

Minutes from Nottingham New Theatre Committee Meeting on 16/9/2013

Attendants:

Aubrey Turner
Tessa Denney
Chelsea Wright
Jacob Hayes
Ginny Lee
Aaron Tej
Lyle Fulton
Nicola Fox
Dan O'Connor
Nick Stevenson
James McAndrew

Nick Barker and James Bentley all apologised. Ellie Cawthorne & Joe Heil came late.

10:11

Meeting Begins - Nick clarified the meaning of the Bentley's message at the top of the agenda. Minor decisions can be made without discussing everything with the Committee as it slows down the process.

10:13

Nick wishes for a United Front regarding the committee. If something is decided as a committee, we should all make an effort to enforce it and not complain. There was a divide between the membership and committee last year, something Nick hopes to address this year. Be more upbeat!!

10:15 : Fresher's Week & Fresher's Fair + Proposals

Bentley needs to set up a doodle for the whole of Fresher's week so we know availability. - The doodle needs to run till 7 on account of Fresher Hall shout outs.

Fresher's fair is next Monday - Wednesday: 10am-4pm each day. They are being more strict this year regarding number of people on the stall.

Suggested that 3-4 committee remain at the Fresher's fair, 4 in the New Theatre and 2 in Portland.

Proposals are 28/9/2013 - suggested start time is 10:00 in order to accommodate Bentley who is needed for a Matinee performance of 'Clockwork Orange'

10:20

AGM - 1 & 3pm on the 2/9/2013

Nicola potentially may not be available for the AGM, due to a seminar. Ginny and Nick will also potentially not be there.

10:22 : Changes to the Publicity Guide

Dan outlined changes to publicity guidelines i.e. names of Publicity Managers

James suggests that publicist is an option.

Guidelines/booklet over how to do a program is suggested including more about the actors' courses etc as it was successful at the end of last year. (Using Boeing-Boeing programme as an example)

Exit flyering at the Playhouse is now feasible, particularly for related plays. Dan and Nick to oversee this relationship.

10:29: Role of Publicity Reps + Incentives

Suggestion of changes to giving out free tickets to publicity reps as there were too many free tickets given out last year to people who didn't give out many flyers. Particularly as those who help with get-ins and get-outs don't get free tickets at the moment.

May then have to give an alternative incentive for people to get involved as publicity reps. Chelsea suggested an incentive is unnecessary- Freshers tend to be enthusiastic about doing publicity anyway.

James suggested that the producer for each show compiles a list of people who have helped out and deserve half price tickets- which would then be given to the box office each week. Concerns raised over how many people would then get cheaper tickets and whether it is financially viable.

General agreement that a cap on how long this list can be is a good idea. Length of list can be agreed at productions and/or accountability meetings the week before.

Case by case basis.

10:37: Fresher's Fair Stall

Freshers' Fair stall- meeting on Sunday at 12pm or 1pm- Dan to attend.

Jacob to help set up stall on Sunday.

Flyer designs will be made accessible on the group- 1000 suggested initial order.

Roll up banner being ordered- would be useful for Freshers Fair.

Could use the old photos from the foyer to decorate the stall- general agreement that photographs would look good.

Suggestions of best posters to use on the stall inc. 'Educating Rita' and 'Red'.

James M, Nick and Nicola think reducing the number of flyers printed for each show should be reduced to cut waste. Plans made to speak to the print shop to ensure weekly consistency in price and paper quality.

Nottingham Playhouse offered to give out our flyers to put in their tote bags (given out to colleges and Universities in the area). However- they want 4000 flyers. Jacob suggested that we give them beer mats instead.

- They have a stall at Nottingham Uni during Freshers- check whether we can do flyer exchange in Freshers at the meeting on Sunday.

10:42: Publicity on Website, Membership Cards

Will P thinks that the part of the website for publicity sounds dull and needs changing.

Nick asks that everyone look through their sections to ensure that they all sound exciting and give specific detail about how people can get involved so that both Freshers and potential students can look at it.

Discussion over whether membership cards are necessary. Nick B thinks they are unnecessary as nobody shows them but Nick S says that we need them for insurance reasons and to avoid the situation last year when NSDF casts included a lot of non-members.

Important to show cards when buying tickets and for those auditioning.

Can't use old ones as they are dated.

James M suggests that we have a couple of people in the theatre giving out membership cards on the days of auditions, AGM etc so that people who have bought memberships don't miss out on cards.

Ginny says that we should be extra careful when on FoH for the first few shows- make sure we don't give out reduced tickets to people we just assume are members but may never have paid.

General agreement that we should enforce at the AGM that cards MUST be shown in order to audition and buy members tickets.

