



PALACE THEATRE & OPERA HOUSE TRUST

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Report and Financial Statements
Year ending 31st March 2022
Charity Number: 1188662

Palace Theatre
Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 6FT

Trustees

Name	Date of appointment
Thomas Aaron Kirk	01 August 2021
Hollie Coxon	01 August 2021
Pippa Campbell	19 July 2021
Kui Man Gerry Yeung OBE DL	01 August 2021
Julian Woolford	01 August 2021
Anthony Hallwood	17 March 2020 (second term commenced 01 August 2022)
Chris Keady	01 August 2021
Claire Louise Rick	01 August 2021
Peter Robertson	01 August 2021

Purpose of the CIO

The PT&OH Trust (the Trust) is an independent trust working to advance education, arts and culture by supporting educational and participatory activities inspired by the programmes, history and heritage of the Palace Theatre & Opera House Manchester.

Our vision is to bring the Palace Theatre & Opera House back into the heart of the city and the lives of its people. To re-ignite Manchester's long love affair with two of its oldest and most famous theatrical buildings.

We will open up these theatres and what goes on in them. We will transform them into the places where a new generation of Mancunians can play, learn, explore and discover what theatre and performance means for them.

ATG is the owner and operator of the Palace Theatre & Opera House. ATG supports the work of the PT&OH Trust through providing access to its facilities, producing a Creative Learning programme which delivers on the Objectives of the Trust as outlined in its constitutional documents, and liaising with the Trust through attendance at regular meetings.

Objectives:

- Open up the two historic theatres to local people through increasing daytime access and creating dynamic educational heritage projects.
- Deliver a programme of educational and participatory activities for people of all ages, inspired by the theatres' touring productions musicals, drama and dance.
- Increase the opportunities for schools, students and young people, to learn more about the business of theatre, the creative and technical production processes and industry careers.

- In accordance with our equal opportunity best practice, to optimise the experience for anyone with health, disability or additional learning requirements or for those who may need financial assistance and/or socially accompanied visits
- Launch a new Youth Theatre & Young Company within the buildings, enabling opportunities for young Mancunians to perform, produce and see musical theatre and dance.

Achievements

As a result of Covid-19, the Palace and Opera House remained closed from March 2020 (when the CIO had been established) until August 2021. Whilst it was therefore impossible for the Trust to deliver activities during this period, an open and thorough Trustee recruitment process was successfully undertaken which led to the appointment of eight new Trustees, who bring with them a wealth of knowledge, experience, connections and energy to further the Objectives of the Trust.

The theatres mobilised to reopen from September 2021, although they were initially required to operate within the protocols of Covid-19 guidance. Separately, ATG's Palace and Opera House's Theatre Director, Sheena Wrigley, stood down in August 2021(?). The Theatre Director position remained vacant until January 2022, during which time Trust activities remained largely on hold, given ATG's need to re-establish operational practices in the venues, and the Trust's need to establish with the incoming Theatre Director how its own operations would interact with the theatres'. A formal meeting of Trustees did take place on 4th November 2021, which provided an opportunity for the new Trustees to connect with each other as well as with ATG representatives.

Robin Hawkes arrived in post as Theatre Director for ATG in late-January 2022. He proceeded to connect with the Trustee group, and the Trust began to remobilise ahead of the first in a series of more regular meetings, commencing on 28th April 2022.

Subsequently, ATG also appointed Grace Cameron as its first Creative Learning Producer for the Manchester venues. Grace began in post on 14th March 2022, with a remit to plan and deliver a year-round programme of participatory and engagement activities for the theatres, which should include acting as a delivery partner for the Trust's activities.

Note on Finances

Due to lack of activity as outlined above, the sole outgoing was a £5 banking charge.

Future plans

The board of Trustees is now fully established, with a formalised Constitution, and a regular pattern of quarterly meetings. Following an away day in Summer 2022, the Trustees have recently appointed Claire Rick as the Board's first Chair for an initial twelve-month term, and have established Task and Finish Groups with remits for Governance and Fundraising.

Trustees have also begun to draw on the experience of other trusts ATG venues work alongside, in particularly the Sunderland Empire Theatre Trust, to further develop ways of working and replicate any models of best practice.

A Memorandum of Understanding has also been put in place with ATG, so that the Trust is equipped to begin work on making our vision and mission a reality.

Since the appointment of the new role of Creative Learning Producer for Manchester, ATG has made significant progress in the establishment of a year-round Creative Learning Programme for the venues. The Producer has developed a business plan and piloted a range of new activities for the theatres, which are closely aligned to the Trust's vision and objectives. The new Theatre Director and CL Producer have together reached out to other culture and education sector organisations operating in the city region, in order to help define a remit for the Palace & Opera House's Programme that is complementary to those already in existence, and to explore potential partnership opportunities.

The intention of the Programme is that activities and projects will enable anyone who is curious about what we do to come and explore our unique theatres, gain a greater insight into the productions, develop their own creative talents, and give access to workforce of industry professionals. It will focus on three key areas:

'Creative Generation' – projects with schools to support creativity across the curriculum to support the mental health & wellbeing of pupils and teachers.

'Community' – Working in partnership to create work, space, or projects to address a specific need and demand locally. This could include working with older residents or those with mental health challenges or supporting a local artist collective with space to meet or work in.

'Talent pipeline' – Support and nurture the next generation of performers and industry workforce through our weekly youth theatres, holiday projects, masterclasses, and careers insights events.

There will be a strong focus on working with visiting show producers to support the delivery of wrap-around activities linked to and inspired by the shows in the Palace & Opera House to help connect with new and existing audiences.

Diversity and inclusion will carry specific targets in our planning, increasing engagement with those from underrepresented groups within our participants and freelance team.

The Trust will focus on transformational projects which will have the greatest impact, open up and welcome less advantaged groups and bring the theatres back to the heart of the city.