

OUDS MEETING MT18 WEEK 7

PRESENT: Chris Burr, John Livesey, Fran Amewudah-Rivers, Chris Burr, Amy Thompson, Hannah Greenstreet, Miranda Mackay, Joel Stanley

APOLOGIES: Lucy Miles, Jake Harrison-Woods, Tracey Mwaniki, Linette Chan, Jamie Lucas, Ros Ballaster

1. Hannah from Oxford Playhouse

- a) OP are looking at drastically restructuring the student drama system.
- b) They would like to know:
 - a. what do students want from doing an Oxford Playhouse show?
 - b. what isn't working under the current schedule?
 - i. Financing. A combination of having to pay a lot for the space, and seat prices, transparency in costing from pre-bid to settlement. Pack on website does a lot to help with this. Marketing side of it is good throughout - could producing be modelled on the marketing model. Technicians spend money and tell you at the end. It's hard to calculate - a budget needs to be agreed with the technicians.
 - ii. Sometimes technicians put orders through the playhouse, which increases OP losses.
 - iii. The recharge system is one part of this, but as it the problem when box office commission and booking fees change. This went largely unnoticed and was a problem. The themes are a lack of clarity. OUDS are probably the best way to communicate these things to students.
 - iv. In one bid round, all the information was on the website, but all the bids were received showing the wrong figures
 - v. The financing situation is the biggest problem.
 - vi. Keble O'Reilly being unavailable is a problem, and we don't know how long this will last. Makes it a lot harder for everyone to scale up.
 1. Students will be coming into the playhouse having never handled a budget with an expenditure over £700
 - c. OP want the new funding structure to be matched with an artistic support & development structure, as the quality of recent bids have been going down. Bids that have not been thought through, people who haven't done much drama.
 - d. HG asks why FAR doesn't want to direct a playhouse show after AD-ing one.
 - i. The stress was too much at the O'Reilly, and even after AD-ing the playhouse, felt unprepared for the O'Reilly.
 - ii. The O'Reilly isn't a sufficient mid-point between the BT and the playhouse.
 - iii. Directing the playhouse requires a lot of experience, and a lot of directors here don't have that. There's only so many shows you can do here.
 - iv. Workshops on getting into directing at a professional level might help.
 - e. There's a kind of commercial constraint on what kind of directors will succeed at the Playhouse - you can't do an experimental show, and it means the playhouse isn't for a certain type of director - it has to be commercially viable. It occupies a weird slot of not being for certain types of show and certain types of director.
 - i. Our impressions of what playhouse shows are are informed by what we've recently seen at the playhouse - we can't see what's going on on the production side. It does tend to be the same type of shows.
 - ii. How do we expect directors to break the mould without a support system? There's no real encouragement or support for people who want to break the mould.
 - iii. We do see good experimental things at the Playhosue

- iv. Fewer people go and see student shows anyway
 - v. The OP doesn't always take experimental shows with a proven track record - Commercial shows bankroll the great experimental ones that don't break even. This model would be ideal for student drama as well.
 - vi. Ideally that would work, but even student commercial shows don't make enough money to bankroll experimental work.
 - vii. would shorter runs work better?
 - viii. That depends on the nature of the budget - if the run-time is shorter then the production value will be less.
 - ix. A showcase with a different show every night?
 - x. A showcase would be watering-down the opportunities available to producers - it would feel diluted.
 - xi. Could a showcase work for one term?
 - xii. Could we find five directors who would do a showcase?
 - xiii. would actors put in the right amount of work for one night?
 - xiv. The Playhouse is an opportunity for local people. You can't put on smaller shows there. Student groups do small-scale theatre spectacularly well, but this is not what works in the playhouse.
 - xv. could more reps from the Playhouse come and see more student theatre to get an idea of what is working?
 - xvi. A commissioning model? That could extend once people have graduated. On the model of the North Wall? A culture of nurturing young artists. The development model may not work well with a one-week slot.
 - xvii. The director doesn't have an OP counterpart - there's no mentoring for Directors.
 - xviii. Could recruit alumni to mentor?
 - 1. HG has been in touch with a few but it's hard to nail down.
 - xix. HG The Pillowman was an example of a great student show. Commercial and artistic success. Even shows with that level of quality haven't sold those seats. The key was that they had done really well at the O'Reilly and so were known.
 - xx. OP not seen as a professional stepping-stone.
 - xxi. production companies don't have the capital of something that's done two big O'Reilly shows.
- f. FAR: Let's discuss this as a committee next time and feed back to you.
- a) Scheduling Don Giovanni
- i. HG: There's not much that can be done. We're programmed for the first five weeks of student shows. One more may drop out but we won't know until January. If they want to not do it, then there's not much we can do. Doing it somewhere else with playhouse support may be a good way of sorting it out.
- c) Scheduling OFS
- a) The OFS are looking at doing a Hilary slot for students
 - b) They schedule on a wildly different timetable than the playhouse
 - c) How can we make that work without clashing?
 - a. HG: Our programming director will have to talk with the OFS
 - b. Maybe we could do a Playhouse show at the fire station? Replace a playhouse slot with a firestation slot?

