

MINUTES

LONDON CULTURAL STRATEGY GROUP

Date: Tuesday, 12 November 2013

Teas and Coffees: 9.30pm

Meeting: 10.00am

Venue: The Royal Court Theatre, London

ATTENDEES:

Chair: Iwona Blazwick, OBE, Director, Whitechapel Art Gallery

Vice Chair: Charlotte Jones, Chief Executive, Independent Theatre Council

Members

Sharon Ament, Director, Museum of London Group

Nigel Barker, Head of Regional Partnerships, English Heritage- London Region

Geoffrey Bond, OBE, DL, FSA, Lawyer, Businessman and Broadcaster

Tracy Cooper, Director, artsdepot

Clr Guy Nicholson, London Councils

Observers:

Souraya Ali, Principal policy & project officer, London Councils

GLA:

Justine Simons, Head of Culture, GLA

Amanda Neal, Culture Strategy Coordinator, GLA

Apologies:

Nick Allott, Managing Director, Cameron Mackintosh Ltd.

Alan Bishop, CEO, South Bank Centre

Sue Bowers, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund London, Heritage Lottery Fund

Professor Anthony Bowne, Principal, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance

Ben Evans, Director, London Design Festival

Manick Govinda, Head of Artists' Advisory Services, Artsadmin

Gordon Innes, Chief Executive, London and Partners

Sir Nicholas Kenyon, Managing Director, Barbican Centre

Munira Mirza, Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture, Mayor's Office

Vicky Richardson, Director of Architecture, Design and Fashion, British Council

Caroline Rush, CEO, British Fashion Council

Nii Sackey, CEO, Bigga Fish

Joyce Wilson, Area Director, London, Arts Council England

Adrian Wootton, CEO, Film London

Guest Presenters

Vicky Featherstone, Artistic Director, The Royal Court Theatre

David Jubb, Artistic Director, Battersea Arts Centre and Chair, London Theatre Consortium

Agenda item/time	Notes	Actions
<p data-bbox="107 193 181 217">10.00</p> <p data-bbox="107 256 226 280">Welcome</p> <p data-bbox="107 292 371 316">Iwona Blazwick, Chair</p>	<p data-bbox="423 193 1554 217">The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and introduced the guest presenters for the day.</p> <p data-bbox="423 256 696 280">Apologies were noted.</p> <p data-bbox="423 320 1122 344">Minutes and actions from the last meeting were reviewed.</p> <p data-bbox="423 384 1223 408">The Group ratified the minutes of the September 17 2013 meeting.</p>	
<p data-bbox="107 419 181 443">10.20</p> <p data-bbox="107 496 349 552">Culture Programme Update</p> <p data-bbox="107 600 394 663">Justine Simons, Head of Culture, GLA</p>	<p data-bbox="423 419 1693 483">Justine Simons provided an overview of the cultural projects and policy activity undertaken by the Mayor's Office since the last meeting.</p> <ul data-bbox="472 531 1693 810" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="472 531 1659 595">• The City of Istanbul is hosting the World Cities Culture Summit from November 12-15 coinciding with the online publication of the updated report to include data from 10 new cities. <li data-bbox="472 603 1693 738">• In October the Mayor of London met with Mayor Bloomberg of New York City and agreed an inter-city promotional tourism campaign which aims to boost tourism between both cities, promote London's cultural offering to its no.1 tourist market and share digital best practice between the respective promotional organisations, NYC & Co and London & Partners. <li data-bbox="472 746 1615 810">• The Fourth Plinth shortlist exhibition was a great success with approximately 40,000 people visiting the exhibition and over 2,500 360 degree virtual tours from the Fourth Plinth website 	
<p data-bbox="107 826 181 850">10.30</p> <p data-bbox="107 863 394 927">Maintaining position as world capital of culture</p> <p data-bbox="107 967 349 1031"><i>A wealth of London theatre</i></p> <p data-bbox="107 1110 371 1246">Presentation 1: Charlotte Jones, CEO, Independent Theatre Council</p>	<p data-bbox="423 826 1693 1074">Charlotte Jones set the context of the discussion on London's Theatre Sector. When most people think of theatre they think of red seats and curtains. This is not the full picture. Eighty percent of the Independent Theatre Council's members are companies which are working site specifically or across established venues and touring internationally. Theatre companies are easily positioned for work at a community level and do so in incredibly interactive ways. For example, Clean Break is a theatre company started in 1982 and works with ex-offenders and those recovering from mental illnesses. Performance company, Oily Cart, stages unique productions tailored to address child learning disabilities.</p> <p data-bbox="423 1106 1671 1281">The issue is that the width and breadth of activity in the sector is marginalised by perception – and often focuses on commercial or large scale works. In reality small theatres in the capital are faced with fewer opportunities for small scale work, competition from regional theatres for public funding, and a lack of affordable rehearsal and living space combined with low earnings. These factors have created a veritable 'time bomb' for London's fragile small theatre community. Low levels of affordable creative spaces,</p>	

