



Blue Elephant Theatre Limited

Annual report and financial statements

Year ended 31 March 2023

Company no 03724349

Charity no 1077161

an Andy Nash
Accounting &
Consultancy

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Photo on front cover

Aso Sherabayani & Joseph Samimi, Give Me the Sun, July 2022, taken by Lidia Crisafulli

Legal and Administrative Information

Charity name	Blue Elephant Theatre Limited	
Charity registration no.	1077161	
Company registration no.	03724349	
Registered office	59a Bethwin Road London SE5 0XT	
Trustees	Christopher Lawrence Matthew Craig Brian Alistair Beaton Martine Jean-Baptiste Paul Langton Maya Pindar Derrick Tawiah	Chair Treasurer <i>appointed 8 September 2023</i>
Executive director/co-artistic director	Niamh de Valera Alice Gentle	<i>maternity leave from 5 May 2022</i> <i>maternity cover until resigned November 2022</i>
Participation director/co-artistic director	Jo Sadler-Lovett	<i>resigned May 2022 and re-appointed September 2022</i>
General manager	Jimmy Chamberlain	
Independent examiner	Andy Nash Accounting & Consultancy Ltd Units 24 & 25 Goodsheds Container Village Hood Road Barry CF62 5QU	
Principal bankers	Santander Abbey National House 2 Triton Square London NW1 3AN	

Trustees' annual report

The Board of Trustees, who are also Directors of the Charity for the purposes of the Companies Act, and Trustees for charity law purposes, submit their annual report and the financial statements of Blue Elephant Theatre Limited for the year ended 31 March 2023. The Board of Trustees confirms that the annual report and financial statements of the Charity comply with current statutory requirements, including the Charity Act 2011, as well as the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the 'Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) second edition (effective 1 January 2019)', the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), and the Companies Act 2006.

Objectives and activities

Objects

The objects of the Charity, as set out in its Memorandum of Association, are the advancement of public education in the arts and in film and theatre by way of workshops, seminars and productions of work and in such other charitable ways as the Charity may from time to time decide.

Activities

In furtherance of its objects Blue Elephant Theatre (BET) provides:

- a theatre in the community, running participation workshops for people across the arts, especially for young people and those with lived experience of mental health problems; and,
- a professional programme of work supporting new and emerging artists, which seeks to engage the local community by programming work relevant to it and offering discounts and incentives to attend shows.

Throughout the process of determining these activities, the Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in determining the activities undertaken by the Charity.

Achievements and performance for 2021-2022

As April 2022 began, we had no doubt that the coming year would see big changes, opportunities and challenges.

After nearly a decade of co-leading the Blue Elephant, both Co-Artistic Directors would be leaving their posts, for a while at least.

Participation & Co-Artistic Director Jo Sadler-Lovett had secured a position of Artistic Director with The Playhouse in her home city of Birmingham, where she had hoped to move for some time after having her first child.

Executive & Co-Artistic Director Niamh de Valera was going on maternity leave at the start of May and arranging cover for her leave had proved to be very tricky, compounded by the realisation that BET would also need to hire a new Participation & Co-Artistic Director.

There was also a good deal of trepidation as we prepared our application to remain part of Arts Council England's National Portfolio of regularly funded organisations. The Blue Elephant had been one of just five theatre organisations in London to be added to the portfolio in 2018 but we were very aware that we were vulnerable as ACE was having to make huge cuts to its London budget. We had previously also received some core funding from Southwark Council but their Culture funding programme was restructured to provide project funding only. BBC Children in Need, which was in its fifteenth year of supporting our Young People's Theatre project, was also restructuring and closing to applications just as we had hoped to reapply for Young People's Theatre (and ReACT which we had taken on from Rewrite when it had closed).

It was not all worry and challenges, however. There were a lot of positives to celebrate. After the huge disruption of omicron, we had a number of exciting theatre projects coming up - our travelling children's theatre programme, supported by Team London Bridge, a three-week run of The Blue House by emerging company Helikon Theatre and the continuation of our Inter-Generational Project. We were also delighted to offer career development opportunities to a talented team of people, who were to lead the Blue Elephant in 2023-24. Alice Gentle, who had recently returned to her part-time Deputy Theatre Manager post following maternity leave, was seconded to Executive Director to oversee the organisation. Guillaume Doussin, producer with No Table, one of our recent resident companies, became Theatre Manager and Programmer. Darnell Shakespeare secured the role of Participation & Co-Artistic Director. Jimmy Chamberlain, recently returned from a lengthy period of sick leave, remained as General Manager. Jo remained employed by Blue Elephant in a consultancy role to ease the transitions.

Following the restructuring of Southwark Council's Culture grants, we were in a position to use free reserves to bridge the gap created in our annual budget and planned to do so to reduce pressure on a staff team with new responsibilities and a wide remit to fulfil. Some projects such as our Intergenerational Project were also delayed into 2022-23 when funds were received in 2021-22. As such, what appears a large deficit for the year was a planned utilisation of funds brought forward from 2021-22.

