

Kendal Community Theatre

Annual Report, October 2021 - September 2022

During the year, KCT produced 2 shows. The first brought to a conclusion the project started in 2018, which was massively disrupted by – but continued during – Covid. The cast remained committed; there was a change in director following the Artistic director's departure to London. It is a testament to the loyalty and commitment of KCT members that they kept the momentum going through Zoom and outdoor rehearsals, as well as uncertainty over the music. The final result was an almost sold-out triumph. Our thanks go to all those who made it happen.

The Threepenny Opera. Director's Report

a. What a project! I knew I liked the text of The Threepenny Opera from studying it and staging extracts years ago, so I was pleased to be able to play with it again with Kendal Community Theatre. It's now a text I love.

b. Taking over from Chris – who had made a really strong start and put several chunks of the production in place – worked well overall, I think, despite losing some cast members due to the inevitable date and rehearsal schedule changes. I deliberately chose not to radically alter any production decisions made in the initial rehearsal period with Chris – not least because I liked them, but also because I hoped that this would help the cast retain a general confidence in the production as a whole and in the direction of travel. I think this proved to be the case, though losing cast members remained a theme throughout, sadly, for a range of reasons; the parts of Smith, Brown and Lucy were particularly prone to this and we only actually had the final performance cast in place on September 26th 2021 – a month before the show! That the performance cast gelled so well together in the run-up to production week is to their credit and was a huge relief.

c. Things that worked well, I believe, were the recorded piano tracks we received from Anne Pater as these were useful both in rehearsal and for the cast to work on at home, which they clearly did. The rehearsal spaces at Castle Street and the Catholic Church Hall were both great. Beth and Ginny were both excellent assistant directors and I think that they worked well for KCT on this production. Jill co-ordinated costumes beautifully and she and Anne were a great support in and out of rehearsals, making and gathering props and much, much more. Chris on lights was greatly appreciated and George, the pianist, was an excellent addition to the whole. He was obviously talented and a pleasure to work with. I have written a little more about George for the report I understand Chris is sending to his college. Publicity seemed generally effective to me as well, as I think the audience numbers achieved during a very challenging time, were very pleasing.

d. Challenges – aside from the cast changes, pandemic and bad weather! – included the lack of communication from the licence people,

which did cause me some anxiety. I will let you know if they ever do get in touch again... Also, I was never totally confident that I had all the correct email addresses for the cast, despite asking them to email in reply to me very early in the process – in theory to save Anne B having to be part of every email exchange. In practice, I did send every whole cast email via Anne (thank you!) and I know she had a lot of email communication for me that she had to work through – I suspect this will always be the case with a big cast, really... I was also worried when I discovered that we couldn't have Castle Street until Sunday of the get-in weekend, though things worked out fine as we had an additional dress rehearsal planned for the Tuesday. If this had been a more technically complex production or we had left Tuesday night as a "preview", things would have been very tight for time, though, and, in general I would recommend booking the venue for the whole weekend prior to performance, wherever possible.

e. Overall, though, this was a great project for me. I thought the atmosphere on Saturday night, especially, was electric and it was wonderful to see a group of people perform something so ensemble so well, clearly enjoying and taking pride in their own performances and those of others.

f. I wish KCT all the best with forthcoming projects and hope to work with you again – feel free to ask any time I might be useful!

Emma Rucastle

November 4th 2021.

2022 was Kendal Community Theatre's 10th Anniversary.

To mark this, our 2nd production for this report was a compilation of Street Theatre pieces performed over the past ten years.

'10 Out Of 10' Street Theatre Sat 25th June 2022 - Production Report

Our Street Theatre production in 2022 was designed to begin our celebration of Kendal Community Theatre's 10th Anniversary, with excerpts from 10 of our productions: *Threepenny Opera*, *Vampyres*, *Lady Anne Clifford*, *Cool Yule*, *Curious Botanicals*, *A Passion for Kendal*, *1715 Jacobite Rebellion*, *Kendal Yarns*, *The Trouble With Women* and a monologue from the *2021 YouTube Advent Calendar*.

The excerpts were directed in small groups of actors with just a short period of rehearsal, as songs and scenes were relearnt or revamped. The scenes were played twice at four venues, the Library, Birdcage, Market Place and the Peace Garden at the Unitarian Chapel. A piper led the way as we processed between venues was very effective in attracting people's attention.

Some excerpts and venues worked better than others, *Lady Anne* and several of the ensemble pieces were particularly strong and the musical elements in *Curious Botanicals* and *Vampyres* created an excellent atmosphere.

The town was exceptionally quiet following the Farmers' Market the day before, audience picked up on individual excerpts rather than following round.

'10 out of 10' provided a useful opportunity for the original core cast to meld with new people who came in during Covid restrictions, as we brought the cast together at last, for face to face rehearsals. This smaller project acted as a springboard into our big production of *A Christmas Carol for Kendal* later in the year.

Anne Banks

Hon Secretary

Chris Taylor

Hon President

Production Report 2021- 2022

Curious Botanicals Street Theatre



community groups. In addition we had a stall where we publicised KCT. Thanks to all concerned.

Kendal Community Theatre actors were delighted to join in this project in collaboration with Ragtag Arts and under the umbrella of the Torchlight Festival.

