

**THE ASSOCIATION OF  
BRITISH THEATRE TECHNICIANS**

**Registered No. 1231725**

**Registered Charity No. 282069**

**ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**31 DECEMBER 2021**

**The Trustee-Directors are pleased to present their Report together with the Consolidated Financial Statements of the charity and its subsidiaries for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021. This Report is the forty-seventh since the incorporation of the Association and the fifty-eighth since its inception.**

### **Chairman's Report 2021**

Throughout 2021, the theatre and entertainment sector we support, continued to struggle. Although some restrictions associated with COVID-19 were easing, this was tentative and uneven through the year and the effects continued to impact the work of our members, supporters, committees, and staff. Building on approaches established at the outset of the pandemic, I have been impressed and proud of the ways the ABTT has continued to use our expertise, networks and influence to support the industry.

Robin Townley, our full-time Chief Executive, continued to be a superbly committed and effective advocate for the ABTT leading the office and our relationships with stakeholders within the sector. Elysia Moore as Association and Events Manager, and Stuart Roberts as Financial Controller continued as our core team.

Our office team continued to work remotely. I thank them for the flexibility and resilience they have shown efficiently running our activities on a day-to-day basis, and their significant contributions to the Association's presence and activities under these difficult conditions. The Association continued to make use of the Government's Job Retention Scheme as a mechanism to align expenditure with the reduced income and industry activity while retaining staff ready for the sector recovery. Following a successful experience working remotely, the association took advantage of the break clause in its lease to depart the ABTT Office in Farringdon in December.

As in previous years, the core of the ABTT's work is undertaken by the hugely experienced professional experts who work through our committees to provide leadership to the industry in safety, standards, training and other activities. The reports of these various committees are to be found later in this 2021 Annual Report.

I am enormously grateful for the time and energy which these individuals dedicate to the ABTT. Continuing in their roles from 2020, the Safety Committee was chaired by Michael Anderson, Principal Consultant at Anderson Bradshaw Limited; the Training and Education Committee was chaired by Sebastian Barnes, freelance Trainer and Assessor; the Historical Research Committee was chaired by Roger Fox; and the Theatre Planning Committee was headed up by Theatre Architect Tim Foster. We welcomed Henry Bell as chair of the Stephen Joseph Committee, taking over from Alistair Livingstone. Jean Shevelan continued to Chair ABTT NorthNet, Martin Hunt, Technical Director of the Wales Millennium Centre chairs ABTT Cymru, and Paul Durose managed the School Theatre Support Group. Mark White continued as Chairman of the Communications and Publications Committee, and Nikki Scott chaired the Core Values Working Group. Jessica Nicholls led the UK Theatre and Live Events Apprenticeship Network.

Rebecca Morland continued as paid Editor of Sightline, with four issues published in 2021. This remains a prestigious journal of record for technical aspects of the theatre industry with content that is highly regarded and well received by members and the wider industry. Recognising that our members and supporters have not been at their usual place of work this journal continued to be issued in electronic format only. I also thank Geoffrey Joyce on behalf of the Association for his continued work as a paid consultant delivering and developing ABTT Training.

In consideration of the fragile recovery and uncertain outlook, the annual ABTT Theatre Show was presented jointly with PLASA's annual show in Olympia in September on a one-off basis. This efficient approach was well received by exhibitors and visitors who made the most of the opportunity to connect in person at a vibrant event.

Following this exceptional arrangement, a range of previous exhibitors at the ABTT Theatre Show were consulted to gauge the appetite for a return to Alexandra Palace for an independent presentation of the ABTT Theatre Show in June 2022. This exercise produced a strong positive response in favour of a return of an event as similar as possible to that held in June 2019. As a consequent we began to plan for such an exhibition, bringing the exhibitor recruitment and management back into the ABTT Office team and appointing suitable new contractors to undertake ticketing and onsite show management.

We continued to use online seminars to engage with our membership and the wider industry addressing important issues including Health and Safety, Well-being, Apprenticeships, Mental health, Sustainability and more. I thank the speakers and panellists who have brought a genuine depth of experience and knowledge to these events, and Elysia Moore for her management of them.