Long term projects

Young People's Theatre

Run by Carlos Ossa (and later Montel Douglas) and Sulaimon Idris, supported by long-standing volunteer Darren Spencer, Young People's Theatre continued to support local young people to develop confidence, social skills and creativity. It also remained an important resource for supporting young people's mental health with 89% of parents surveyed feeling that the sessions had improved their child's well-being. Sulaimon's return to the project

to replace Ore Olowokere meant that there continued to always be at least one past member of YPT working on it since 2016.

Some feedback from parents included:

"My very shy 9 & 8 year olds have started singing and dancing at home and school with so much confidence since they started here. The drama sessions really impact our well-being, mentally, physically and in bringing the community together."

"After joining YPT, my son has become more happy and likes to make new friends. He also helps me with the housework now and says it's teamwork- just like his drama sessions!"

"People say how thoughtful/ considerate/ confident my daughter is and I believe these sessions have helped develop these aspects of her personality"

ReACT

We were delighted to secure some funding from Jack Petchey Foundation's Relgnite Fund to ensure the continuation of our other youth theatre, ReACT, when its BBC Children in Need funding came to an end earlier than YPT's. Offering weekday evening provision enabled more young people to engage with our supportive workshops. The ReACT workshops took a focus on script work in summer term, nicely tying in with a trip to the Press Night of our in house show, *Give Me the Sun*, which participants had an opportunity to give feedback on afterwards.

Creative Minds

We delivered Creative Minds sessions as in school and after school provision in five Southwark primary schools. The demand for our workshops was reassuring after the pandemic disrupted our work with schools so much. Nonetheless, it is evident that schools' budgets are being hugely stretched and several schools preferred cheaper after school clubs to provision during the school day. For us, unfortunately, after school clubs are unsustainable financially and following the change in our funding position, we sadly made the decision to pause offering them. We deliver an intervention project in one of the schools we continue to work with, working with very small groups of students handpicked as needing this extra support, particularly around emotional needs. The school has said:

"While the budget is really tight, I value the work you do so so much it would be the last thing I would want to cut."

Public Health Project

Our Drama for Well-being project, funded by Public Health Southwark, progressed in exciting avenues in 2022-23. Community Development Assistant, Mariana Aristizábal, deftly managed the project, building up relationships and adapting the original plans in order to fulfil the aims of the project more successfully.

Delivered by Kome Ovuworie, our Dance with Dementia sessions went out to existing groups and community spaces, such as Time & Talents' Dementia Group and Camberwell Lodge, in order to make it as accessible as possible. and reach those who would really benefit.

We delivered 'Leave the Day Behind' Workshops as one-off workshops to groups of adults. Designed to help participants live in the moment and not let anxiety from one part of their lives overshadow it all, they were delivered to groups from Beyond Food, Waterloo Community Counselling, South London Cares and feedback included:

"A great start of my week"

"Can't think of anything better to have done in my time"

"I felt very engaged with others"

"It was really enjoyable, really lifted my spirit"

We continued our Playing Up workshops, delivering creative activities for early years children to support the well-being of their parents. We partnered with PACT with workshops happening with their Mumspace and Espacio Mama groups.

A highlight of this project was created midway through-a drama group for Spanish speaking adults called Creando Escenarios. Aimed at London's Latinx communities, Creando Escenarios is an artistic opportunity for Latinx adults (18+), aiming to improve their well-being and sense of belonging by offering a creative outlet in their mother tongue. It offered a chance of self-expression without worrying about mediating between languages and reached out to the often-marginalised Latinx communities locally.

Through drama activities and games, and pre and post-session social coffee time, 90% of participants strongly agreed that this project improved their mental health and well-being, building skills, developing confidence, resilience and empathy and generating spaces for meaningful conversations and connections.

"This space has given me many transferable skills, and I feel much better about myself in other aspects of my life. It helps me a lot with my mental health. After each session, I leave with a smile on my face and a sense of lightness in my body" (participant).

Creando Escenarios *"helps with personal and collective (social) development of migrant communities in London"* (participant) and proved so successful that it ran again with funding from United St Saviors after its initial funding was wound up.

Holiday Club work with SCHWEP

We worked with SCHWEP (Southwark Culture, Health & Well-being Partnership) again, providing cultural offerings to young people at holiday clubs. We delivered 26 workshops to 637 young people (approximately 40% of all the young people reached by the programme across the borough) and 74 young people came to see our Christmas show.

Short term projects

Touring Family Performances

With the support of Team London Bridge, we performed our early years storytelling shows *Cow's Rainy Day* and *Ana & Silly* in libraries and community spaces around Southwark including Walworth Library, Mercato Metropolitano, John Harvard Library, Camberwell Library and Elephant Park. More than 300 people saw these

performances and we were subsequently engaged by Southwark Libraries to deliver more performances in Peckham and Dulwich Libraries as part of their Festival of Words in June.

Street Parties

Supported once again by Southwark Council's Cultural Celebrations Fund, we held two street parties in 2022-23. The first, in August, had a circus theme and we enjoyed discovering which circus skills our talented team were hiding! In March, Group B and Young Company from Young People's Theatre performed their end of term showcases at the street party, which seemed very fitting given the initial idea for the street parties came from our youth board, made up of Group B and Young Company members, all the way back in 2019.

