

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

Belarus Free Theatre
Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 January 2024

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)	07897118
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

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024

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 2024.

The theatre is a registered charity, registered number 1147372, and a registered company, registered number 07897118, limited by guarantee. The charitable 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 2023 and the date of signing this report were as follows:

M J Attenborough
M F Ball
J R Bierman (resigned May 2024)
T J Clark
H A Kennedy
D M Lan
D J Law
M F Miller
A J Stanley
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

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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 continues to be an associate company of Young Vic Theatre and is currently based at its new offices at the Somerset House in London, UK.

Since the company relocation from Belarus in the autumn of 2020 the UK office continues to solely coordinate all company and charitable activities in the UK and around the world, including organising creative residences and performances in the UK and international performances and tours, building relationships with local and international partners, creating performance-based human rights projects and fundraising for the company's operations.

As of January 2023, Belarus Free Theatre 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.

In 2023-24 Belarus Free Theatre continued to deliver high impact programmes in the UK and internationally, including new work, including opera, across spheres and fields of work previously not attempted by the company.

Review of Activities and Achievements for 2023/2024 Promoting Democracy and Social Justice in Belarus

Having relocated out of Belarus by the end of 2020, the company is now based between London and Poland, with majority of the ensemble living in either of the two countries. Following the success of its previous large-scale production, which premiered in Barbican, London in the spring of 2022, Belarus Free Theatre returned to Barbican with another large-scale production.

King Stakh's Wild Hunt

Embracing the spirit of two nations and the against dictatorship and oppression a united Belarusian and Ukrainian creative team came together under Belarus Free Theatre to create and premiere the company's largest production to date, King Stakh's Wild Hunt, a first ever Belarusian opera sung on the British stage. King Stakh's Wild Hunt is a thrilling gothic noir from Belarus Free Theatre, directed by its co-founding Artistic Directors, Natalia Kaliada and Nicolai Khalezin, and based on the celebrated novel by Uladzimir Karatkievich. Combining the efforts of over 60 professionals across different fields ranging from musicians to actors, stage designers, costume designers, make-up artists and musicians, the show became the first ever to be nominated for

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024**

the Olivier Award in Belarusian language. It premiered in London on 14th of September 2023 playing to 6000 people and was simultaneously broadcasted to Belarus on the official opening night of 15th of September 2023. The online broad casts reached 1150 audience members in London and over 6.1 thousand viewers watched the show in Belarus online at Belsat.

Back in 2022 the company began working on the idea of bringing Uladzimir Karatkievich's novel King Stakh's Wild Hunt to the stage. The idea was originally inspired by Natalia Koliada's father, Andrei Kaliada, who had taught at Fortinbras studio in Minsk since its founding and until the company relocation in 2020. Andrei has long talked about King Stakh as a production the company had to do, not just because it's one of the greatest Belarusian novels of the last century, but because he deeply understood how relevant it was to Europe today.

King Stakh's Wild Hunt is a motif that appears in Northern and Eastern European folklore. Karatkievich places it at the heart of a story that combines mysticism and reality, love and hatred, nobility and cowardice, history and modernity. The Wild Hunt reminds us that the past is not dead; good can only prevail when people unite to overthrow evil. As Andrei understood, its relevance is undeniable. The Wild Hunt runs here in Europe today, and we must do everything in our collective powers to stop it in its tracks. This work is exactly what represents the core values of the company of using art to stand together against war and oppression.

Upon completing the filming of the project, the director Dmytro Guk edited to opera for a small screen format, and we released it for general public over Christmas and New Years celebrations limiting the broadcast to the Belarus and Ukraine territories. The broadcast was viewed by over 50,000 people, surpassing our initial goal of 20,000 viewers.

The opera has united invaluable voices of Ukrainian opera stage including baritone Andrei Bondarenko, soprano Tamara Kalinkina, mezzo-soprano Iryna Zhytynska, tenor Oleksandr Chuvpylo, baritone Oleksandr Forkushak, soprano Olena Arbuzova, and baritone Mykola Hubchuk, as well as the world-renowned Belarusian conductor Vitali Alekseenok.