The Award for Technician of the Year was presented to Sorcha Steele acknowledging her exceptional leadership and innovative approach leading the sound department at the Royal Exchange in Manchester, and supportive approach to development of others around her. The award for Emerging Excellence was presented to Jesse Caie of Chichester Festival Theatre. The inaugural Stephen Joseph Award was presented to Persis Jadé Maravala, performer and teacher and Artistic Director of ZU-UK Company. It was a delight on behalf of the ABTT to offer them all our warmest congratulations on receiving these awards in September.

There were three vacancies on Council in 2021 occurring through the resignation of Darren Joyce and the retirement by rotation of David Evans and Louise Birchall who had completed their three-year term of office. David Evans had served two consecutive terms and was not eligible to stand again this year. Following elections, Ben Stephen and Oliver Brown joined the Council as new Trustee-Directors, and Louise Birchall was re-elected joining our other continuing trustees Mig Burgess, Andy Franks, Alexander Cann, Peter Maccoy, Caroline Rouse, Nikki Scott, Anton Woodward and Emma Wilson.

I am delighted to be handing over to the Association's new co-chairs Mig Burgess and David Evans who were formally appointed by the Trustee-Directors in November. They both bring deep expertise and together a breadth of experience to lead the ABTT's Council of management and guide the Association over the next two years

Nikki Scott, Trustee-Director continued as Vice-Chair. Matthew Jones from Taylor Wessing has continued to serve as Honorary Secretary, and Loretta Tomasi as our Honorary Treasurer. I thank them all for the considerable time, wisdom and advice they have given to the Association in these difficult times. Jane Thornton continues as Honorary Archivist with the assistance of Paul Roberts.

I also thank Matthew Freeman for his continued work and am delighted to welcome Jessica Nicholls and Joshua Burnside as co-opted Young Associate Representatives to the Council. Their contributions and insight at Council meetings, in committees and to the Young Associate page for Sightline has been of tremendous value to the Association and our membership.

I am grateful for the companies and organisations that form the ABTT Industry Supporters' Group. This philanthropic support makes a real difference to funding our work and provides a collective commercial knowledge which helps our work stay aligned with the needs and emerging issues facing our industry.

Although planned, risks associated with COVID-19 once again prevented us meeting in person at the end of the year for the ABTT Christmas Party. As an important event in our calendar, I hope that this will return in 2022 as a moment to bring together our members, supporters, and friends.

Richard Bunn, Chairman

## **Our Purpose**

### **The purposes of the charity are:**

The advancement of public education in the technical subjects connected with the theatre and theatrical presentation and the promotion for the benefit of the public of excellent theatre design and technical presentation of theatrical works.

Our vision of work remains the promotion and fostering of knowledge and the appreciation of the art of technical theatre from well-designed theatres and better trained staff. Our Codes of Practice continue to be developed and we debate safe ways of working that become universal standards for theatres across the nations of the United Kingdom. The Association produces a number of other publications that inform those working in the theatre industry. These are also useful references for those members of the public who have a keen interest in finding out more about the technical aspects of performance and venues which are necessary to provide a seamless experience when they attend a performance.

In guiding our activities for 2021 the Trustees continued to observe the Charity Commission's requirements for public benefit. The Association primarily relies on membership subscription for income which is supplemented both by the income generated from the annual ABTT Theatre Show and subscriptions from members of the ABTT Industry Supporters' Group. The International Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference (ITEAC) held every four years and next in 2022 (at the beginning of 2022, this event was rescheduled for 2023) also provides welcome returns. The trading activities of the group are carried out by the trading companies and any profits are distributed as a dividend to the charity as required by the Memorandums of Association of the profit-making trading entities.

## **Our Objectives**

Our objectives are set out in the ABTT Memorandum of Association, a copy of which is to be found on our website: [www.abtt.org.uk](http://www.abtt.org.uk)

The strategies employed to achieve the Association's objectives of publicly available good works are to:

- Advocate and provide efficient standards of planning for the building or reconstruction of theatres and to promote theatre design which will offer the widest possible scope for theatrical expression;
- Promote and encourage improvement in the design and the proper installation and use of stage equipment and materials;
- Advocate an enlightened and flexible approach to measures for public safety and fire precautions in theatres and the application of new technical knowledge and experience in those fields to changing conditions;
- Encourage excellence in all technical matters relating to the theatre;
- Facilitate the exchange of ideas and information amongst theatre technicians and others concerned in any way with the theatre, paying attention to the different needs and opportunities of each locality, organisation and form of theatre;
- Organise meetings, correspondence, demonstrations, exhibitions, and courses of training in relation to the technical aspects of theatre;
- Publish books, magazines and other matter relating to the art of the theatre and provide information services for the collection and dissemination of technical information.