Theatre Programme

In 2022-23, Blue Elephant Theatre supported roughly **210 artists** through in-house events, shows and residencies, hosting **104** performances in-house. We were able to run our Elephantology Festival again, with funding from Austin Pilkington Trust, offering showcase opportunities and support to recent graduates. We again hosted residencies with a bursary attached to offset financial barriers.

As ever, our eclectic programme featured a high proportion of artists from diverse backgrounds, who may face barriers to careers in the arts, and was unafraid to engage with pressing questions and urgent topics. This includes *Patient is a Verb* about trans healthcare system by an all-trans team assembled by Burning Attic Theatre Company, *Lasagna*, about women who lost children to the care system, and *Grown Men Keep Breaking My Heart*, *Arrogant Soft* and *ERECT* which all looked at toxic masculinity in some way.

Some highlights included:

The Blue House

A play in poetic form by Gaia Fay Lambert, Helikon Theatre Company's *The Blue House* was the first three week run at the Blue Elephant since the start of the pandemic. We gave the production considerable support, including a subsidy, and helped the company secure Arts Council Funding for the run. It received offwestend.com award nominations for best ensemble performance and best director (Myles O'Gorman) while Jamie Lu was a finalist in the best Sound design category.

The Continuation of Our Intergenerational Project

Supported by a project grant from Arts Council England, we continued to look at the experiences of being 'first gen' in London by mounting in house production *Give Me the Sun* and holding Research & Development periods for *The Apple of His Eye* and *Approximately 150 Years*, whose opening pages had won our playwriting competition in 2020. We had originally planned for these projects to happen in 2021-22 but they were delayed, principally by the significant wave of Omicron in December 2021 and its knock on effects. The majority of funding was received in 2021-22 but utilised in 2022-23.

We had been working with Mamet Leigh, playwright of *Give Me the Sun*, since 2019, supporting the development of the script in various ways and ultimately produced *Give Me the Sun* as an in-house production. The majority of the creative team were of MENA (Middle Eastern & Northern African) background as the play is about an Egyptian father and son and the production was deeply moving to many in the audience.

"One of the most moving pieces I have ever seen. It made me think of my home and the reason why I came to UK."

"Speaks well to our own migrant experience but also different and intimate." – Mother & daughter from Egypt

It also received stellar reviews from the likes of Broadway World and London City Nights.

As a BET in house production, we were keen to make it as accessible as possible. We offered a relaxed performance, a performance captioned by Stagertext & an audiodescribed recording available for free. We also offered free tickets to SE5 & SE17 residents, & partnered with South London Cares to offer comps to participants of their "Love Your Neighbour" programme, which was very successful.

R&Ds: *The Apple of His Eye* & *Roughly 150 Years*

Vicky Olusanya and Rebecca Batala each used several days of space at BET to develop their pieces with a creative team. *The Apple of his Eye* had a closed showing in April 2022 with 10 spectators & a feedback session at the end. *Roughly 150 Years* had a sold-out public showcase with industry in attendance.

Both artists greatly benefited from the financial support, which took time pressures off & allowed them to work with industry professionals at BET, & to continue working on scripts after receiving feedback at the showcases.

Elefunny Comedy Nights

This year saw the launch of Elefunny Comedy Nights, compered and programmed by long term volunteer Fitzgerald Honger, who is a regular on London's stand up circuit. We had hoped to launch these comedy nights before the pandemic so were very glad they were finally realised! Viggo Venn performed at the November night, before going on to win Britain's Got Talent 2023.

A Topsy Turvy Christmas

Our inhouse Christmas production was funded by the Royal Victoria Hall Foundation, Unity Theatre Trust and our NPO funding. It was directed by Alice Gentle (who specialises in children's theatre outside her role at the Blue Elephant) and written by Louise Dickinson. This was our first time working with Louise since she had fallen ill with Covid in June 2020 as it had developed into Long Covid which incapacitated her. She had previously been our much-loved Young People's Theatre Coordinator and a Participation Officer who worked on numerous projects so we were delighted to be able to work with her again in a way which worked with her new needs.

A Topsy Turvy Christmas was about a young person coping with change and it was very well received by school and family

audiences. As ever, we heard that it was the first trip to the theatre for some young people, which it is our privilege to provide.

Black History Month Projects

We had two Black History Month projects onstage this year. A scratch night called Astroblack, curated by Tatenda Matsvai, and an original play for young people called Forgotten Voices by Jacqui Livingston. Forgotten Voices, which was supported by Southwark's Black History Month Fund, was also performed at local schools.

Volunteers

Darren Spencer continued to be a stalwart volunteer on YPT throughout 2022-23 while Anne Buffardi, who has been a front of house volunteer since 2015 and took part in our community play project in 2021-22, became even more involved in supporting the theatre. Former volunteer Ben Jones became a Duty Manager and we recruited several new volunteers after the lull caused by the pandemic.

