

Company Registration No. 07897118 (England and Wales)
Charity Registration No. 1147372

**Belarus Free Theatre
Trustees' Report And Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 January 2023**

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

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BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Trustees	M J Attenborough M F Ball J R Bierman T J Clark H A Kennedy D M Lan D J Law M F Miller A Stanley L J Wade S West
Registered Office	c/o Young Vic Theatre 66 The Cut London SE1 8LZ
Company Registration Number (England and Wales)	7897118
Charity Registration Number	1147372
Bankers	HSBC Bank plc 28 Borough High Street Southwark SE1 1YB
Auditors	Saffery LLP 71 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4BE

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2023

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of the company law, present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 January 2023.

The company is a registered charity, registered number 1147372, limited by guarantee. The company is incorporated under the Companies Act 2006 and is governed by its Articles and Memorandum of Association dated 4 January 2012.

Structure, Governance and Management

The company was formed on 4th of January 2012. The company's principal activity is to advance the arts for the public benefit by the promotion in particular, but not exclusively, of the art of drama. The company was registered as a charity of 22 May 2012.

Trustees are recruited and appointed in accordance with the organisation's governing document and mission statement, and with relevant legislation. Before new trustees are appointed the Board determines what new attributes and knowledge are needed and then compiles a profile.

Trustees

The trustees in post at any point between 1 February 2022 and the date of signing this report were as follows:

M J Attenborough
M F Ball
J R Bierman
T J Clark
H A Kennedy
D Kramer (resigned 13 October 2022)
D M Lan
D J Law
M F Miller
A J Stanley
D Wilson (resigned 18 June 2022)
L J Wade
S A J West

Objectives

Belarus Free Theatre (BFT) is a UK-based international award-winning theatre company founded on the principle of freedom of speech and artistic expression. The charity's objectives, as set down in its articles of association, are to advance the arts for the public benefit by the promotion, but not exclusively, of the art of drama.

The company has previously worked with both a permanent ensemble of actors based in Belarus and an international ensemble made up of UK and international actors. As of November 2021,

following a period of severe repression the majority of Belarus based ensemble relocated to the UK and Poland for safety reasons. Continuing to work in the UK and across borders, BFT creates advocates and educates internationally for human rights. The company brings the lived experience of state oppression to the stage by creating theatre drawn directly from real life experience as well as presenting contemporary deconstructions of classic works.

BFT's transnational initiatives and theatre education programmes encourages people to find their own voices within society and to develop a deeper engagement with social and political issues.

Review of activities and achievements

Belarus Free Theatre is an Associate Company of Young Vic Theatre, London. However, in 2023 has relocated its headquarters to a new address at Somerset House, London. As of January 2023, Belarus Free Theatre has ceased to receive the in-kind support from the Young Vic Theatre that consisted of office space, support staff, IT and telephone. Gifts in kind in the form of donated services from the Young Vic that cannot be quantified with reasonable accuracy are not recognised by the Charity.

The UK office now solely coordinates all the charitable activities in the UK and around the world, including organising creative residences and performances in the UK and international performances and tours, building relations with local and international partners, performance-linked human rights projects and fundraising for the company's operations.

Entering its tenth year as a registered UK company and charity, in 2022-23 Belarus Free Theatre continues to deliver high impact programmes in the UK and internationally.

Artistic Activities Promoting Democracy and Social Justice in Belarus

Review of Activities and Achievements for 2022/23

Following the forced relocation of the company from Belarus caused by the regime's crackdown on pro-democracy organisations and the associated risks to the personal safety of the staff, Belarus Free Theatre has become a truly international company with ensemble members residing in the UK, Poland and Ukraine.

Despite some of the staff being personally affected by the war in Ukraine which began in February 2022, the company premiered a sold-out show at the Barbican main stage, titled Dogs of Europe, which was simultaneously live streamed back to Belarus.

The company has gone on to tour Dogs of Europe along with its other shows internationally, as well as continued working with the Belarusian community in exile in Poland, including working with Belarusian and Ukrainian refugee children. As such, despite the continued impact of the authoritarian regime within Belarus and the complex geopolitical situation in the surrounding region, Belarus Free Theatre has delivered against the goals set out for the 2022/23 financial year.