# Our Core Values

Appropriate to the current state of the theatre sector the ABTT has adopted five core values. These values are in addition to the objects as stated in the Memorandum of Association. These values underpin all the activities of the Association and act as a ‘toolkit’ to guide us in the way we meet our objects. The ABTT demonstrates as many of the values as appropriate in all with which it engages. The values are:

- **Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion**

The ABTT believes that those who are interested or working in the design of places of entertainment or in their operation or in the production of performance should be as diverse in all respects and attributes as the members of the society in which we all live. The Association will be welcoming and respectful to all who seek to connect with it. In addition, it recognises that it must work to overcome barriers of any nature that prevent or inhibit anyone from seeking connection, support, guidance or participation with the ABTT. This value mandates the ABTT to find ways of actively promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and removing barriers for those who are underrepresented in our current membership, Association leadership and sector.

- **Enabling excellence**

The ABTT recognises that the development of excellence in attitudes, behaviours, skills and knowledge is essential to sustain the areas it supports. In all that it undertakes it will seek to enable participation and the achievement of excellence, identifying barriers to entry and progression and seeking to find solutions by which they may be removed.

- **Acknowledging achievement**

The ABTT will work to communicate and celebrate the contribution that the sector it represents makes to the success of the theatre and live performance industries and it will acknowledge excellence in the performance of all the associated crafts and disciplines.

- **Representing all**

The ABTT is for all who are interested or working in the design of places of entertainment or in their operation or in the production of performance. It will seek to offer support and be relevant to all the regions and nations of the United Kingdom, those whose participation is waged and unwaged, the small and the large, those with buildings and those without; everyone no matter where or how they pursue their interest.

- **Combating climate emergency**

The ABTT is committed to taking positive action in response to climate breakdown and biodiversity collapse. It has pledged to support all those operating in live performance production, technology and building design to strengthen working practices and redesign business activities, operational processes, use of resources, organisational policy and overall governance in order to create and present live performance in a way that has a more positive impact on the world around us. The ABTT also pledges to adopt positive measures in its own activities.

## Structure, Governance and Management

### Governing Document

The Association of British Theatre Technicians is a non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee of its Members each of whom agree to contribute £1 in the event of the charitable company winding up. The Association is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 30 October 1975 (as amended by Special Resolutions dated 31 July 1987, 5 April 2000, 24 April 2002, 13 December 2002, 22 September 2005 and 12 October 2016). It obtained dispensation from the Secretary of State for Trade to

omit the word “Limited” from its registered name. The Association is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission.

## Reference and Administrative Details

Inception: 3 March 1961

Company number: 1231725, registered as a company in England and Wales on 30 October 1975

Charity number: 282069, registered as a charity on 6 April 1981

Principal Office: 4th Floor, 55 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3JB A five-year lease was entered into commencing on 14th May 2020, but the ABTT took advantage of the mutual break clause in September 2021 and vacated the office to work from home permanently. The principle office is now 22 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0QL.

Telephone: 020 7242 9200

E-mail: [office@abtt.org.uk](mailto:office@abtt.org.uk)

Registered Office: 2 London Wall Place, 6th Floor, London, England, EC2Y 5AU

Auditors: MHA MacIntyre Hudson, 2 London Wall Place, 6th Floor, London, England, EC2Y 5AU

Bankers: Royal Bank of Scotland, 40 Islington High Street, London N1 8XB

## Council of Management

The Council of management is responsible for the overall direction of the affairs of the Association and decides all matters of policy. The Council meets at least four times each year depending upon business. The Council comprises:

- The elected Trustee-Directors;
- The Committee Chairmen ex officio;
- The Officers ex officio;

Any Member or Associate of the Association co-opted by the Trustee-Directors to fill a casual vacancy amongst the elected Trustee-Directors or by way of addition to the Council, the maximum number of persons to be at the discretion of the Council. When considering co-opting Trustee-Directors, the Board has regard to the requirement for any specialist skills needed.

Only elected Trustee-Directors have a vote.

The Council met five times in 2021.

## Trustee- Directors

As set out in the Articles of Association, the Electoral College elects the Trustee-Directors. There are up to eleven Trustee-Directors who serve for three years and who are eligible for a second consecutive term but who are not eligible for further election until the year after the termination of their second term of office.