Our Building

We aim to make our work as inclusive as possible and have been striving to make our building more accessible, safe and welcoming for some time. As part of the ongoing work to arrange a new lease, Southwark Council have addressed a number of concerns about the building, including redoing sections of the roof, replacing ceilings and re-damp proofing the theatre's back wall and repointing brickwork. With our NPO funding, Southwark's Cleaner, Greener, Safer funding and our Theatres Trust's Re-Opening fund support, we have improved our building hugely since 2019, including installing an entirely new fire alarm system with automatic sensors, purchasing a defibrillator, installing a ventilation system to ensure there are adequate air changes (particularly important in the wake of covid) and completely redoing our accessible bathroom. Additional work was done at the same time to address some dead legs in our water supply, improve our other bathrooms and address some issues to pave the way for a second accessible bathroom upstairs. While an Access Audit had previously established that it would not be possible to install a chair lift at Blue Elephant, we are committed to working towards making our building fully wheelchair accessible and so kept this in mind when other works were happening. As such, it was very welcome news when we successfully secured Cleaner, Greener, Safer funding from Southwark Council to work with architects (to RIBA State 3) to find solutions which could transform our building's accessibility.

Challenges

For all the positives, it was a very challenging year.

Incoming Participation & Co-Artistic Director, Darnell Shakespeare, stayed in post only eight weeks and his departure made us re-evaluate our onboarding practices.

We subsequently recruited openly to replace him, with involvement from Arts Council England, and Jo Sadler-Lovett, who had moved back to London for personal reasons, was reappointed to the Blue Elephant.

In November, we received news that we were to be dropped from ACE's National Portfolio, leaving our future uncertain. We set about redefining Blue Elephant's work model, aiming to find a balance between financial feasibility and maintaining our ethos and ideals. We chose to prioritise Blue Elephant's high quality participation and outreach work which has generated such profoundly positive outcomes over the last two decades. As such, we plan to predominantly run participatory programmes and pause our professional productions. This aligns with our ethos of prioritising artistic opportunities for those who may not otherwise access them, and is similar to our approach during the pandemic. We successfully applied to ACE's Transitions Fund to support the move to this new business model. This funding, with the majority of our free reserves, will support our core costs in 2023-24.

Conclusion

This was a very difficult year for the theatre. Having a near total changeover of the key staff at the beginning of the year was an unprecedented development, and led to extremely challenging circumstances for staff and trustees alike. The Blue Elephant owes a debt of gratitude to them all for their dedication, initiative and loyalty this last year.

The loss of NPO status has been a devastating blow. We had enjoyed a unique period of stability and development since 2018 with this regular funding and now, especially in conjunction with the loss of Southwark Council Core Funding and multi annual grants from BBC Children in Need, it is hard to adjust to being without that support. We see the Blue Elephant's future sustainability as being based on transitioning to a business model which uses our existing resources to generate earned income, widens the scope of our fundraising endeavours and relies on a smaller staff team with greater use of freelancers. While we make this transition, there has definitely been a feeling of reducing resources to survival mode; a great challenge to a venue that has been famed for its sociability, inclusivity and welcoming atmosphere.

The resilience of the theatre staff has been commendable in these difficult conditions. And while the future is uncertain, we are determined to find the light at the end of this threatening tunnel and continue to work in our community for years to come.

Financial Review

During the current financial year the Charity achieved a deficit of £72,420 (2022: surplus of £34,373), decreasing total reserves at year end to £114,581 (2022: £187,001). The deficit was a planned utilisation of funding received in the prior year.

Of the total reserves held at year end £113,011 was unrestricted in nature (2022: £140,693).

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have a policy that the Charity maintains an unrestricted reserve equivalent to at least three months of expenditure. At the year-end this equated to £60,300.

The current reserves of £113,011 meet this requirement.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Blue Elephant Theatre Limited is registered under the Companies Act 2006 as a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.

Blue Elephant Theatre Limited is a registered charitable company constituted as a limited company under its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The charity registration number is 1077161 (England and Wales) and the company registration number is 03724349 (England and Wales).

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

The Trustees are also the directors of Blue Elephant Theatre Limited for the purpose of company law. Blue Elephant Theatre Limited Articles of Association require a minimum of three trustees. There is no maximum number of trustees.

A third of the directors are subject to re-election at the Annual General Meeting, with no maximum length of service. Only the current directors can appoint new directors.

Organisational structure

The Trustees are responsible for the overall financial control, direction and work of the Charity. They meet approximately nine times a year with the principal staff outlined on page 2, who have no voting rights. Day-to-day responsibilities are delegated to the principal staff within a framework of approved policies and operational plans, who manage the other staff employed by the Charity.

Statement of Board of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law they are required to prepare the financial statements in accordance with UK Accounting Standards and applicable law (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the excess of income over expenditure for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and,

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue its activities.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They have general responsibility for taking such steps as are reasonably open to them to safeguard the assets of the charitable company and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the UK governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions. In addition, the Trustees confirm that they are happy that content of the annual review, including the legal and administrative information, in pages 2 to 7 of this document meet the requirements of both the Trustees' Annual Report under charity law and the Directors' Report under company law.