Belarus Free Theatre Performances

Between February 2022 and January 2023 has presented a new, large scale production Dogs of Europe, as well as numerous smaller shows within its laboratory in Poland. The number of new productions was significantly lower than the year prior, largely due to the relocation of the company out of Belarus and the consequential lack of activity there.

Dogs of Europe

Dogs of Europe has originally premiered in Belarus in February 2020, but was fully reimaged in London following the relocation of the company. It resonated not just with the current realities but warned us of potential dangers ahead. The play is based on a novel by a banned Belarusian writer Alheird Baharevich, which looks into a possible anti-utopian future in which Russia develops a new Reich and takes over the majority of Asia and post-Soviet countries. Its counterpart -- the West, in turn, has forgotten how to read books. This extremely poignant novel was meant to act as a warning of growing Russian aggression – and the war in Ukraine began days before the premiere in the Barbican. The physical production sold out in its Barbican run.

In addition performing the show live at the Barbican we live streamed the show to Belarus as well as pre-recorded the show to be released on Belarusian Freedom Day, in support of all the political prisoners. The live stream happened on the 11th of March 2022 and was advertised in advance through various social media channels, including Nicolai Khelezin's telegram channel, with over 12,000 followers, Motolkohelp, with over 131,000 followers, as well as through Nicolai's Facebook, with over 10,000 followers. It was also promoted by the Belarusian opposition leader Svetlana Tikhanovskaya. On the day at 7:30 pm GMT, so 9:30 GMT+3 (Minsk time), 8,074 people joined the live stream. The recording of the Dogs of Europe was released on the 25th of March in honour of Freedom Day in Belarus, it was watched similarly to the live stream on YouTube and was watched by 3,316 people, of whom 45.6% were in Belarus.

Following the Barbican success, the show went on tour to Luxemburg and in December 2022, Dogs of Europe was presented Paris to the Odeon Theatre, one of the main theatres in France, and was sold out for the whole duration of the run. The show was watched by over 4,000 people and was described in the French media as "a theatrical 'warning shot' about growing authoritarianism."

Master Had a Talking Sparrow

First premiered in Minsk in 2017, Master Had a Talking Sparrow is an immersive theatrical dining experience that explores the hidden histories of Belarus by placing the audience at the heart of a family's birthday celebrations. Over mouthfuls of delicious Belarusian cuisine, the kaleidoscopic evening descends through toasts, impassioned speeches and dancing until long-buried memories rise to the surface as the conversation turns to 1941 and the unsayable becomes sayable.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2023

Inspired by Zmitser Bartosik's book of the same name, *Master Had a Talking Sparrow* shares the stories of the last survivors of the Second World War in Belarus and the history of a country torn apart by communism and Nazism. As imperialism continues to destroy the lives of people across eastern Europe, this urgent piece of theatre blasts through rose-tinted nostalgia to point the finger squarely at the icons and demigods who brought Belarus and its people to their knees.

Master Had a Talking Sparrow was reimagined for London partially since, in the face of arrest in Belarus and war in Ukraine, our actors essentially became homeless. This brought the realisation that there are many Belarusians like us stranded in the UK, so we reimagined the show during a three-week sold-out run at London's Stonesnest, including two free runs for Ukrainian refugees from Bucha and Irpen.

For all three runs of the production, we partnered with Anna Goltsberg, a fashion photographer from Ukraine to create an exhibition portraying the faces of the unsung heroes of Kyiv at the start of the war. The performance combined with the exhibition was attended by Ukrainian and Belarusian refugees, who attended for free - to help them not only get involved into the political discourse but provide the sense of community and home.

Audience Statistics

Show	Total Performances	Total Audience
<i>Dogs of Europe</i>	14	11,310
<i>Discover Love</i>	1	986
<i>Master Had a Talking Sparrow</i>	15	330
<i>Post Childhood</i>	10	1,500
<i>Total</i>	40	14,126

Despite a decrease in the number of performances during the financial year, the number of people who attended productions in person grew exponentially, largely due to international touring and the location of company outside of Belarus, where due to its underground nature only a limited number of audience members were able to attend the show at any given time.