Accordingly, the Electoral College was sent an invitation to nominate Trustee-Directors prior to the AGM advising them of the retiring Trustee-Directors.

Three trustee positions became vacant this year through the resignation of **Darren Joyce** and the retirement by rotation of the following members of Council who will have completed their current three-year term of office: **Louise Birchall** and **David Evans**.

**David Evans** had served two consecutive terms and was not eligible to stand again this year. **Louise Birchall** had served one three year term and was eligible for nomination.

The results of the elections to Council were announced stating that **Louise Birchall**, **Oliver Brown** and **Ben Stephen** were appointed. New Trustee-Directors are informally introduced to their roles as Directors and Trustees of the charitable Company. The Council of Management has issued a handbook to assist new and existing Trustee-Directors and holds a more formal induction process that informs the additional responsibilities that are placed on trustees of a charitable organisation on an ad-hoc basis.

The Trustee-Directors serving at the end of 2021 were as follows:

Louise Birchall (re-appointed 2021)  
Oliver Brown (appointed 2021)  
Mig Burgess (appointed 2019)  
Alexander Cann (appointed 2020)  
Andy Franks (appointed 2019)  
Peter Maccoy (re-appointed 2019)  
Caroline Rouse (re-appointed 2019)  
Nikki Scott (re-appointed 2019)  
Ben Stephen (appointed 2021)  
Emma Wilson (appointed 2019)  
Anton Woodward (appointed 2020)

## Officers

The Trustee-Directors appoint biennially a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, an Honorary Treasurer and an Honorary Secretary. At their meeting of 3rd November 2021, the Council appointed Mig Burgess-Walsh and David Evans as Co-Chairs. Nikki Scott continued as Vice-Chair. Matthew Jones as Honorary Secretary and Loretta Tomasi as Honorary Treasurer. Jane Thornton continued as Honorary Archivist

The Officers serving at the end of 2021 were as follows:

Mig Burgess Walsh: Co-chair  
David Evans: Co-chair  
Nikki Scott: Vice-chair  
Matthew Jones: Honorary Secretary  
Loretta Tomasi: Honorary Treasurer  
Jane Thornton MBE: Honorary Archivist

## Co-opted Council Members

Paul Moore: Co-opted member  
Matthew Freeman: Young Associate representative  
Ben Mills: Young Associate representative  
Jess Nicholls: Young Associate representative  
Josh Burnside: Young Associate representative

## Staff

There were no changes in the permanently employed staff responsible for day-to-day administration of the association. The permanently employed staff at the end of 2021 were as follows:

Robin Townley: Chief Executive Officer  
Elysia Moore: Association and Events Manager  
Stuart Roberts: Financial Controller

## Consultants

The association paid for the following consultants during 2021 to help deliver the Association's activities:  
Geoffrey Joyce: Training Consultant  
Rebecca Morland: Editor of Sightline

## Committees

The Trustee-Directors appoint from time-to-time various committees, working parties and ad-hoc panels to deal with specific matters. This year two new Committees were created: ABTT Automation Committee and ABTT Wigs, Hair and Make-up Committee. The technical work of the Association is carried out by Technical Committees. A report on the activities of the Committees forms part of this Report. The Association is proud of the extent of public good that is carried out by these committees and the hard work contributed by them to assist the Association in fulfilling its aims.

## Related Parties

### *Theatrical Trading Ltd and Theatrical Events Ltd*

The Association has two wholly owned commercial subsidiaries. Theatrical Trading Ltd produces the annual ABTT Theatre Show and produces the majority of the Association's publications and training. Theatrical Events Ltd stages conferences such as the International Theatre Engineering & Architecture Conference and has published related books. The profits of both companies are distributed as a dividend to the charity as required by the Memorandum of Association of these profit-making trading entities

## Strategic Partnerships

### *The Theatre Safety Committee*

The ABTT is one of twelve members of the Theatre Safety Committee. The other members are: Society of London Theatre; UK Theatre; Independent Theatre Council; Institute of Entertainment and Arts Management; Little Theatre Guild; Society of Independent Theatres; Equity: Musicians Union; Stage Management Association, BECTU and Theatres Trust. The Theatre Safety Committee supports the ABTT in the production of a Code of Practice for the Theatre Industry.