They also confirm that the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in the notes to the accounts and comply with the Charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102, The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published on 16 July 2014.

Preparation of the report

This report has been prepared taking advantage of the small companies exemption of section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

Independent Examiners

The independent examiners, Andy Nash Accounting & Consultancy Ltd, have indicated their willingness to accept re-appointment under Section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 14 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:


CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE (Dec 15, 2023 17:55 GMT)

Chris Lawrence

Chair of Trustees

Independent examiner's report to the board of trustees of Blue Elephant Theatre Limited

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of Blue Elephant Theatre Limited (charity number 1077161 – England & Wales, company number 03724349) for the year ended 31 March 2023 which are set out on pages 9 to 22.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act'). The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act') nor under Part 16 of the 2006 Act, and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and,
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

This report, including my statement, has been prepared for and only for the Charity's Trustees as a body. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the Charity's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity and the Charity's Trustees as a body for my examination work, for this report, or for the statements I have made.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the Trustees concerning any such matters.

The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or,
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or,
- the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or,
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Andrew Philip Nash ACA

Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales – 2461833

Dated: 15 December 2023

Andy Nash Accounting & Consultancy Ltd
Units 24 & 25
Goodsheds Container Village
Hood Road
Barry
CF62 5QU

Statement of Financial Activities

Incorporating the Income & Expenditure Account and the Statement of Recognised Gains & Losses
For the year ended 31 March 2023

		Unrestricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Restricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £
	Notes				
Income from:					
Donations & legacies	2	76,612	60,202	136,814	251,671
Charitable activities	3	38,435	-	38,435	22,759
Other trading activities	4	9,409	-	9,409	1,069
Investments		173	-	173	7
Total income		124,629	60,202	184,831	275,506
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	5	4,548	80	4,628	830
Charitable activities	6	136,111	116,512	252,623	240,303
Total expenditure		140,659	116,592	257,251	241,133
Net income/(expenditure)		(16,030)	(56,390)	(72,420)	34,373
Transfers between funds	10 & 11	(11,652)	11,652	-	-
Net movement in funds		(27,682)	(44,738)	(72,420)	34,373
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward	10 & 11	140,693	46,308	187,001	152,628
Total funds carried forward	10 & 11	113,011	1,570	114,581	187,001

All income from investments was unrestricted as to use in both the current and prior year.

The notes on pages 11 to 22 form part of the financial statements.

Balance Sheet

As at 31 March 2023

	Notes	Total funds 31-Mar-23 £	Total funds 31-Mar-22 £
Current assets:			
Debtors & prepayments	8	8,172	25,623
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>109,877</u>	<u>164,724</u>
Total current assets		118,049	190,347
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	(3,468)	(3,346)
Net current assets		114,581	187,001
Net assets		114,581	187,001
The funds of the charity:			
Restricted funds	10 & 11	1,570	46,308
Unrestricted funds	10 & 11	113,011	140,693
Total charity funds		114,581	187,001

The notes on pages 11 to 22 form part of the financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with section 415A of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and FRS 102 Section 1A.

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2023, and the members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 under section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of the accounts.

They were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 14 December 2023 and signed on their behalf by:


CHRISTOPHER LAWRENCE (Dec 15, 2023 17:55 GMT)

Chris Lawrence

Chair of Trustees

Notes to the financial statements

1. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation of the financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 'Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) second edition (effective 1 January 2019)', the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The effect of any event relating to the period ended 31 March 2023, which occurred before the date of approval of the financial statements by the Board of Trustees has been included in the financial statements to the extent required to show a true and fair view of the state of affairs at 31 March 2023 and the results for the year ended on that date.

Under the exemption available to smaller charities the Board of Trustees has chosen not to include a Statement of Cash Flows within the financial statements.

The functional currency of the Charity is sterling and amounts in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest pound.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis as the Board of Trustees is confident that future reserves and future income is more than sufficient to meet current commitments. There are no material uncertainties that impact this assessment and the ongoing global economic uncertainty has had no material impact on this assessment.

Legal status

Blue Elephant Theatre Limited is a charitable company registered in England & Wales, and meets the definition of a public benefit entity. In the event of the Charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10 per member. The registered address is 59a Bethwin Road, London, SE5 0XT.

Fund Accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise of unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in note 10 of the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds that are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or that have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The

aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in note 10 of the financial statements.

Income

Income is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance indicators attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Donations are recognised in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when entitled, receipt is probable and when the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. Gift aid receivable is included when claimable.

Grant income is credited to the Statement of Financial Activities when received or receivable whichever is earlier, unless the grant relates to a future period, in which case it is deferred.

Income from charitable activities and other trading activities is credited to the Statement of Financial Activities when received or receivable whichever is earlier, unless it relates to a specific future period or event, in which case it is deferred, except for tickets sales and bar revenue which are recognised on a cash basis.

Donated goods and services

Donated goods and services are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the Charity, which is measured as the amount the Charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market. This amount cannot exceed open market fair value. A corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities.