Education

Postchildhood

Due to the company relocation out of Belarus the theatre laboratory Fortinbras, which has existed for over a decade underground in Belarus, changed its format and relocated to Poland. Work on a new show, *Postchildhood*, started in the aftermath of the war in Ukraine when our laboratory in Warsaw received requests to teach not only Belarusian refugee children but also Ukrainian refugee children too.

Postchildhood was directed by long-standing BFT ensemble member, Pavel Haradnitski, co-directed by Svetlana Sugako, and created with and performed by seven young people, aged 14 to 17, originally from Belarus and Ukraine and now living in exile in Poland. The show had been developed and rehearsed since May 2022, using BFT's method of Total Immersion led by co-founding Artistic Director Nicolai Khalezin, who worked with the young people to build theatrical stories based on their real-life experiences. The resulting stage production - Postchildhood - was an exploration of what matters most to them: their relationship with their parents, as well as questions around how asylum, war, sexuality and nationality are shaping their sense of evolving identity. Each performance was followed by a post-show Q&A with Natalia Kaliada, the co-founding Artistic Director of BFT, and members of the acting company, and on the final show, the panel was joined by Agnieszka Holland, the renowned Polish filmmaker.

Towards the end of the 2022, Belarus Free Theatre started to work with the parents of the children from PostChildhood to provide a reflection of older people who had to become refugees and become displaced from their countries. The show PostEscape premiered in Warsaw in February 2023.

Online following

Platform	Followers/subscribers Jan 2022	Followers/subscribers Jan 2023
Twitter	16,100	18,272
Instagram	6,732	7,320
Youtube	2,985	3,010

UK Programmes

The majority of Belarus Free Theatre's activities of 2022/23 financial year were carried out in the UK due to a number of factors, including the company relocation and the ongoing war in Ukraine.

The show Dogs of Europe has premiered in London in March 2022, starting the UK season for Belarus Free Theatre and the Master had a Talking Sparrow was performed for three one week runs over the following months.

As the UK has shown great support for the Ukrainian refugees we felt the need to make our own contributions by mounting photography exhibitions and offering free shows for the refugees in an environment where people spoke the same language and were of the same culture.

In 2023 we plan to premiere another show at the Barbican main stage, King Stakh's Wild Hunt which will be a first Belarusian modern opera production sung in Belarusian. The project has been in development in 2022, with the music and libretto being written by our team along with talented Belarusian artists, who look forward to bring it to life in 2023.

International Press Coverage

Due to the relocation of the company out of Belarus as well as production of the largest new show up to date, we have received a large number of international coverages both in the UK and abroad.

The production of Dogs of Europe was reviewed by the Guardian, ArtsHub, TimeOut, Evening Standard, The Stage, The New York Times, The Independent, Toute la Culture, The American and many others. Master had a Talking Sparrow was reviewed in Time Out and The Stage and wider pieces on Belarus Free Theatre were commissioned by the New York Times, The Stage, The New European, The Telegraph, and others.

Simultaneously Belarus Free Theatre has continued to receive consistent media coverage by Belarusian media, not only in telegram channels (Nexta, Motolko Help, Zerkalo, Kyky_ which since the 2020 elections became the main source of communication), but also in few still published media outlets, such as Nasha Niva.

Future Plans

In 2023 Belarus Free Theatre plans to premiere its first ever opera production of King Stakh's Wild Hunt which is due to premiere in September of 2023, with a cast consisting of a Ukrainian and Belarusian ensemble. As such majority of 2023 will be devoted to the production of the opera as well as the rehearsal period.

Dogs of Europe is scheduled for a tour in Australia and Germany for the spring of 2023, where it will perform in Adelaide and Berlin respectively.

Documentary Alone is also scheduled to go on tour in New York for a number of private screenings in an attempt to bring wider attention to the subject of art as a tool in combating authoritarian regimes.

Public Benefit

In planning the activities of the Charity, the Trustees have given due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The trustees believe that the activities of the charity in the year confirm its ability to provide current and on-going benefit to the public.

Belarus Free Theatre continues to work across borders, increasing its accessibility to audiences around the world – both through international performing and the development of its digital work.

The company continues to work with international talent in order to raise awareness of global issues through its outstanding, critically acclaimed theatre productions. It continues its unique and exceptional outreach work with young people in the UK, Belarus and around the world.