<p>Presentation 2: Vicky Featherstone, Artistic Director, The Royal Court Theatre</p>	<p>rehearsal studios and ultimately residential homes need to be addressed with urgency.</p> <p>Vicky Featherstone, Artistic Director at the Royal Court Theatre shared that the theatre receives 1/3 of its funding from ACE, 1/3 from box office and 1/3 from fundraising. While 21% of their theatres audiences reside in south west London - almost the same percentage earn less than £20K per annum. This has led to a shift away from a traditional approach to audience development. She suggests that theatres, big and small, would do well to focus on integrating into the fabric of their immediate communities to build new audiences.</p> <p>In terms of economics, the link between London and regional theatres is incredibly symbiotic. This is not merely in the sense of London based productions touring outwards but regionally small scale productions receiving investment from and eventually transferring to the West End, i.e. Billy Elliot. Without the power of the West End, which is one of only two commercial theatre hubs in the world – the other being Broadway, productions such as these would never become global sensations. However, caution needs to be taken, as innovative models from London’s theatre sector – such as live screenings – has taken a bite out of live theatre offer in small villages.</p>	
<p>Presentation 3: David Jubb, Artistic Director, Battersea Arts Centre and Chair of the London Theatre Consortia</p>	<p>David Jubb, Artistic director of the Battersea Arts Centre and Chair of the London Theatre Consortia (LTC) shared his experiences, focusing on the work of the consortium. The collaboration between the theatres in the consortia began 5 years ago. The group was initially pulled together via Art Council England Audiences London programme, but is now self-organised. The nature of the consortia has been one of ‘collaborative competition’ in identifying areas where resources can be shared but standards are driven upwards. Achievements of the consortia include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of the combined theatres energy consumption by 10% • Delivery of a three year apprenticeship programme – hosting 40 apprentices • Cutting costs via shared procurement driving costs down for services such as insurance. 	
<p>Presentation 4: Tracy Cooper, CEO, artsdepot</p>	<p>David agreed that theatre’s would do well to ingrain themselves in the local community. He referred to the ‘figure eight’ model where a theatre should start outside of the building with the community to bring relevant work to the stage that reflects the community and in turn drives audience development.</p> <p>Tracy Cooper focused her presentation on ‘outer’ London theatre provision. There are 200 strictly theatre</p>	

	<p>venues in London, of which 150 are located outside of the West End. artsdepotis an arts centre rather than a dedicated theatre, which supports collaborations across disciplines. The new network of UK arts centres has been hugely helpful in supporting ‘all the arts in one place’ approach – and could be a useful model for small theatres. The issue for artsdepot and small theatres in the outer boroughs is the tension with larger venues which have a 50 mile touring radius, consequently passing over these small organisations on the flawed basis that there would be competition for audiences.</p> <p>Smaller organisations contributions to their local economy should not be overlooked. Artsdepot conducted a study on its own economic contribution to the local community. The results are staggering with the organisation turning £300K of Arts Council funding into a £1.6m turnover.</p> <p>Member contributions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenter posed that there is room to do more to celebrate our artists – particularly when advocating to government officials. • Member agreed and suggested that the language used needs to change. In London the focus seems to be the problems. Though these problems are real, the messaging could be counterproductive if the public consistently hear about the issues in the absence of the achievements. • Members discussed the forms of mass communication, i.e. digital social media and broadcast approached culture – agreeing that more risk needed to be taken in profiling artists and disciplines. • Presenter mentioned that there are so many places and spaces that could be made more of through creative programming, including housing estates. • Member noted that there is need to better profile theatres community work. • Member suggested building a consortium across different creative and cultural sub-sectors. 	
<p>11.30</p> <p>The Mayor’s response to the London Assembly’s Small Theatre Report</p> <p>Group, discussion and</p>	<p>Mayor's Response to Small Theatre:</p> <p>The LCSG was invited to help shape the Mayor’s response to the London Assembly’s Small Theatre Report, Centre Stage. In spring 2013 the London Assembly’s Economy Committee led an enquiry of small theatres across London to better understand the challenges and opportunities the sector is facing. The Committee published its findings in July. The Mayor agreed to respond to the recommendations of the report by the 22 November.</p> <p>At the meeting the members confirmed the response and supported the GLA Culture Team by making</p>	<p>Need to explicitly say in the response that this report has an awkward definition of small theatres that has created large gaps.</p> <p>Group approved the</p>

approval	<p>further suggestions on carrying out the recommendations of the report.</p> <p>Member contributions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member stated that the report was unclear in its definition of what a small theatre is, and there are major gaps to the survey with some theatre's not meeting the criteria of a 'small theatre' but equally not considered a 'large theatre.' • Member suggested that it would be worth investigating borough regeneration departments to identify empty spaces that could be suitable for rehearsal and performance. 	response.
11.55 AOB	The Chair closed the meeting.	