Indirect costs, including governance costs, which cannot be directly attributed to activities, are allocated directly to charitable activities as this is the focus of all staff time. A breakdown of these expenses is outlined in note 6 of the financial statements.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of expenditure for which it was incurred.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets comprise fixtures, fittings, and equipment. As a substantial part of the theatre equipment used by the Charity for its activities belongs to the landlord it is excluded from the financial statements.

Other equipment that has been purchased by the Charity is written off in the year of acquisition due to the nature of the wear and tear during its normal use within a theatre context.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash in hand, deposits with banks and funds that are readily convertible into cash at, or close to, their carrying values, but are not held for investment purposes.

Debtors and prepayments

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount is applied. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Creditors and accruals

Creditors are recognised where the Charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party, and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Pensions

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme which is administered by an external independent pension provider. Contributions are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities as they fall due.

Financial instruments

Basic financial instruments are measured at amortised cost other than investments which are measured at fair value.

Critical estimates and judgements

In preparing financial statements it is necessary to make certain judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts recognised in the financial statements. The treatment of tangible fixed assets is sensitive to changes in useful economic lives and residual values of assets. In the view of the Trustees in applying the accounting policies adopted, no judgements were required that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements nor do any estimates or assumptions made carry a significant risk of material adjustment in the next financial year.

2. Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Restricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £
Grants			
Arts Council England - Project Grant	-	3,888	3,888
Arts Council England - National Portfolio Organisation	73,834	-	73,834
Austin & Hope Pilkington Trust	-	1,000	1,000
BBC Children in Need	-	22,480	22,480
Chapman Charitable Trust	-	1,000	1,000
Jack Petchey Foundation	-	7,800	7,800
Royal Hall Victoria Foundation	-	1,000	1,000
Southwark Council Black History Month	-	2,000	2,000
Southwark Council (Street party)	-	5,540	5,540
Southwark Council (Public Health)	-	9,741	9,741
Team London Bridge	-	2,000	2,000
United St Saviours	-	2,953	2,953
Unity Theatre Trust	-	800	800
	73,834	60,202	134,036
Mad about the Elephant - membership scheme	290	-	290
Other donations	2,488	-	2,488
	76,612	60,202	136,814

2. Income from donations and legacies (continued from previous page)

	<i>Unrestricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>
Grants			
Arts Council England - Project Grant	-	34,990	34,990
Arts Council England - National Portfolio Organisation	73,834	-	73,834
Alan & Babette Sainsbury Trust	15,000	-	15,000
BBC Children in Need	-	64,916	64,916
Jack Petchey Foundation	-	850	850
KFC Foundation	-	1,957	1,957
Saving London Lives	-	10,000	10,000
Southwark Council (mainstream)	-	19,500	19,500
Southwark Council Black History Month	-	1,998	1,998
Southwark Council (Street party)	-	4,052	4,052
Southwark Council (Public Health)	-	5,566	5,566
Southwark Council (Neighbourhood fund)	-	2,800	2,800
Team London Bridge	-	2,000	2,000
	<hr/> 88,834	<hr/> 148,629	<hr/> 237,463
Mad about the Elephant - membership scheme	390	-	390
Other donations	13,818	-	13,818
	<hr/> 103,042	<hr/> 148,629	<hr/> 251,671

3. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Restricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £
Creative Minds - contribution from schools	10,888	-	10,888
Box office takings	21,165	-	21,165
Theatre hire	1,860	-	1,860
Other	4,522	-	4,522
	38,435	-	38,435

	<i>Unrestricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>
Creative Minds - contribution from schools	6,815	-	6,815
Box office takings	4,786	-	4,786
Theatre hire	4,448	-	4,448
Other	6,710	-	6,710
	22,759	-	22,759

4. Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Restricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £
Merchandise	6	-	6
Bar takings	9,403	-	9,403
	9,409	-	9,409

	<i>Unrestricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>
Merchandise	6	-	6
Bar takings	1,063	-	1,063
	1,069	-	1,069

5. Expenditure on raising funds

	Unrestricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Restricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £
Bar purchases	4,548	80	4,628
	4,548	80	4,628

	<i>Unrestricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>
Bar purchases	782	48	830
	782	48	830

6. Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Restricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £
Staff salaries	93,155	51,084	144,239
Other staff costs	1,095	451	1,546
Production costs	8,363	989	9,352
Projects	9,131	57,885	67,016
Marketing	150	2,202	2,352
Premises	17,821	2,680	20,501
Office overheads	4,860	1,221	6,081
Governance	1,536	-	1,536
	136,111	116,512	252,623

	Unrestricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £	Restricted funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £	Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £
Staff salaries	78,761	80,462	159,223
Other staff costs	600	1,104	1,704
Production costs	2,097	3,665	5,762
Projects	7,117	32,403	39,520
Marketing	78	324	402
Premises	13,445	11,305	24,750
Office overheads	5,423	2,079	7,502
Governance	1,440	-	1,440
	108,961	131,342	240,303

Governance costs includes:

	Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £
Independent examination	1,536	1,440
	1,536	1,440

7. Staff costs

	Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	<i>Total funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>
Gross salaries	136,120	149,919
Employer's NIC	5,521	6,463
Employer's pension	2,598	2,841
	144,239	159,223

The average headcount during the period was 13 persons (2022: 15 persons).