Financial Review

In 2022/23 Belarus Free Theatre has spent £1,316,540 (2021/22: £952,533). Staff and personnel expenditure at £388,755 (2021/22: £417,824) was lower than in the previous years due to a reduction in administrative and production staff. Staff costs equated to 30% (2021/22: 44%) of the total expenditure of the Charity.

Fundraising was at a slightly lower level than in previous years - with fundraising efforts leading to donations and grants of £1,240,315 (2021/22: £1,807,157), approximately 85% (2021/22: 98%) of the total income of £1,459,406 in the year (2021/22: £1,840,507).

Reserves Policy and Risk Management

The Trustees consider the risk to the charity at each quarterly Board meeting and ensure that systems and procedures are established to mitigate key risks identified. These key risks fall into two broad areas:

The security of the personnel and property of the charity, due to the nature of its work. These risks are managed through frequent reviews of the security situation in the areas in which it works, and through specific training of all Company members.

That the Charity receives and maintains adequate resources to deliver its charitable objectives, mitigated by diverse fundraising strategies which are regularly reviewed by the Trustees.

It is the policy of the Trustees for the charity to hold reserves to enable it to continue to operate for approximately three months in the event of a shortfall in income.

At the balance sheet date, the charity held "free" reserves, defined as unrestricted funds of £1,299,225 (2022: £928,616).

This current level of free reserves is sufficient for the charity to carry on its basic operations and support the company in line with the reserves policy. The trustees have the flexibility on specific projects and will only go ahead with these when confirmed funding is in place.

Fundraising policy

That the Charity receives and maintains adequate resources to deliver its charitable objectives, mitigated by diverse fundraising strategies which are regularly reviewed by the Trustees.

The Trustees understand their responsibility and the implications of fundraising as set out under the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016. The Charity is committed to its donors and remains committed to the highest level of supporter care. The Charity fundraises in a variety of ways including via the Charity's website, at theatrical productions and in applying for grants from trusts and foundations. The Trustees are not aware of any complaints in relation to fundraising during the financial year.

Going Concern

Following the relocation of the ensemble in October 2021 the company has faced increased overhead costs, which however are expected to drop towards the end of next financial year as many company members chose to relocate to Poland which is closer proximity to Belarus, easing the travel requirements for their family members in comparison with the UK. Keeping in mind that such concerns are potentially unavoidable the Trustees hope to further diversify sources of income and to attract more unrestricted sources of income which can cover the variation in overheads caused by the relocation.

Furthermore, the company is expecting significant production costs involved with the new opera King Stakh's Wild Hunt due to the nature of production, which is a large scale opera, and to the production costs associated with creating brand new material and the international nature of the ensemble.

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's financial position, taking account of the levels of reserves and cash in the charity at the balance sheet date. The Trustees believe that the charity is well placed to manage operational and financial risks successfully and has the flexibility to undertake projects only when funding is confirmed for them.

The Trustees acknowledge that there are uncertainties inherent in the timing of receipts from funders but are confident that they have plans in place to manage any delays in receiving funding for specific projects.

Accordingly, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and believe that there are no material uncertainties that call into doubt the Charity's ability to continue. The Trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the annual accounts.

Remuneration

Remuneration policy is decided by the Executive Management team, consisting of the Artistic Directors, and is reviewed by the Board of Trustees as part of the financial review at all Board meetings. The Board is responsible for making recommendations and approving any changes to the Artistic Director's salaries.

Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are directors of Belarus Free Theatre for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming

resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at the time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and the group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act relating to smaller companies.

Signed on behalf of the board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Ball', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

M Ball
Trustee

Date: 30/11/2023

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Belarus Free Theatre for the year ended 31 January 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the charitable company's state of affairs as at 31 January 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees which includes the Directors' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Report of the Trustees which includes the Directors' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustees.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or

- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and to take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 12, the trustees (who are also directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditors under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with regulations made under that Act.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are detailed below.

Identifying and assessing risks related to irregularities:

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement and how fraud might occur, including through discussions with the trustees, discussions within our audit team planning meeting, updating our record of internal controls and ensuring these controls operated as intended. We evaluated possible incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements. We identified laws and

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF BELARUS FREE THEATRE

regulations that are of significance in the context of the charitable company by discussions with trustees and updating our understanding of the sector in which the charitable company operates.