### *Stage Management Association (SMA)*

The Association has a close working relationship with the Stage Management Association (SMA), an organisation that exists to promote better standards in stage management. It is a joint founder with the Association in the Production Managers' Forum.

### *International Organisation of Scenographers, Theatre Architects and Technicians*

The Association is a member of the International Organisation of Scenographers, Theatre Architects and Technicians (Organisation Internationale des Scénographes, Techniciens et Architectes de Théâtre) (OISTAT). OISTAT is a co-operative, non-governmental organisation which operates under the auspices of UNESCO. OISTAT's principal purpose is to foster opportunities for co-operation between and among theatre organisations. The ABTT is one of the OISTAT Centres in the UK and as such plays an active role in each Commission. [www.oistat.org/](http://www.oistat.org/)

### *Theatres Trust*

Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. It believes that current and future generations should have access to good quality theatre buildings where they can be inspired by, and enjoy, live performance. It champions the future of live performance by protecting and supporting excellent theatre buildings which meet the needs of their communities. It does this by providing advice on the design, planning, development and sustainability of theatres, campaigning on behalf of theatres old and new and offering financial assistance through grants. The ABTT provides expert technical assistance to the Theatres Trust. [www.theatretrust.org.uk](http://www.theatretrust.org.uk)

#### *Association of Performing Arts Collections(APAC) & SIBMAS*

The Association is a member of the Association of Performing Arts Collections and SIBMAS the International Association of Libraries, Museums, Archives and Documentation Centres of the Performing Arts. APAC is a key forum for the placement of performing arts archives and collections for which the ABTT's and particularly the Historical Research Committee's help is sort in connection with their disposal.

#### *Alliance of Associations and Professionals in Theatre & Live Events (AAPTLE)*

AAPTLE includes representatives who work in all aspects of the theatrical and events community including more than two hundred thousand creative and production practitioners. It seeks to work towards making our industry a safe, inclusive and sustainable place to work, now and in the future.

## **Membership of the Association**

There are various ways of joining the Association. These are as a Member, an Associate or an Affiliated Organisation. Membership of the Association at 31 December 2021 was as follows:

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Fellows	26	22	22	22	19	18	19	16	14	13	9
Honorary Members	13	14	14	15	15	16	16	15	13	13	14
Members	329	346	370	316	303	312	322	319	297	279	261
Associates	1110	1258	1168	1255	1291	1338	1350	1193	1057	1019	1134
Affiliated Organisations	209	199	226	217	199	198	201	194	194	198	201
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1687</b>	<b>1839</b>	<b>1800</b>	<b>1825</b>	<b>1827</b>	<b>1882</b>	<b>1908</b>	<b>1737</b>	<b>1575</b>	<b>1522</b>	<b>1619</b>

## **Members**

Any individual with relevant experience and manifest commitment to the technical aspects of the art of the theatre is qualified to be a Member of the Association. Those people who have given a working life's commitment to the art of technical theatre can continue as retired Members. The admission of applicants is determined by the Trustee-Directors.

The Trustee-Directors may appoint as Fellows of the Association any persons who, in the opinion of the Trustee-Directors, have rendered signal service to the technical aspects of the art of the theatre. The Trustee-Directors may also appoint as Honorary Members of the Association any persons who, in opinion of the Trustee-Directors, have rendered signal service to the Association. Fellows and Honorary Members are entitled to the privileges and rights of Members.

Members together with Fellows and Honorary Members have the right to vote and are collectively referred to in this Report as the Electoral College.

During 2021 the Association decided not to appoint any fellows due to the ongoing pandemic.

## **Associates**

Any individual who is interested in technical aspects of the art of the theatre is qualified to be an Associate of the Association. This includes Young, Early Career and retired Associates who are keen to both enter the industry and maintain their links once their working life is over.

## Affiliated organisations

Any non-profit distributing organisation interested in technical aspects of the art of the theatre is qualified to be affiliated to the Association. There are two kinds of Affiliates large (up to six named employees) and small (up to three named employees).

## Activity, Achievements and Performance

The ABTT is proud of its many achievements in bringing together a wide range of people who wish to make UK and international theatre even more successful currently and in the future. We work collectively to ensure that theatres are better designed, better equipped and that the staff are trained to the highest possible standard. The ABTT is a unique organisation that facilitates bridges between producers, theatre operators and designers, technicians and architects. We bring people together who discuss improvements in theatres and theatrical practices which allow the successful staging of productions of all sizes. The Association has high ambitions. It encourages debate and welcomes the recruitment of new members to help shape forthcoming generations of practitioners.