Dan to look into cost of printing membership cards.

Nick clarifies who has access to the NNT Facebook and Twitter- Dan Encourages professionalism.

- Nick suggests that what gets posted on Facebook should be changed/re-thought. E.g recall times should be posted on the members' site instead of the Facebook. Could use Facebook to alert auditionees to the recall lists on the members' site.

10:58: Will's Theatre Document/ Clarification of roles

Will has created a theatre document and is showing it off to the group. The document clarifies the general roles of the technical side of the committee.

Jacob asks for a summary sheet, Will tells Jacob that the four pieces of paper is the brief version.

11:00: Show Report Document / Updated Calls List

Will is suggesting that a show report document is used to detail anything problems that occur in a show tech wise.

Will has also provided and updated shows call list.

The roles document also contains information about what we should be doing if we're going to use smoke on stage.

The tech stuff has all arrived.

11:06: Security of the Theatre/ Committee Training

The theatre needs to be more secure than it has been in previous years due to the new equipment that we now have. Locking the tech store is currently done, but possibly locking the tech box as well.

Timings in regarded to tech training for committee hasn't been decided, Tessa needs to look at the equipment before she can start teaching the rest of the committee how to use it.

Nick suggests that committee need to be signed off before general training is offered to others, so there aren't any health and safety issues that can be brought up.

11:10: Customer Service Training

Ginny reminds the committee that customer service training is this thursday at 1pm.

Ginny has done some designs for Foyet decoration, however these were done before PWC ditched us.

One of the things that most people were asking for was a poster wall. Estates has been asked whether we need to put MDF up on the wall before placing the posters on or if we can blue tack them straight on.

A box office sign has also been discussed, although budget may limit what we can get.

11:18: Signage in the Theatre

A hanging sign over the Box office is the general consensus.

A poster wall is going to be created on the wall behind the desk

Nick suggests that we should all wear the same clothing for our head shots for the committee sign. He is quickly shot down.

The consensus is that we all have similar head shots taken for our roles of the committee.

11:22 Logo Mat

Ginny brings up the possibility of a Logo mat. Jacob points out that financials wouldn't support both a logo mat and a sign. However, if we make the sign, it will be feasible to have both.

Chelsea, Ginny and Aubrey are going to tackle the sign for the box office.

Whole company photographs aren't a priority right now, but can be considered in the future.

Due to the number of things that need sorting in the Foyet, a logo mat has been pushed back.

10am this Thursday is the selected day for creating the poster wall.

11:29 Front of House Training / Stamp of Logo on Wall

Front of house training will be completed after Fresher's fair, but before fresher's fringe.

A stamp on the wall next to the entrance has been agreed upon. It will be placed next to the board.

11:30: Plans for new Foyet - Windows next to Entrance

Plans for the New Foyet

Decided that a season breakdown will be placed in one of the windows, alongside a poster of the current main season show.

One window will contain the poster for both shows and information alongside each one.

The other window will contain season information for both main season and fringe.

On the interior side of the window the general agreement is that we'll have next week's fringe and main season show posters up.

11:42: Theatre Bar

The SU has considered the proposal for us to get a Bar. It seems as though they will be happy to invest the money for a bar next year, but this needs to be confirmed.

The method of having a bar here is currently discussed, whether we'd simply have a bar license and store it in our current fridge, or if we get a designated bar area.

A concern was raised about storing alcohol in the theatre and people stealing alcohol from the fridge.

11:44: Ordering Tickets Online

Will is discussing the new process for ordering tickets online. People can reserve a ticket through the website. It allows users to cancel the reservation at any time as well. Users get an email confirming reservation.

However, it currently seems impossible to order tickets online and purchase theme.

Reservation is the limit of what we can do, simply because ordering tickets online, money has to go through the SU at the moment.

Posters need to now say that you can "Reserve tickets online" now.

For ordering tickets for people in the theatre, simply go onto the website and pretend to be them.

Making it clear for casts who is ordering tickets so that casts don't double book.

Updating the website and making shows available is the responsibility of both Publicity and Front of House.

11:52 : Reusing Tickets/ Season Passes

Tickets can be reused at the start of the year. They are all in pretty good condition.

Season Passes - For membership cards, can we have a white box that clarifies their season pass.

So what the season pass will cover, is undecided. Financials need to be considered as to what shows will be available. Chelsea proposed that the season pass only covers in-house shows.

It's decided the season pass only covers in house shows. The season pass will give a 25% discount.

A season pass will cost £25, not including membership. Season pass will only be available to those who are members. So the final total including a season pass £30.

12 - 12:40

Committee broke for lunch.