Dogs of Europe

The company has continued to tour its show Dogs of Europe internationally travelling to Australia and Germany in the early part of 2023. 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. It resonated not just with the current realities but warned us of potential dangers ahead.

Following the Barbican success, the show went on tour to Luxemburg and Dogs of Europe was presented Paris to the Odeon Theatre, one of the main theatres in France, and was sold out for the 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."

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In 2023, the show has further toured internationally, making its way to Adelaide Festival in Australia and Radar Ost, in Berlin, Germany, adding to another series of sold-out runs. Described by Australian press as ‘an invaluable opportunity that is ... dense, dazzling, hallucinatory and frustrating in equal measure’.

Kitchen Revolution

The company has started a new branch of its digital work, a YouTube version of the original Kitchen Revolution project, aimed at uniting cooking and provocative discussions in an intimate setting. This time in an online format the show brings together two people from different spheres with talks about a variety subjects about Belarus. It was largely targeted at a Belarusian audience in an attempt to counter disinformation, fake news and propaganda spread by the Belarusian government and Russian influence. As of 31st of January 2024, the show had close to 1,000,000 million combined views across platforms.

Overall, despite setting up very ambitious targets for 2023/2024 Belarus Free Theatre has managed to deliver against both artistic and financial targets, delivering world class theatre while championing its charitable objects.

Audience Statistics

Show	Total Performances	Total Audience
Dogs of Europe	7	6,510
King Stakh's Wild Hunt	5	5,750
Post Childhood	10	1,500
No Exit	5	157
Total	27	13,917

Despite a decrease in the number of performances during the financial year, the number of people who attended the show 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 view the show at any given time. This experience can be seen in the numbers of No Exit which mimics the previous capacities.

Education Work**PostChildhood and PostEscape**

Belarus Free Theatre has continued its work in Warsaw with refugee children from both Belarus and Ukraine as well as their parents. The have produced a response to the previous work PostChildhood, titled PostEscape, exploring adult responses to the issues raised by children who were forced to face exile at a very young age.

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Postchildhood is 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 has been developed using BFT's method of Total Immersion led by co-founding Artistic Director Nicolai Khalezin, who worked with the young people to build theatrical etudes based on their real-life experiences. The resulting stage production - Postchildhood - is 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. The Stage wrote of the process completing post-childhood: "After settling in Poland, its members set up the Free Artist programme for young people from Belarus and Ukraine, who were now based there. To begin with, they set out to give these young people a wide range of cultural experiences, including visits to art galleries, to explore the different ways they could express themselves. But, ultimately, the goal was to produce a piece of performance."

In 2023 Belarus Free Theatre produced the show response to PostChildhood titled PostEscape, which works 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 has premiere in Warsaw in February 2023 and has run in conjunction with PostChildhood during 2023/24 season.

No Exit

A collaboration with students working on PostChildhood, composer Volha Padhaiskaya and playwright Volha Varankova. A work staged within the Belarus Free Theatre laboratory in Poland with the support of ETC. The play titled Lucky, by Varankova talks about the reality of inability of hiding or running away from the war, no matter how hard you try to dream yourself away from it.

Spoken through the stories and eyes of children forced to live through the real life equivalent of the events unravelling in the play it is a powerful reminder of the people behind the news we encounter on daily basis. The show had a successful run in Warsaw and Slovakia and will tour locally within the region in the upcoming seasons.

Online following

Platform	Followers/subscribers Jan 2022	Followers/subscribers Jan 2023
Twitter	18,272	17,560
Instagram	7,320	7,730
Youtube	3,010	3,697

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International Press Coverage

The company has received extensive press coverage both in Belarus and the UK as well as internationally.

King Stakh's Wild Hunt was reviewed by The Guardian, The Telegraph, Opera Today, Broadway World, TimeOut, New York Times, The Stage, Alleycat Reviews, The Review Hub, Opera Wire, The Moscow Times and many others.

Dogs of Europe received press coverage by local newspapers in the corresponding countries, including The Advertiser, The Australian, Stage Whispers Australia, ArtsHub, Glam Adelaide, The Guardian, Limelight magazine, In Daily, The Barefoot Review, In Review, Broadway World, Canberra Critics Circle and many others.