2. Our role in NSDF

3. Potential sponsorship

- a) We don't know who's agenda point this is?
- b) Last week we wanted to brainstorm ideas about potential sponsors - this will require groupthink to put together a list.
- c) Chris is not sure TAFF are still sponsored by Henley.
- d) Fran forwarded some ideas to Amy, but they were not offering the kind of sponsorship we want.

- e) AP ALL: Actively think about this over christmas - come up with a list of companies that might be interested in being involved with OUDS

4. Feedback on NSDF Manifesto

5. Welfare rep update

- a) Amitai and Fran meeting with Oxford SU on Wednesday to discuss what drama consent workshops might look like
- b) Drama consent workshops will hopefully be taking place at the start of next term
- c) Drop-In to discuss NSDF manifesto will be on Saturday from 5 - 7
- d) AP LUCY to organise the space for (c)
- e) AP AMITAI to make a facebook event to advertise (c)
- f) AP ALL to market this and circulate the manifesto once it's launched
- g) Could we put it up on the auditions portal or send it out to everyone who holds auditions so that everyone can see it?
- h) AT: This can easily be done
- i) Can we share the document instead of the event, to make sure more people see it?
 - a. FAR would prefer to share the event, but HG suggests people should come informed.
 - b. We'll share the document with the event attached. Can there be a google form for people to feedback who couldn't make the event.
 - c. AP SEB: create google doc feedback form to be published after the event and put up on the website
 - d. John L: should we encourage TAFF major funders to come?
 - e. The SU will be pushing this as well.

6. Workshops Update

- a) John L made a post on the OUDS group; a spreadsheet of everyone contacted so far
- b) JL and JL currently in contact with about 15 people in a wide range of disciplines
- c) Had an email from someone FAR was in contact with about adapting classical drama
- d) AP ALL: Please add suggestions and contacts to this spreadsheet
- e) Can we use the results of the survey to guide workshop suggestions?
 - a. Lots of people want to have a musical theatre workshop
- f) CB: The BT is free in first week.
- g) Iqbal Khan has been contacted by John L
- h) AT: Had an email from Phil Macken at Headington School
 - a. AP John L to email him to pass on what we discussed

7. Socials Update

- a) TAFF Pub trip
 - a. Miranda has been in discussion about timing
 - b. Make it a handover social – it's getting late in the day now
- b) OUFF Crewdate
 - a. They contacted us: might be hard to get OUDS for this in 8th week
 - b. Postponed also to next term – get it organised in first week of next term
- c) The event is live for Friday's film screening: committee push at 6pm on Wednesday into societies and show groups
 - a. AP ALL: Come to the event!

10. NWF Update

- a) For handover next year: Please put content warnings on the scripts!
- b) May be helpful to read more scripts, as it's difficult to standardise the marks. This may be hard to do time-wise
 - a. Can we read more but mark the same number?
- c) Were the scripts double-marked?
 - a. The higher-marked ones will be double-marked
- d) Can we have one or two people who read all of them, and then have specific people to mark a few?
 - a. We think the NWF reps are going to read them all
- e) Maybe we could just read the first ten pages?
 - a. Or a sample of five pages from the beginning and the middle?
 - b. So how about reading fewer pages of a larger number of scripts?