Directed by the brilliant Jayne Davies and with amazing costumes by Kate Reid, this took place in five locations in the town and was followed by joining the procession in the afternoon along with many other

The Threepenny Opera

Face-to-face distanced rehearsals began at the end of May, directed by Emma Rucastle with actors who had been part of the show during lockdown, and involved in the open-air performances, drawing on their memories of Chris Taylor's direction. Things went slowly at first, due to people being quarantined or unable to attend for different reasons, although we were able to bring them in on zoom on occasion. Summer cover for direction was provided very ably by Ginny Moss and Beth Saunders. Once Emma returned at the end of September she was able to pull everything together and the final result was a performance to be proud of.



Because of Covid, and for access, Jill and Anne elected to be present at all rehearsals between us, with Anne Cleasby kindly filling in when we couldn't be there.

Rather more actors than usual pulled out for a variety of reasons, but fortunately we were able to recruit excellent replacements quite quickly. We were particularly sorry to lose Jay Dodd, to whom we had offered a

mentoring package to help with her College course.

Our main problem was in the area of stage management. It was lucky that we were doing Brecht, with only the most basic props and costumes, mainly supplied by the actors



themselves. Jill stepped into the breach and helped with costume where necessary. However in future productions it is absolutely essential to have a stage management team in place to provide continuity and backup for the director.

We had to book larger spaces than usual to allow for distanced rehearsal, but we were offered very generous discounts by Castle Street Centre and



Holy Trinity and St George Catholic Church.

Ticketing using Trybooking online services was very successful and actually seemed easier to use than The Brewery's service, although it did lose us some publicity opportunities which the Brewery previously offered. Most people seemed to be able to book online and a very few that couldn't, Anne was

able to help by holding tickets for them to pay on the door.

Our pianist George, a second year Royal College of Music student, added an extra dimension to the performance with his excellent performance. It was a huge advantage to have a live musician and the funding to pay him. It was also good to be able to offer him that experience to add to his CV.

To run a successful show of that size, with a cast of seventeen, despite covid, floods and gridlocked traffic, was, in our view, a remarkable achievement. Brecht was always going to be a challenge, and it was a pleasure to see Kendal Community Theatre rise to that in the most difficult circumstances. Audience members told us that the performance was excellent, and we were extremely proud of the cast.



Some of the feedback we received below:

A friend of mine came from Lancaster last night to see the performance (I didn't know he was coming). He has just messaged me to say how much he and his son enjoyed the show.

Apparently my friend has been a Brecht fan for a long time, but has never seen any Brecht outside London - and hasn't seen any at all for years. He said that last night reminded him of why - and how much - he likes Brecht's work, which I think is pretty high praise! Well done all

I greatly enjoyed the show, as did Frei, my guest. The dynamism, technical competence and *joie de vivre* of the production were all most impressive. By sheer chance, this morning I found Peachum gazing earnestly out of the pages of *Cumbrian Wildlife*, the magazine of Cumbria Wildlife Trust, by whose London equivalent my daughter is employed; Stephen Lockwood is a very capable singer too, as is Sarah Cox, who has a strong stage presence - as does the anti-hero Tim Tranter. Eleanor Brook also stood out, but it was essentially a collective enterprise: congratulations all round. I look forward to your next show.

Hi. I saw your production of 'Theepenny Opera' on Wednesday and thoroughly enjoyed it. So glad to see Brecht up and about again.

Playreadings on zoom Jan to Feb 2022

As Covid surged this winter, we decided to run another series of zoom play-readings. We were delighted that 21 of our actors were interested in taking part and enjoying a variety of roles.

Anne Banks and Jill Clough
Photos by Stuart Atkinson

Kendal Community Theatre Final Accounts 01.10.21-30.09.22

Kendal Community Theatre Income & Expenditure

01.10.21-30.09.2021

INCOME

Membership	700.00	
Donations 22-23	260.00	
Miscellaneous		
Total Annual	960.00	

PRODUCTIONS

The 3d Opera	7847.15	
Ten out of Ten	44.56	
Total productions	7891.71	

Balance: income over exp - profit (loss)

TOTALS 8851.71

EXPENDITURE

Refreshmentts	89.58	
HT&St G Rm Hire	25.00	
Storage	600.00	
lonos Webmail	28.80	
Insurance	252.31	
	16.00 amend pol	
Miscellaneous		
	1011.69	

	5649.78	
	443.98	

6093.76

1746.26

8851.71

BANK BALANCES Opening 01.10.21

Account 1	426.66	
	10952.60	11379.26

BANK BALANCES Closing 30.09.2022

Account 1	817.69	
	11314.93	12132.62

Christmas Carol For Kendal

INCOME

Grants		
Town Council <i>c/f (May 2022)</i>	1000.00	
Doyley Carte <i>c/f (Aug 22)</i>	1080.00	
Stephenson Trust <i>c/f (Sept 22)</i>	500.00	

Sponsorship London Marathon

Just Giving	569.64	
Bank credit	55.00	
Cash	90.00	

3294.64

EXPENDITURE

Postage	6.85	
Parking	1.20	
Costumes	25.00	
Temp Licence	21.00	
Scripts	17.82	
Poster Torchlight	21.60	

93.47

KCT's accounting year runs from 1st Oct - 30th Sept.

The grants carried forward were received during the yeat 2021-2022 but given for productions during 2022-3.

They were paid in to the bank when received, but will show on the accounts for 2022-2023