Wider pieces on Belarus Free Theatre were commissioned by the New York Times, The Stage, The Telegraph, The Guardian and others, showing the continued impact the company makes on both theatre and social world.

In June 2023, co-founders of the company Natalia Kaliada and Nicolai Khalezin were awarded MBEs in the King's Honours in recognition of their services to theatre in the UK, an event largely publicised across The Stage, Broadway World, and naturally the London Gazette where the honours are announced.

Future Plans

In 2024 Belarus Free Theatre will premiere a new show titled KS6: Small Forward, following the story of a professional basketball player Katsiaryna Snytsina, at New York's La Mama Theatre. As one of the top 3 scorers in the history of the women's EuroCup, Katsiaryna Snytsina has made victorious three-point shots in the nail-biting final seconds of a match, competed in two Olympic Games, taken Bronze at FIBA Women's EuroBasket, the prestigious European championship, and captained her national team.

In 2020 her life took a dramatic turn when she spoke out against the Belarusian dictatorship in the wake of internationally discredited elections and a systematic crackdown on all opposition. In protest of the brutality of the regime she resigned from the national basketball team and was forced to leave her homeland. But just as Katya's sporting career is defined by her passion, determination and courage, so too is her activism and her new life as a prominent dissident in exile has brought her to the centre of the movement for a democratic Belarus. "In basketball, my team is 12-strong, now I'm part of a far bigger team on the frontlines of the fight against dictatorship".

In 2022, now living in London, she was signed up by London Lions, the Stratford-based team rising up the ranks. She also met and fell in love with Nadia Brodskaya, a long-standing member of BFT. In declaring their love to the world she became the first and only well-known sporting figure in the history of Belarus to have openly come out as gay.

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At the outset of the 2023/24 sporting season, Katya announced that she would be retiring from basketball after a final season with her beloved team. A new production will follow Katya on this journey and invite her to take the stage to share her meteoric journey to the heights of her sporting profession, a rollercoaster of a life story propelled by love, courage, determination, and above all fight for freedom.

In addition to the new production the company plans to continue its work with refugees in Poland, as the geo-political situation within the region remains unchanged, the war in Ukraine rages on and political imprisonments in Belarus only rise, creating an ever growing demand for social and artistic support in the region.

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 – through international touring, widening access and production of its digital work and annual production of new works.

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, Ukraine and around the world both within the UK and abroad.

Financial Review

In 2023/24 Belarus Free Theatre has spent £2,141,047 (2022/23: £1,316,540). Staff and personnel expenditure at £291,867 (2022/23: £388,755) was lower than in the previous years due to a reduction in administrative and production staff. Staff costs equated to 14% (2022/23: 30%) 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 £1,055,171 (2022/23: £1,240,315), approximately 89% (2022/23: 85%) of the total income of £1,186,478 in the year (2022/23: £1,459,406).

Reserves Policy and Risk Management

The Trustees consider the risks to the charity at each quarterly Board meeting and ensure that systems and procedures are established to mitigate key risks identified. These key risks continue to 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.

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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024

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. 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.

At the balance sheet date, the charity held "free" reserves, defined as unrestricted funds of £139,723, (2023: £1,299,225).

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

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 can manage operational and financial risks 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, including the timing of receiving all expected income in the current financial year. For the current and future years the trustees will consider a scenario budget in the event that income targets are not met.

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. To ensure financial resilience in future years the Trustees will consider a reserves policy that sets a level of minimum reserves the charity requires to consistently cover short-term operating costs.

The Trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the annual accounts.

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REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024

Remuneration

Remuneration policy is decided by the Executive Management team and is reviewed by the Board of Trustees. The Board is responsible for making recommendations and approving any changes to the Executive team'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:

Signed by:

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M Ball

Trustee 30 October 2024
Date.....

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

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Belarus Free Theatre for the year ended 31 January 2024 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 2024 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.

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

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 Trustees' Report which includes the Directors' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Report 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 Trustees' Report.