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 (2022: Nil).

The total employee benefits paid to key management personnel during the year was £72,097 (2022: £62,687).

8. Debtors and prepayments

	Total funds 31-Mar-23 £	<i>Total funds 31-Mar-22 £</i>
Other debtors	5,620	21,216
Prepayments	2,552	2,668
Accrued income	-	1,739
	8,172	25,623

9. Creditors – amounts falling due within one year

	Total funds 31-Mar-23 £	<i>Total funds 31-Mar-22 £</i>
Accruals	3,118	2,629
Pensions	-	667
Deposits held	350	50
	3,468	3,346

10. Analysis of charity funds

	Funds brought forward Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Income for the year Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Expenditure in the year Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Transfer between funds Year ended 31-Mar-23 £	Funds carried forward Year ended 31-Mar-23 £
Unrestricted funds	140,693	124,629	(140,659)	(11,652)	113,011
Restricted funds					
Community Development Assistant	7,774	-	(7,911)	137	-
Theatres Trust	1,876	-	(2,557)	681	-
Team London Bridge	849	2,000	(2,849)	-	-
Young People's Theatre (i)	297	23,480	(22,777)	-	1,000
Young People's Theatre (ii)	600	300	(900)	-	-
ReACT	-	7,500	(9,299)	1,799	-
Black History Month	-	2,000	(2,000)	-	-
Public Health Southwark	3,723	9,741	(13,464)	-	-
Neighbourhood Fund	609	-	(609)	-	-
Street Party	-	5,540	(5,558)	18	-
Intergeneration Festival	30,580	3,888	(34,468)	-	-
A Topsy Turvy Christmas	-	1,800	(9,425)	7,625	-
Creando Escenarios	-	2,953	(2,383)	-	570
Elephantology 2023	-	1,000	(2,392)	1,392	-
	46,308	60,202	(116,592)	11,652	1,570
	187,001	184,831	(257,251)	-	114,581

Community Development Assistant

We received funding from the Evening Standard Dispossessed Fund/Save London Lives, which had previously funded a Development Officer. After this role became vacant, we redesigned the role as a Community Development Assistant, supporting the Participation department more broadly.

Theatres Trust

We received a grant in the 2020-21 financial year to install a new ventilation system in the theatre, which was carried out in summer of 2021. Southwark Council's Cleaner, Greener, Safer was the other funder of this work. Further work associated with the installation was completed in 2022-23.

Team London Bridge

This grant funded free storytelling performances around Southwark for early years audiences, delivering these in partnership with libraries and local companies.

Young People's Theatre (i)

Young People's Theatre is a youth theatre project for children and young people in our local area facing various barriers. YPT reaches approximately 120 young people each year aged 7 – 18 on 30 Saturdays throughout the year. It is funded by BBC Children in Need

for most of 2022-23. A grant of £1000 was received from the Chapman Charitable Trust in 2022-23, towards delivery from April - May 2023.

Young People's Theatre (ii)

Young People's Theatre also receives funding from Jack Petchey to support treats and Leadership awards for the young people.

ReACT

ReACT is also a youth theatre, funded by Children in Need, primarily working with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Its work for young people aged 11 - 18 from May to December 2022 was supported by a grant of £7,500 from the Jack Petchey ReIgnite Fund. We also ran sessions for 6 - 11 year olds.

Black History Month Project

Southwark Council's Black History Month fund allowed us to commission and stage a new work by Jacqui Livingston called Forgotten Voices.

Public Health Southwark

We launched four new projects to run across 2022 under the Southwark Council Public Health pilot programme including:

- Workshops with adults to 'Leave the Day Behind', providing tools to live in the moment and handle anxiety.
- Playing Up! workshops, working on developing play with new parents and their young children which we delivered in partnership with PACT.
- Dance with Dementia, a group for people with dementia and their caregivers encouraging activity.
- Creando Escenarios, a drama group for adults from Latinx Communities, delivered through Spanish.

Neighbourhood Fund

Camberwell West's Neighbourhood Fund supported us to run After Hours for aspiring local actors, culminating in an original performance at our March Street Party.

Street Party

Southwark Council awarded us a second Cultural Celebrations Grant for us to host two community street parties, following the success of our initial parties.

Intergenerational Festival

We received a project grant from Arts Council England to commission and stage an Intergenerational Festival, comprising of a community play, R&D and seed funding for two emerging writers and a full-scale professional production of 'Give Me the Sun' by

Mamet Leigh. Owing to COVID and other factors, the production and writing R&Ds were pushed back into 2022-23.

A Topsy Turvy Christmas

Blue Elephant's Christmas production, an original play written by Louise Dickinson and directed by Alice Gentle, was supported by our NPO funding and grants from the Royal Victoria Hall Foundation and Unity Theatre Trust.