12:40 : Aims of the Year

Nick brings the meeting back by discussing the aims of this year. Or rather, how we're going to delay deciding what we as a theatre do until a little way into the year.

Will points out that people need to make accounts for the members wiki training. All files will be uploaded here.

12:42 Bulk buying Timber

Joe hasn't informed Aubrey of some of the items on the agenda.

Aubrey proposes bulk buying timber, it means we can get timber for cheaper and then the theatre could make a small profit selling it back to shows. Everyone is a winner.

12:46: Splitting roles within Workshop

Nick brings up the idea of splitting roles between the two workshop managers. Whilst not official, it means that the workload can be shared and people know who to approach regarding certain issues.

12:47: Meetings

Chelsea suggests having meetings with the productions two weeks before the show so we can go through get in and get out and make sure there is a plan. Jules will also appear for the last ten minutes of these meetings so they can discuss any health and safety issues.

12:48: Fire Safety Training / Costume Cupboard Lock/ Health and Safety

Fire safety training. Training is this Wednesday, the Lyle, Nick Barker, Bentley, and Joe possibly can't make it.

There is going to be a new lock on the costume cupboard, but only three committee members are going to get a key. Chelsea, Nicola and Nick.

Health and safety training is going to be on 14/10/2012. Most likely at about 3 or 4 in the afternoon.

12:52: Bins / Action Plan

Bins - The proposed solutions are we either have industrial wheelie bins situated at the back of the theatre, or we have a fence and waste disposal area sorted. However, debate is still ongoing with estates.

Chelsea has pointed out the action plan for Friday's clean up. James has mentioned that he has a dust allergy and he can't go under the stage to tidy up.

12:54: SMC

Nick is clarifying what SMC actually stands for (space management committee) and also the work that has gone on over the summer and what needs to be done.

The corridor shelving should be up at some point tonight.

Kevin has been unprofessional regarding budget management and spent the entire amount of SMC 1. Nick is meeting with a group this afternoon to discuss what exactly has happened.

The project manager has stated that the theatre is responsible for any budget overspend despite the fact that they are ultimately in charge of budgeting works. Obviously, we are fighting this claim because it is ridiculous.

12:59 : Keeping the Theatre Tidy

Keeping the theatre tidy. Chelsea has stated that it is the shows responsibility to keep the theatre tidy. Although it should be the committee's responsibility to keep the foyer tidy. However, the rehearsal rooms need to be kept tidy every day, not just at the end of their week. No food in the rehearsal rooms either, because of the mess it leaves and the new floor.

13:01: Sponsorship - PWC

Lyle has confirmed that PWC are no longer sponsoring us. Lyle has spoken with the fundraising coordinator at the UON and has stated that we overvalued ourselves. Apparently PWC felt they were treated badly as our sponsors, and as such we aren't in particularly good standing with other companies. Nick and Lyle have come up with a proposal for gaining sponsorship.

It's been suggested that our relationship with PWC was pretty abrasive.

Looking into naming rights as some form of sponsorship. However, the amount of money that has been given for the studios by other sponsors, it would probably be a slap in the face if we then named it after somebody else.

Currently, negotiation of sponsorship is simply ongoing. The idea is to propose putting forward money towards workshop as it's something tangible we can show.

13:10 : Impact

Impact - Lyle has nothing new to report regarding Impact. Edgar Wallner has intimated that he is willing to donate more money.

13:11: Open Day

We're holding an event in the 16th November. An open day is being held here for people who work in the theatre. It's Andy Shield's idea of gaining money from Alumni.

13:14: Fundraisers

There's been some ideas regarding fundraisers. Some people think that we should do less fundraisers but of a higher quality, or keep the current number.

James suggests that we have a pub quiz at the beginning of the year that raises money towards the theatre as a whole. This prevents any arguments between productions over who can actually use the pub quiz as their fundraising idea.

Aaron has suggested doing it as early as possible.

Ellie has suggested having less fundraisers, but teaming up productions and then splitting the money. It's also been suggested by James that we should schedule fundraisers and Fringe shows in accordance with each other.

Fundraisers could be organised organically at the beginning of the season.

13:22 : Nadia's Nu:Art / Saveras

Nadia wants to do a "Nu:Art" style event to raise funds for Clockwork Orange. It's been agreed that the event should take place after the pub quiz and before fresher's fringe.

Chelsea wonders about whether we can organise a proper deal with Saveras. Considering we go there so often, we should be pushing for a deal.

13:27: Workshops

We're currently aiming for 4-5 people in terms of workshops.

It's possible to get members to pay for workshops. This will help us pay for higher quality workshops.