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

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

- 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 Trustees' Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement set out on pages 11-12, 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

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**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, the Charities Act 2011 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

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

company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

DocuSigned by:

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

71 Queen Victoria Street
London
EC4 V 4BE

30 October 2024

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 2024**

				2024	2023
	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Total Funds £
Income and endowments from					
Grants and donations	2	63	1,055,108	1,055,171	1,240,315
Charitable activities		131,307	-	131,307	219,091
Total income		131,370	1,055,108	1,186,478	1,459,406
Expenditure on					
Raising funds	3	54,465	-	54,465	44,413
Charitable activities	4	1,236,407	850,175	2,086,582	1,272,127
Total expenditure		1,290,872	850,175	2,141,047	1,316,540
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		(1,159,502)	204,933	(954,569)	142,866
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year		(1,159,502)	204,933	(954,569)	142,866
Balances brought forward at 31 January 2023		1,299,225	131,916	1,431,141	1,288,275
Balances carried forward at 31 January 2024	11	139,723	336,849	476,572	1,431,141

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. A full comparative statement of financial activities is included at note 15.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 JANUARY 2024**

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Current assets			
Debtors	9	21,907	52,255
Cash at bank and in hand		596,508	1,468,047
		618,415	1,520,302
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year			
	10	(141,843)	(89,161)
Net current assets		476,572	1,431,141
Net assets		476,572	1,431,141
Funds			
Unrestricted	11, 13	139,723	1,299,225
Restricted	11, 13	336,849	131,916
		476,572	1,431,141

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 30 October 2024 and signed on its behalf by

Signed by:

 BDB8D25AABD7440.....

M Ball
 Trustee

Belarus Free Theatre - Company Registration No. 07897118 (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 2024**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net cash (used by)/provided by operating activities (see below)	(871,539)	147,241
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	(871,539)	147,241
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 February 2023	1,468,047	1,320,806
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 January 2024	596,508	1,468,047

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

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net movement in funds for the reporting period	(954,569)	142,866
Adjustments for:		
Decrease in debtors	30,348	995
Increase in creditors	52,682	3,380
Net cash provided by operating activities	(871,539)	147,241

Analysis of changes in net debt

	1 February 2023	Net cash flows	31 January 2024
	£	£	£
Cash at bank	1,468,047	(871,539)	596,508
Net debt	1,468,047	(871,539)	596,508

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash at bank	596,508	1,468,047
	596,508	1,468,047

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024**

1 Accounting Policies**1.1 Accounting basis**

The financial statements of the charity 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, the Charities Act 2011, and the 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)) (effective 1 January 2019).

The charity is a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £1.

1.2 Going concern

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.

1.3 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.

1.4 Expenditure

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

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024**

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.

1.5 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.

1.6 Cash and cash equivalents

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

1.7 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.

1.8 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.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024****2. Grant and Donation income**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Unrestricted Income		
Donations	63	4,416
Open Society Foundations	-	356,334
The 3C Foundation	-	10,000
AKO Foundation	-	5,000
Total	63	375,750
Restricted Income		
CAF America	801,513	-
Backstage Trust	200,000	-
Danish Cultural Institute	33,474	-
German Marshall Fund	20,121	-
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
Total	1,055,108	864,565
Total Grants and donations	1,055,171	1,240,315

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024****3. Expenditure on raising funds**

	2024	2023
	Total	Total
	Funds	Funds
	£	£
Staff costs (note 6)	33,374	33,336
Direct costs	21,091	11,077
	54,465	44,413

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.

	2024	2023
	Total	Total
	Funds	Funds
	£	£
Staff Costs (note 6)	258,493	355,420
Overhead Costs	553,803	262,271
Direct Production Costs	450,770	210,619
Travel and Accommodation Costs	641,425	408,658
Production and Performance Grants	39,827	101,703
Governance costs (note 5)	78,372	35,397
Foreign exchange	63,892	(101,941)
	2,086,582	1,272,127

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024****5. Governance Costs**

	2024	2023
	Total	Total
	Funds	Funds
	£	£
Legal and professional fees	18,476	6,361
Bank Charges	4,356	4,652
Audit and accountancy – current year	25,000	13,200
Audit and accountancy – prior year	30,540	11,184
	78,372	35,397

6. Staff costs

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries	272,699	367,567
Employer's National Insurance	15,516	16,606
Pension costs	3,652	4,582
	291,867	388,755

Average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024	2023
Admin (UK)	3	5
Admin (Belarus)	3	3
Productions	5	8
	11	16

No employees received emoluments as defined for taxation purposes of more than £60,000 in the year (2023: none).

