



Annual Report

Period of Report

Start Date: 3 April 2023

End Date: 1 April 2024

Company Number: NI676327

Registered Charity Number: NIC108049

HMRC Number: NI01255

Purpose of Charity

The company exists for the benefit of the public to: produce performances in the UK and Ireland; promote and develop the performing arts for the benefit of the public; encourage appreciation and participation in performing arts activities, encourage and stimulate artistic creativity and present, promote, organise, manage and produce work of cultural and educational value.

Commedia of Errors creates art that responds to, challenges and questions the changing times in which we live. It aims to grow, develop and inform audiences, beneficiaries and the arts sector and to broaden and deepen engagement by overcoming barriers to arts participation.

List of Trustees

List of Trustees

Chairperson:

Sally Campton

Secretary:

David Gould

Treasurer:

Neill Cauwood

Member:

Jenny Cooke MBE

Sally Campton

Fiona McAnespie

Mark Francos

Michael Weir

Staff

Benjamin Gould – Artistic Director

Clare McMahon – Co-Creative Director

Megan Kelly – Assistant Producer (Resigned 07/11/2023)

Director's Report

In 2023-2024 Commedia of Errors maintained its commitment to its audiences, bringing *I am Maura* to audiences of young people across the province and into the Republic of Ireland, continuing the development of Rose Coogan and her piece *Rose+Bud* and two more successful tours of Plays Aloud.

While a sharp reduction in funding from a principal funder curtailed some ambitions and reduced output, it was an opportunity for the company to restructure its systems and realign itself to come back more strongly in the future. New business and marketing plans were created to shape future planning, and a new major funder was found in the National Lottery whose Community Fund has committed to funding Plays Aloud for the next three years, including a major expansion and a new dedicated staff member.

Further opportunities were developed with the script for *Rose+Bud* now performance ready and through new connections built with venues North and South of the border through the tour of *I Am Maura*.

Artistic Director Benjamin Gould continued to offer training workshops to the Lyric Theatre's Drama Studio, strengthening our partnership and continuing our commitment to the development of the next generation of actors.

Whilst 2023-2024 will be remembered as a challenging year, it was a year that planted the seeds for the company's ongoing success and stability, while highlighted our flexibility and ingenuity as an organisation in the face of ongoing adversity.

Finance Overview

Financial Summary

From 3rd of April 2023 to the 1st of April 2024 we generated a total income of **£89,395** and expended **£88,503**.

Income sources

Income from Charitable Activities

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| • Performance Fees | 0.28% |
| • Box Office Receipts | 6.77% |
| • Workshops | 0.78% |

Grants

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| • Donations | 0.02% |
| • Merchandise | 0.00% |
| • Trusts and Foundations | 15.10% |
| • Governmental Funders. | 64.41% |
| • Miscellaneous | 0.33% |
| • Sponsorship | 12.30% |

Company Expenditure

Support Costs

- | | |
|---------------------|--------|
| • Operational Staff | 49.24% |
|---------------------|--------|

Charitable Expenditure

- | | |
|---------------------|--------|
| • Freelancer Fees | 41.17% |
| • Venue Hire | 0.27% |
| • Marketing | 1.86% |
| • Office | 1.77% |
| • Travel | 3.05% |
| • Miscellaneous | 0.96% |
| • Set/Costume/Props | 0.18% |
| • Insurance | 1.38% |
| • Technical | 0.12% |

Due to a reduction in funding from a key funder, 23 – 24 saw a reduction in artistic output from the company and as a result a higher proportion of expenditure utilised for core costs. We continue to be a lean organisation with low overheads, building and expanding our activities despite a challenging funding environment.

Public Benefit

Commedia of Errors is established predominantly (but not exclusively) to produce performances in the UK and Ireland and in particular to: Promote and develop the performing arts for the benefit of the public. Encourage appreciation of and participation in performing arts activities. Encourage and stimulate artistic creativity by the provision of artistic performances, training, support and facilities for artistic expression. Present, promote, organise, manage and produce work of cultural and educational value, including (but not limited to) dramas, comedies, operas, operettas, burlesques, films, broadcasts, television shows, concerts, musical pieces, puppet shows, ballets, Procure to be written and printed, published, issued, distributed and circulated, reports or periodicals, books, pamphlets, leaflets or other documents or information. Recruit, train and employ volunteers with relevant skills, for the furtherance of the above aims. Promote and carry out, or assist in promoting and carrying out, research, surveys and investigations provided the useful results are published. Co-operate to such an extent as may be necessary with the statutory authorities and voluntary organisations engaged in the furtherance of the above objects or of any of them. Raise and accept money by way of grants, donations, bequests, legacies or other lawful method and give, donate or disburse grants and loans to such related organisations or projects as are by law deemed charitable, provided that in the exercise thereof Commedia of Errors shall not engage in any form of permanent, non-primary purpose trading. Purchase, take or lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property and any rights and privileges necessary for the attainment of the said objects. Subject to such consents that may be required by law to sell, let, mortgage, dispose or turn to account all or any of the property or assets of Commedia of Errors which shall be deemed necessary for the furtherance of Commedia of Errors. All such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said objects.