Laws and regulations of direct significance in the context of the charitable company include The Companies Act 2006, and guidance issued by the Charity Commission for England and Wales .

Audit response to risks identified:

We considered the extent of compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items including a review of financial statement disclosures. We reviewed the charitable company's records of breaches of laws and regulations, minutes of meetings and correspondence with relevant authorities to identify potential material misstatements arising. We discussed the charitable company's policies and procedures for compliance with laws and regulations with members of management responsible for compliance.


During the planning meeting with the audit team, the engagement partner drew attention to the key areas which might involve non-compliance with laws and regulations or fraud. We enquired of management whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations or knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud. We addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and identifying any significant transactions that were unusual or outside the normal course of business. We assessed whether judgements made in making accounting estimates gave rise to a possible indication of management bias. At the completion stage of the audit, the engagement partner's review included ensuring that the team had approached their work with appropriate professional scepticism and thus the capacity to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Cara Turtinton (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Saffery LLP

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditors

71 Queen Victoria Street
London
EC4 V 4BE

30 November 2023

Saffery LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (incorporating an income and expenditure account) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2023

				2023	2022
	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Total Funds £
Income and endowments from					
Grants and donations	2	375,750	864,565	1,240,315	1,807,157
Charitable activities		219,091	-	219,091	33,350
Total		594,841	864,565	1,459,406	1,840,507
Expenditure on					
Raising funds	3	44,413	-	44,413	22,849
Charitable activities	4	179,819	1,092,308	1,272,127	929,685
Total		224,232	1,092,308	1,316,540	952,534
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		370,609	(227,743)	142,866	887,973
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year		370,609	(227,743)	142,866	887,973
Balances brought forward at 31 January 2022		928,616	359,659	1,288,275	400,302
Balances carried forward at 31 January 2023	11	1,299,225	131,916	1,431,141	1,288,275

All of the above results are derived from continuing operations and include all gains and losses recognised in the period. The notes on pages 21 to 31 form part of these financial statements.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 JANUARY 2023**

		2023	2022
	Notes	£	£
Current assets			
Debtors	9	52,255	53,250
Cash at bank and in hand		1,468,047	1,320,806
		1,520,302	1,374,056
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(89,161)	(85,781)
Net current assets		1,431,141	1,288,275
Net assets		1,431,141	1,288,275
Funds			
Unrestricted	11	1,299,225	928,616
Restricted	11	131,916	359,659
		1,431,141	1,288,275

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 30/11/2023 and signed on its behalf by



M Ball
Trustee

Belarus Free Theatre - Company Registration No. 7897118 (England and Wales).

The notes on pages 21 to 31 form part of these financial statements.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Net cash provided by operating activities	147,241	889,192
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	147,241	889,192
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 February 2022	1,320,806	431,614
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 January 2023	1,468,047	1,320,806

Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Net movement in funds for the reporting period	142,866	887,973
Adjustments for:		
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	995	(43,750)
Increase in creditors	3,380	44,969
Net cash provided by operating activities	147,241	889,192

Analysis of changes in net debt

	1 February 2022 £	Net cash flows £	31 January 2023 £
Cash at bank	1,320,806	147,241	1,468,047
Net debt	1,320,806	147,241	1,468,047

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash at bank	1,468,047	1,320,806
	1,468,047	1,320,806

The notes on pages 21 to 31 form part of these financial statements.

1 Accounting Policies

1.1 Accounting basis

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102), the Companies Act 2006 and the Second edition of the 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 (FRS102) (Charities SORP (FRS102)).

The charity is a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102 and the functional currency is £ sterling. The Trustees consideration of going concern is documented on page 11 of this report. In forming their assessment they have made certain judgments concerning the timing of future funding but have concluded there are no material uncertainties regarding the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for at least 12 months from the date of approval of the balance sheet.

1.2 Income

Production income is recognised in line with performance dates.

Grants receivable are recognised in accordance with the terms of the agreements. Donations are accounted for as and when entitlement arises, the amount can be reliably quantified and the economic benefit to the charity is considered probable. All other income is recognised on an accruals basis once the charity is legally entitled to receipt.

