises our potential

Commit to a meaningful environmental action plan for the company that not only reduces our environmental footprint, but also champions and highlights the need for action on the climate emergency.

“Another fantastic workshop from The Play’s The Thing. It’s great the company offers such an array of theatre experiences from different practitioners”

Workshop Participant

Commedia dell'arte (Photo: Simon Raynor)



3 Year Plan – 2020-23

2020-21

PRODUCTIONS & EVENTS

- Develop Becoming Invisible the Woman by Sarah Wanendeya to be rehearsal and funding ready as part of our Artist Development programme
- Develop new digital adaptations model of working with creatives and publish/share the Becoming the Invisible Woman pilot digital projects
- Present a sharing of outputs from the Invisible Woman project and the associated community work at MK Gallery in November 2020
- Secure funding for the Autumn tour of Becoming the Invisible Woman
- Tour Booking for Invisible Woman Autumn 2021
- Rehearse and present Vagina Monologues at MK Gallery

PARTICIPATION & LEARNING

- Deliver the Invisible/Visible community arts project connecting creatives across various disciplines with a diverse range of community groups in Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire
- Develop a training and education strategy and publish a prospectus style brochure to maximise opportunities for both engagement and revenue
- Book creative learning activity to support Becoming the Invisible Woman Autumn 2021 tour

REPUTATION AND SECTOR INFLUENCE

- Prepare ACE application and project plans for Taking the Stage 2 – our performing and broadcast arts symposium and festival exploring the role of women in our sector

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

- Implement business plan and publish as a live document through our website
- Redraft fundraising strategies with full timelines for submissions
- Develop new marketing and audience development strategy to cover the period of this plan
- Develop and launch a new ‘friends’ membership scheme to build supporter base
- Prepare and submit application to the Space Commission R&D online film fund for work around Invisible Woman

“This intelligent production will definitely leave you pondering it all well after you have left the theatre and perhaps even questioning looks you think you saw, songs you thought you heard, and facts you thought were true”

Female Arts ★★★★★

OLD TIMES by Harold Pinter

2021-22

PRODUCTIONS & EVENTS

- Commence work on new digital initiatives around Invisible Woman (informed by early versions from ACE project in 2020)
- ACE application in for developing scratch commission for further development across different platforms and media (i.e., artists are encouraged to make work NOT just for stage)
- Commission scratch pieces for Taking the Stage as part of our Artist Development Programme
- Rehearsal and final development of Becoming the Invisible Woman leading to final dress/tech
- Autumn 2021 tour of Becoming the Invisible Woman
- Start development on a revived or commercial piece of theatre dependent on market conditions at the time
- Rehearsal and performance run of revived or commercial piece

Old Times (Photo by Karen Kodish)



PARTICIPATION & LEARNING

- Starting development for community arts project in 2022 leading into project planning and application submissions for funding
- Launch of workshop and training programme for 2021-22

REPUTATION AND SECTOR INFLUENCE

- Develop Taking the Stage content with peers in the sector to ensure the debate and discourse is relevant, forward-thinking, and championing change
- “Taking The Stage” - Women in the Performing Arts delivered at MK Gallery

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

- Develop and implement a robust environmental action plan with a focus on sustainable touring, reducing carbon footprint of the company and reducing waste in production
- Secure core funding to help support growth in our administrative function

“More work like this please! Great to see a middle aged woman the centre of attention for a change. Telling it like it is.”

Audience Member

BECOMING THE INVISIBLE WOMAN by Sarah Wanendeya

2022-23

PRODUCTIONS & EVENTS

- Development period for new commissioned works
- Touring and distribution of new commissioned works to UK venues

PARTICIPATION & LEARNING

- Planning for Community Arts Project
- Delivery of the Community Arts Project in Milton Keynes
- Year 2 of training programme delivered and business model for future expansion developed

Becoming The Invisible Woman (Photo - Jane Russell)



REPUTATION & SECTOR INFLUENCE

- Prepare funding applications for Taking the Stage 3 (for autumn 2023)
- Commence monthly ‘In Conversation’ series of events bringing sector peers to Milton Keynes to discuss topics relevant to the sector

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

- Launch our 2023-26 business plan, fundraising strategy, and audience development plan
- Continue to develop our diversified income and core funding to aid expansion of the management and administrative team
- Report on our environmental action plan and generate case study for publication

“

I was so delighted to see the quality and commitment of the Stantonbury students in their performance.

I had never known that some of the Suffragettes had learnt basic martial arts to protect against police attacks and the well choreographed fight scene was impressive and shocking. Harrassment and bullying are shockingly even increasing (and with social media this of course is so uncontrolled and dangerous to girls and women, and to those women in the public eye).

It is so important that young people can explore this through participation and engagement with theatre and I applaud the way you used history and our heritage to explore these modern themes. I was left as an audience feeling, what courage these women had and we must not fail them. ”

Francesca Skelton

Chair of AHA (Arts and Heritage Alliance)