Trying to get a relevant workshop regarding the shows in order to attract higher numbers of members. Physical theatre workshops if we've got plays with large amounts of physical theatre.

Aaron points out that our retention of numbers isn't particularly great in terms of freshers. As long as we treat fresher's like we treat other members it shouldn't be an issue.

13:32: Committee social

There was a divide last year between the committee and the theatre members. If a committee social could occur fortnightly, there could be a more relaxed environment for people to approach us.

We need to make sure that we as a committee remain open and aware of the needs of our members.

13:36: Afterparty

Afterparty - make sure that the prodders and the directors sort out their after parties by the monday of their show that we can publicise the shows. Aaron is happy to attend early and clear things up.

Meeting fresher's in mooch and taking them up to the after party is also a good idea.

13:39: New Theatre Day Out

New Theatre trip. - Trips to London etc to go see a massive show etc.

Also, having one day of sports, much like the 5-a-side last year.

New Writing - Lyle suggests supporting new writing. As part of James' plan as fringe, one of the ideas is to push new writing and develop it over the year, the end goal being taking the show to Edinburgh. A la 'Paradise'

Drama club has been suggested as doing a show in the final week of the fringe season. They have a whole year to devise a piece.

13:46: Drama Club

Encourage a member outside the committee to run the drama club.

We should also make it so people can come to the committee and say they want to run something, if it's feasible, we should be trying to encourage it.

14:02: Budgets for Productions and Edinburgh totals

Jacob has suggested that from the £750 budget provided, the production team needs to fundraise and also get sponsorship as well.

In regards to Edinburgh, we're unsure of the amount that we'll be receiving back from Edinburgh.

Paradise raised £1488, whilst the Project raised £800. The money we'll get from the Zoo venue is yet to be seen.

The books are currently positive as opposed to last year when the money that we had at the beginning of the season was in the negative.

A draconian approach to budgets need to be taken now, if a show goes over budget, we can't fund them. They need to pay for the excess.

14:04

Money has been held for NSDF, we need to make sure we're aware of any possible issues that could cause fines. As last year's NSDF caused an issue in regards to the sheer number of fines we received.

Jacob also suggested that he would like to hold a meeting with the production team regarding the budgets.

14:05: Committee training time.

Tessa will think about the time for committee training. Once availability has been confirmed, we can begin arranging times for it.

14:06: Surveys and Making the Committee more approachable

Bentley wants to reduce the amount of red tape that we as a committee have to go through.

He wants to create weekly/fortnightly meetings where they can approach Bentley and ask questions or raise concerns.

A survey needs to be taken from previous people. Ginny and Dan need to organise this.

Nick suggests we should also ask the membership how to gather their feedback. Do they want a suggestion box etc.

14:14: Online Booking System for Rooms

Jacob was concerned about sharing our space with other societies. We can't charge for loaning our space either, so there isn't much success.

Will has set up an online booking system for the rooms so there isn't confusion about who owns each room.

14:15: Costume Cupboard

Nicola feels we need to sort through the costume cupboard and seeing what's actually useful and what can be thrown away.

She's going to create a coding system so that things can be organised neatly within the costume cupboard.

The absolute priority at the moment is getting it tidy.

Jacob wonders if we could sell some of the stuff we're getting rid of. There aren't any restrictions on selling items that we own, so it is a possible way of raising a small amount of fund.

14:20: Company Stage Manager / Workshop

Tom has clarified his role within the committee. Tom is in charge of the set, the staging area. If the production wants to change the angle of their set, something similar, they need to talk to Tom.

With a flexible staging solution, we can do a number of configurations of different plays.

There are currently a few things missing, but Tom is sorting this out. At the moment, the only people allowed to manipulate the flexible seating is Aubrey, Will, Joe, Chelsea and Tom.

Tom wants to run a basic "get in" workshop, so that committee are trained in the basic elements of getting in. Another workshop in "Set Design" is also something that needs to be considered. Tom thinks contacting the architecture department in finding anyone who is interested. Tom believes we should run this workshop at some point during November.

Email architecture department about finding set designs. Tom talks to the architects society and see if there's any interest. On sunday, Dan should see if it's possible to trade flyers with other stalls.

14:31

James has thanked everyone for supporting the name change from "Uncut" to "fringe".
In regards to dates:

Proposals for the Autumn Season - 12/10/13 or 13/10/13 - The week after in-house casting.