No trustees received reimbursement of expenses in relation to costs incurred on behalf of the charity (2023: no trustees).

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 2023/24 of £96,000 (2023: £96,000).

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024****7. Net expenditure**

Net expenditure is stated after charging:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Auditors' remuneration		
Audit fees	18,000	13,200
Accountancy fees	7,000	-

8. Taxation

The charity is a registered charity and as such is a charity within the meaning of schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010. Accordingly, the charity is potentially entitled to tax exemption under part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 in respect of income and gains arising. Given this, no tax charge arises on the charity.

9. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	13,449	20,007
Prepayments and accrued income	8,458	32,248
	21,907	52,255

10. Creditors: amounts falling within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Accruals & other creditors	130,902	84,171
Other tax and social security	10,941	4,990
	141,843	89,161

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024****11. Funds**

	Balance at 1 February 2023 £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Balance at 31 January 2024 £
Restricted Funds				
Mini Series Project	62,979	-	(45,043)	17,936
Advocacy	34,993	328,620	(136,092)	227,521
Blogging	33,944	-	(33,944)	-
King Stakh's Wild Hunt	-	253,595	(253,595)	-
UK HQ	-	232,439	(232,439)	-
Concert	-	52,098	(28,931)	23,167
Regranting	-	80,151	(23,706)	56,445
Company Relocation	-	40,076	(40,076)	-
Kitchen Revolution	-	68,129	(56,349)	11,780
Total Restricted	131,916	1,055,108	(850,175)	336,849
Unrestricted Funds	1,299,225	131,370	(1,290,872)	139,723
Total funds	1,431,141	1,186,478	(2,141,047)	476,572

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024****11. Funds (continued)**

	Balance at 1 February 2022 £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Balance at 31 January 2023 £
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)	1,299,225
Total funds	1,288,275	1,459,406	(1,316,540)	1,431,141

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024

11. Funds (continued)

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

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.

King Stakh's Wild Hunt – Funds to be used towards expenses incurred by the production and touring of King Stakh’s Wild Hunt production.

UK HQ – Funds to be used for the expenses incurred by the UK headquarters.

Concert – Aimed at Fundings Boombox Game4Ukraine concert, to be reimbursed.

Regranting – Funds to be used for the reapproved regranting for small supporting grants toward individuals and organisations working in line with our charitable aims.

Company Relocation – Funds to be used for expenses incurred by the relocation of the company and the need to buy new equipment, furniture, home goods and other utilities caused by the ensemble forced relocation from the country.

Kitchen Revolution - Funds to be used towards the productions of the Kitchen Revolution YouTube Series, including the physical appearance of the host.

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”.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024

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.

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 2024 the total of such guarantees was £11 (2023: £11).

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024****13. Analysis of net assets between funds**

	2024		
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
Current assets			
Debtors	21,907	-	21,907
Cash at bank and in hand	259,659	336,849	596,508
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(141,843)	-	(141,843)
Net assets	139,723	336,849	476,572

	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	1,299,225	131,916	1,431,141

14. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions to be disclosed.

BELARUS FREE THEATRE**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2024****15. Comparative Statement of Financial Activities**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
Income and endowments from			
Donations and legacies	375,750	864,565	1,240,315
Charitable activities	219,091	-	219,091
Total income	594,841	864,565	1,459,406
Expenditure on			
Raising funds	44,413	-	44,413
Charitable activities	179,819	1,092,308	1,272,127
Total expenditure	224,232	1,092,308	1,316,540
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers	370,609	(227,743)	142,866
Transfers between funds	-	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year	370,609	(227,743)	142,866
Balances brought forward at 31 January 2022	928,616	359,659	1,288,275
Balances carried forward at 31 January 2023	1,299,225	131,916	1,431,141