1.3 Expenditure

Expenditure is included in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis, inclusive of VAT.

Costs of fundraising are those incurred in attracting voluntary income. Costs incurred directly in relation to the charitable activities are allocated to those activities as they fall due.

Support costs are those incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and are allocated on the basis of time spent.

Governance costs are related to the public accountability of the charity and costs related to statutory requirements.

Grants are charged to expenditure when the grants are made by the Charity. Unpaid grants are included in creditors in accordance with the requirements of FRS102.

1.4 Restricted income funds

These balances represent voluntary income or grants, which have been received for the purposes set out in Note 11. The application of these funds is restricted by the expressed wishes of the donor or the terms of the grant.

1.5 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, and bank overdrafts.

1.6 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. The charity has selected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

1.7 Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgement, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

The Trustees consider that there are no areas of judgement or key uncertainties.

2. Grant and Donation income

	2023	2022
	£	£
Unrestricted Income		
Open Society Foundations	356,334	-
The 3C Foundation	10,000	-
AKO Foundation	5,000	-
Donations	4,416	972,282
Arts Council Cultural Recovery Funds	-	177,500
HMRC CJRS	-	43,125
Norwegian Helsinki Committee	-	20,690
Grants	-	164,710
Gifts in Kind (office space)	-	-
Total	375,750	1,378,307
Restricted Income		
Anonymous donation	754,320	-
National Endowment for Democracy	62,979	-
Arts Council Lottery Funding	20,556	-
USAID	18,858	-
Garrick Charitable Trust	4,000	-
Writer's and Scholars International Campaigns	2,750	-
Other donations	1,102	-
Open Society Foundations	-	305,236
Safety Curtain	-	2,000
Backstage Trust	-	100,000
German Marshall Fund	-	17,476
Actor Support	-	4,138
Total	864,565	428,850
Total Grants and donations	1,240,315	1,807,157

Included within unrestricted grants above are amounts received from the government in relation to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme of £nil (2022 - £43,125).

3. Expenditure on raising funds

	2023	2022
	Total	Total
	Funds	Funds
	£	£
Staff costs (note 6)	33,336	22,849
Direct costs	11,077	-
	44,413	22,849

4. Charitable Activities

The charity has one activity being that of the production and performance of theatrical productions. The costs summarised below are those relating to this activity.

	2023	2022
	Total	Total
	Funds	Funds
	£	£
Staff Costs (note 6)	355,420	394,975
Overhead Costs	262,271	88,770
Direct Production Costs	210,619	59,194
Travel and Accommodation Costs	408,658	240,967
Production and Performance Grants	101,703	-
Governance costs (note 5)	35,937	94,548
Foreign exchange	(101,941)	51,231
	1,272,127	929,685

5. Governance Costs

	2023	2022
	Total	Total
	Funds	Funds
	£	£
Legal and professional fees	6,361	70,184
Bank Charges	4,652	12,914
Audit – current year	13,200	11,450
Audit – prior year	11,184	-
	35,397	94,548

6. Staff costs

	2023	2022
	£	£
Salaries	367,567	382,918
Employer's National Insurance	16,606	28,530
Pension costs	4,582	6,376
	388,755	417,824

Average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2023	2022
Admin (UK)	5	7
Admin (Belarus)	3	2
Productions	8	14
	16	23

No employees received emoluments as defined for taxation purposes of more than £60,000 in the year (2022: none).

No trustees received expenses in relation to costs incurred on behalf of the charity totalling £Nil (2022: £Nil).

There were two key management personnel defined as those with strategic influence, being the two Artistic Directors. Between them, these two employees received total remuneration packages in 2022/23 of £96,000 (2022: £96,000).

7. Net expenditure

Net expenditure is stated after charging:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration		
Audit fees	13,200	12,000

8. Taxation

The company is registered as a charity under the Charities Act (2011) and as such is entitled to the exemptions under Income and Corporation Taxes Act (1988).

9. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade debtors	20,007	-
Prepayments and accrued income	32,248	53,250
	52,255	53,250

10. Creditors: amounts falling within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Accruals & other creditors	84,171	76,290
Other tax and social security	4,990	9,491
	89,161	85,781

11. Funds

	Balance at 1 February 2022 £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Balance at 31 January 2022 £
Restricted Funds				
Open Society Foundations	305,236	-	(305,236)	-
Backstage Trust	54,423		(54,423)	-
Letters from Lukashenko's Prisoners	-	2,750	(2,750)	-
Dogs of Europe	-	39,414	(39,414)	-
ETC Young Europe IV	-	5,102	(5,102)	-
Mini Series Project	-	62,979	-	62,979
Advocacy	-	150,864	(115,871)	34,993
Blogging	-	33,944	-	33,944
Emergency support	-	226,296	(226,296)	-
Artistic Projects	-	343,216	(343,216)	-
Total Restricted	359,659	864,565	(1,092,308)	131,916
Unrestricted Funds	928,616	594,841	(224,232)	1,229,225
Total funds	1,288,275	1,459,406	(1,316,540)	1,431,141

11. Funds (continued)

	Balance at 1 February 2021 £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Balance at 31 January 2022 £
Restricted Funds				
Open Society Foundations	116,031	305,236	(116,031)	305,236
Norwegian Helsinki Committee	24,464	-	(24,464)	-
ICFJ Fund	21,597	-	(21,597)	-
London Community Foundation	15,000	-	(15,000)	-
Maria Bjornsson Memorial Fund	20,472	-	(20,472)	-
Goethe Institute	14,618	-	(14,618)	-
Ihnatowycz Foundation	11,215	-	(11,215)	-
German Marshall Fund	13,887	17,476	(31,363)	-
Safety Curtain	-	2,000	(2,000)	-
Backstage Trust	-	100,000	(45,577)	54,423
Other	-	4,138	(4,138)	-
Total Restricted	237,284	428,850	(306,475)	359,659
Unrestricted Funds	163,018	1,411,657	(646,059)	928,616
Total funds	400,302	1,840,507	(952,534)	1,288,275

11. Funds (continued)

Restricted Funds received and utilised in the year or to be used to support activities in future years are as follows:

Open Society Foundation - Funds are given towards organisational and project costs of the charity. Newer grants given to the Charity have no restriction and have therefore been treated as unrestricted from 1 February 2022 onwards.

Backstage Trust – Funds are given towards relocation costs of the Charity.

Letters from Lukashenko's Prisoners - Funds are given towards campaigns.

Dogs of Europe – Funds are given towards the costs of the production “Dogs of Europe”.

ETC Young Europe IV – Funds received from organisation in connection with the European Theatre Convention’s 2021-24 programme Young Europe IV which promotes non-dominant voices through theatre.

Mini Series Project – Funds received from the National Endowment for Democracy to be used for a series of projects highlighting democracy.

Advocacy – Funds towards the Charity’s advocacy through programming.

Blogging – Funds to be used towards blogging to promote the Charity’s productions and messages.

Emergency Support– Funds to be used for emergency regranting and support of cultural activity of those affected by the war in Ukraine.

Artistic Projects – Funds to be used for new and innovative artistic projects initiated by the Charity.

12. Company status

The charity is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees named in the financial statements. In the event of the charity being wound-up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. At 31 January 2023 the total of such guarantees was £11 (2022: £11).

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

	2023		
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
Current assets			
Debtors	52,255	-	52,255
Cash at bank and in hand	1,336,131	131,916	1,468,047
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(89,161)	-	(89,161)
Net assets	1,299,255	131,916	1,431,141

	2022		
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
Current assets			
Debtors	53,250	-	53,250
Cash at bank and in hand	961,147	359,659	1,320,806
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(85,781)	-	(85,781)
Net assets	928,616	359,659	1,288,275

14. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions to be disclosed.

15. Comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total Funds £
Income and endowments from			
Donations and legacies	1,378,307	428,850	1,807,157
Charitable activities	33,350	-	33,350
Total	1,411,657	428,850	1,840,507
Expenditure on			
Raising funds	22,849	-	22,849
Charitable activities	623,210	306,475	929,685
Total	646,059	306,475	952,534
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers	765,598	122,375	887,973
Transfers between funds	-	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year	765,598	122,375	887,973