Slots - Fortnight after casting happens, there are 6 available slots. 5 Mon/Tues and 1 on the Sun/Mon in the final week. Although there are six slots, James feels we should look for 4 fringe shows. That's not to say we don't accept 6 if they are all incredible proposals, but we should look for 4 generally. This will help avoid the double bill issue that occurred in "Voice Without Words" and "The Woman Who Cooked Her Husband"

14:34: Fringe Season

James feels that we should be making it clear what the fringe season really is. For example, last year "The Last of the Hausmanns" was considered a show that shouldn't have been an UnCut show, although they did have the strongest proposal. He feels that if the show has the strongest proposal, we should still accept it, even if we feel it doesn't fit the 'fringe' category.

Site-specific shows and unconventional shows. Shows that typically aren't in the In-house are the shows we need to encourage for fringe. For example, 'Osama the Hero' in the garage or 'Jack: Aged 5 1/2'

By not having to fill every available week, we are able to play around with the schedule more.

14:39

Prices for fringe shows - £3 should remain the same.

James feels we should always maximise the opportunity for members to do theatre.

Casting limits will remain the same. It's agreed if you direct an in-house, you should only be allowed in one uncut.

Jacob feels we should only do one show per season with rights. James suggests that if shows with rights are proposed, production team should also include a fundraising plan.

14:45: Edinburgh Debrief

Edinburgh debrief -

Alternate days worked well. The same venue was satisfying for directors and producers.

Jacob feels that shows shouldn't be allowed a day off, as they treat it as a day off.

Both James and Lyle point out that the days off promoted a company ethos, and that it wasn't just two shows fighting each other for attention.

James also is proposing an 'Edinburgh crash course'. During the course, expectations will be listed etc.

Offering opportunities for developing their scripts are incredibly important. Developing scripts throughout the year has to be done as well.

14:52: Branching out to other societies

Dan needs to search for quotes from the NSDF newspapers, as the quotes on the New Theatre website are currently out of date.

Lyle suggests searching the university for people who may have written scripts but haven't had time to suggest them to the theatre.

James also suggests that for NSDF we have a company director.

14:59: External Slots

External slots - We're going to have a performance of 'Vessel' on the 19th of October.

Fresher's Fringe Performance Dates - 17/10/13 18/10/13.

15:02: Fresher's Fringe

It'd be good if Dan could be involved in Fresher's fringe alongside Aaron and James in order to help out.

First meeting of Fresher's Fringe - 7/10/13

Ellie feels we should encourage those who weren't able to get roles this time around.

Programs for Fresher's Fringe needs to be done as well.

Halfway meeting for Fresher's Fringe needs to be done on 12/13 of 10/13

We are going to have Stars in Your Eyes back. They could be done as Edinburgh fundraisers. James clarified that Stars in Your Eyes is basically a night where members can do a skit, sing a song or something.

In the Robin Hood slot from last year, James is looking to do something, such as 'Fresher : The Musical' in that slot.

15:12 : Pantomime

Nick is proposing a Panto, however there seems to be issues. One of which is whether we take a show out of the main season and replace it with the panto, whether we do it the same night as another show, do it as a fringe show. The general consensus seems to be that we shouldn't compromise an in-house production for the panto.

The committee agreed to wait after proposals in order to make a decision.

Ginny said "Oh no we won't."

James is going to continue looking for external slots and see if they could run a show or possibly just a workshop at the Nottingham New Theatre.

15:19 : Production Dates / Name Change

Ellie has gone through dates for the productions again.

Name has been changed from "Main Season" as "In-house" instead. - It sounds more professional and also means that we're not undermining the "fringe season" as a secondary season.

Ellie wants a brief advice meeting for potential proposals during Fresher's week which is the 25/9/2013

On the 26/9/2013, Ellie will remain accessible somewhere on campus so people can talk to her if there's any more questions. Hopefully this will enable more people to propose if they're able to receive advice.

15:25 : Feedback for Directors

Ellie has proposed "feedback for successful proposals". This would give people ideas of what was good about their proposals and what perhaps could use work. Available as an option if people want more information about why their proposal was successful.

Will has pointed out that there is a document on the website available which details what constitutes a good proposal.

The current production's pack needs be tweaked by 25/9/2013.

James has suggested that in regards to calling up unsuccessful production teams, directors at last year's production feedback were unhappy at getting calls from people who aren't involved in the production's team.

Ellie suggests that feedback is possibly offered on a different day. The option could be made with production teams to talk to Ellie the next day.

Lyle suggests that Bentley does minutes for the proposals, otherwise it's delegated for the proposals.

Ellie suggests mentioning at the AGM that shadowing opportunities are available for those who maybe weren't sure if they wanted to direct or know how to.

Proposal deadline has to be 12pm the day before actual proposals take place.

Tom is looking into loaning out the Flexible staging solution. Prices need to be decided.

End of meeting.