Creando Escenarios

Following the success of the initial Creando Escenarios project as part of our grant from Public Health Southwark, we secured funding from United Saint Saviours Charity to continue our Spanish-speaking drama group.

Elephantology 2023

The Austin & Hope Pilkington Trust supported us with a grant of £1,000 towards Elephantology, our initiative to support recent graduates and early career artists as they navigate entering the arts after training. This was supplemented by our NPO funding to enable us to support artists with bursaries, residencies, showcase opportunities and mentoring.

	<i>Funds brought forward Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Income for the year Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Expenditure in the year Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Transfer between funds Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>	<i>Funds carried forward Year ended 31-Mar-22 £</i>
Unrestricted funds	115,744	126,877	(109,743)	7,815	140,693
Restricted funds					
Core and Management	-	19,500	(19,500)	-	-
Community Development Assistant	7,945	10,000	(10,171)	-	7,774
Elephant and Castle Project	10,000	-	(9,501)	(499)	-
Theatres Trust	5,000	-	(3,124)	-	1,876
Team London Bridge	-	2,000	(1,151)	-	849
Elephantology	5,000	-	(4,020)	(980)	-
Mrs Smith and Mount Trust	3,600	-	(3,600)	-	-
Young People's Theatre (i)	1,817	29,307	(24,107)	(6,720)	297
Young People's Theatre (ii)	1,250	850	(1,500)	-	600
ReACT	(1,747)	35,609	(34,596)	734	-
Speak Out Train in Work	2,328	1,957	(4,285)	-	-
RAFT Workshops	1,400	-	(1,344)	(56)	-
Who Me?/Playing Up	291	-	-	(291)	-
Black History Month	-	1,998	(1,998)	-	-
Public Health Southwark	-	5,566	(1,843)	-	3,723
Neighbourhood Fund	-	2,800	(2,191)	-	609
Street Party	-	4,052	(4,049)	(3)	-
Intergeneration Festival	-	34,990	(4,410)	-	30,580
	36,884	148,629	(131,390)	(7,815)	46,308
	152,628	275,506	(241,133)	-	187,001

Core and Management Spending

Southwark Council supported the theatre by continuing to provide a Culture Grant. This goes towards the rent of the venue, as well as contributing towards the Executive & Co-Artistic Director.

Core costs were also contributed from the Alan and Babette Sainsbury Trust.

Our NPO grant from ACE (Arts Council England) is considered unrestricted income. It is used to support a breadth of our work as well as the core costs of the organisation.

Elephant & Castle Project

We received funding from the Elephant & Castle Fund towards our reopening activities, providing workshops and performances in the Elephant & Castle Opportunity Area. While the grant was secured in summer 2020, restrictions relating to the pandemic prevented the work going ahead until 2021-22.

Elephantology

The Idlewild Trust supported us with a grant of £5,000 towards supporting recent graduates and early career artists as they navigated entering the arts after training. The project took place in

2021-22, supporting artists with workshops, residencies, showcase opportunities and mentoring.

Mrs Smith and Mount Trust

Funded a joint project with Headway South East London and North West Kent (SELNWK) called SELNEK Elephants, working to improve mental health and be a creative outlet for adults with acquired brain injury.

Speak Out Train in Work

Funded by D'oyly Carte and the KFC Foundation in 2021-22, this project worked with young adults (18-24) not in education, employment or training to nurture them into professional drama facilitators, running workshops in local schools and for community organisations.

RAFT Workshops

Online and in person workshops supported the Fore's RAFT Fund were run to address gaps in learning and experience for young people brought about by school closures and other restrictions of lockdowns.

Who Me? (Knife Crime Pilot)/ Playing Up (Early Years Pilot)

A planned early-intervention project working with young people about to move into secondary school, looking at the pressures this age group faces as well as identifying the early signs of gang grooming and how to avoid them. To date, this work has been largely research. This work is funded by the Alan & Babette Sainsbury Trust.

We also launched a project for children aged 0-3 and their parents/carers called Playing Up! Funded by the Alan & Babette Sainsbury Trust, we partnered with a Southwark Children & Family Centre and local organisation PACT which runs Mumspace to run two iterations of the project in winter 2020. The workshops were originally intended to be run face to face but pivoted online when further restrictions were reintroduced.

11. Analysis of net assets

	Unrestricted funds 31-Mar-23 £	Restricted funds 31-Mar-23 £	Total funds 31-Mar-23 £
Current assets	116,479	1,570	118,049
Current liabilities	(3,468)	-	(3,468)
	113,011	1,570	114,581

	Unrestricted funds 31-Mar-22 £	Restricted funds 31-Mar-22 £	Total funds 31-Mar-22 £
Current assets	144,039	46,308	190,347
Current liabilities	(3,346)	-	(3,346)
	140,693	46,308	187,001

12. Other financial commitments

At 31 March 2023, the Charity had no other financial commitments or contingent liabilities.

13. Trustee remuneration

During the year, no Trustee received any remuneration (2022: £Nil). No members of the Board of Trustees received

reimbursement of expenses related to attendance at trustee meetings (2022: £Nil).

14. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the current year (2022: £Nil).