Statement of Trustees Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Commedia of Errors 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 the income and expenditure, of the charitable company

for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to 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 hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on and signed on its behalf by:

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Sally Campton - Chair

Appendix 1

Projects

I Am Maura

Audience Figures

An Tain -	250
Cushendun -	37
Derry Playhouse -	32
Rainbow Factory -	54
Theatre at the Mill -	64
Lyric Naughton -	206
Newry Arts Festival -	109
Total	752



Blurb: It's 2005. Maura is 15 and trying to find a boyfriend. Only she's surrounded by girls and is starting to think she might actually prefer them. Asking questions in school means awkward blushes and detention. Her only guidance is Martine McCutcheon's 'Perfect Moment' and her best mate Ali.

The production debuted at The Mac as part of Belfast's Children's Festival, before touring it's first round in 2022. The first tour was such a great success that a second tour in 2024 ran in even more venues around the island of Ireland. This second tour was an even bigger success than the previous with an increase in audience numbers of 57 persons.



People shared their feedback:

"The show was amazing to experience, and it really opened my eyes to the ways in dealing with mental health." – 16-year-old female student

"I related to the story being told and the journey of Maura, it was an amazing representation with perfect comedic elements with heart felt elements that got me thinking" – 17-year-old male student

"It was extremely clever, thought it was funny and moving! Loved the set! Actress was hilarious." – 14-year-old female student

Plays Aloud

Summer Tour - 306

Christmas Tour - 289

Total 595



Last August, Plays Aloud spent two weeks travelling to schemes across Northern Ireland. The tour visited 22 homes, two of which we have never visited before. This was the first tour of Plays Aloud since 2019 without any Covid-19 restrictions. All the homes we visited have dropped mask wearing and mandatory testing.

During the Christmas tour Plays Aloud visited 19 schemes. The feedback from almost every carer was the same in that they all felt the residents and users would benefit from more regular stimulation from Plays Aloud. Many had said that we would be welcome the next day if we could come back.

"Smiling from ear to ear – absolute magic!"

"The whole mood and atmosphere were totally transformed"

"Our residents are happy, content and full of chat and buzz"

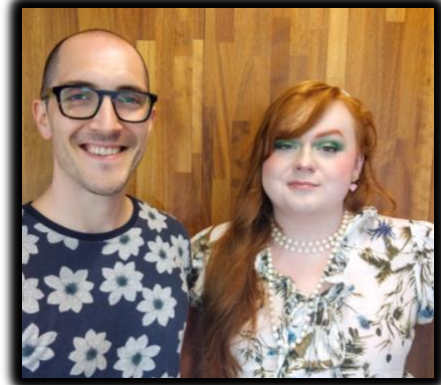


Rose+Bud

Ticket Sales:

Smock Alley - 11

Continuing on the development of Rose+Bud since its first engagement in 2022 under the Lyric Theatre writers' scheme, Commedia of Errors has continued to see this production and its creator Rose Coogan blossom and grow. Rose+Bud was performed to a live audience in Smock Alley to great success and praise from the audience. Plans for Rose+Bud is to continue to work with and develop Rose as a writer and creator through mentorship with playwright Clare McMahon and director Benjamin Gould, and then to bring Rose+Bud on tour in 2024.



Feedback from Audience Members:

"The show was very entertaining all the way through. Very accurate to Derry culture also. Great use of description!"

"The dynamic between the leads is incredible. The switch from Bud to Rose was done brilliantly. I could not stop smiling from both the perfectly timed comedy and the heartwarming experiences"

"Exceptional. This script had everything. Personality, heart, care, bundles of humour and great beginning middle and end. Very well acted. The changeover of actors in the middle was emotional and beautiful."



We would like to give particular thanks to our funders – without whom our work would not have been possible.