The major areas of demonstrable activity are in the provision of publications and training; the work of the technical committees and the presentation of the annual Theatre Show and the quadrennial ITEAC Conference.

In 2021 the ABTT contributed to the charitable public benefit requirement by continuing updated advice on the operation, refurbishment, and compliance with safety regulations by theatres within the United Kingdom.

The ABTT produces with the support of the national Theatre Safety Committee a Code of Practice for the Theatre Industry in the UK. The members of the Theatre Safety Committee in addition to the ABTT are: Society of London Theatre; UK Theatre; Independent Theatre Council; Institute of Entertainment and Arts Management; Little Theatres Guild; Society of Independent Theatres; Equity; Musicians' Union; Stage Management Association, BECTU and Theatres Trust. The Code of Practice includes ABTT Blue Book Codes of Practice, Guidance Notes, FAQs and the regular Safety Matters and Technical Standards columns which appear in *Sightline* the ABTT's Journal of Theatre Technology and Design.

However, the primary reference for the Code of Practice for the Theatre Industry is *Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment* for which the ABTT provides the secretariat and administers the editorial Standing Committee and to which it contributes substantially. It also contributes to other publications such as *R U Safe?* and *Non-Conventional Theatre Spaces*.

Training is vitally important to the theatre industry for ensuring that managers and technicians have the skills which will equip them to work in an ever-changing technology-based work environment. The ABTT also provides in-service training for theatre employees based around National Occupational Standards compiled by our Sector Skills Council (Creative and Cultural Skills) and accredited by the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS). This is carried out peripatetically at centres around the country. Our remote learning CAD course has also continued to receive a growing number of registrations.

Sub-sections below highlight the work of the various committees and record the importance of the ABTT's work going on within the committees. This will help members to understand how the Association is fulfilling its remit of continuing education and the development of technical theatre. The outcomes of the ABTT's work is primarily directed at its members, but there is also a wide public benefit from the ABTT's work in helping the theatre industry as a whole to remain safe and innovative. The prime purpose of the ABTT is to

provide a means for the cross communication of knowledge and experience amongst those who design, build and operate theatres not only in the UK but also around the world. A better-informed industry will always achieve more

## **Marketing and Promotion**

The Association aspires to present itself in a modern and positive light. In 2021, we continued our campaign of encouragement to those people who make theatre work in the nations of the United Kingdom to form the backbone of the ABTT. The greater the number of members, the greater amount of knowledge will be exchanged. Our aim is to ensure that all forms of British technical theatre are guided, directed, are safe and above all are rewarding and challenging. The ABTT continued to use the Association website, launched in 2019, to provide access to ABTT resources, seminars and its community despite the prevailing restrictions in response to the pandemic and continued to promote the Association and its work via various social media platforms.

## **ABTT Theatre Show**

The annual Theatre Show is designed to inform the theatre and allied industries of the technological advances that have been made in equipment over the previous twelve months and to showcase the equipment currently available in the market-place. The Association uses the event to showcase itself to members and to enunciate that for which the organisation stands. The Theatre Show encapsulates that which the ABTT is all about, new, tried and trusted equipment, a programme of seminars to educate and a programme of meetings and gatherings for those who work in the theatre industry and the general public alike. The Theatre Show, being open to everyone, is of great benefit not only to professional theatre, but also to amateur and school theatres.

As a result of the recovering nature of the theatre sector following the effects of the pandemic the ABTT Theatre Show for 2021 was co-presented with the PLASA Show at London Olympia on 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> September. Dates for the 2022 ABTT Theatre Show to be presented independently at Alexandra Palace have been confirmed for the 22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> June and the ongoing restrictions and industry impact is being monitored, to allow timing and format for the next show to be adjusted to align with the industry need.

In November 2021, the ABTT revised the appointment of Elysia Moore as ABTT Events & Association Manager. This role commenced the management of the 2022 Theatre Show providing a first point of contact for exhibitors, contractors and the venue.

## **Seminars**

Following the success of the online ABTT 2020 Theatre Show Seminars, ABTT Administrator Elysia Moore and ABTT Young Associate Representative Matthew Freeman collaborated to curate a series of ten online seminars, webinars and discussions running throughout 2021 to celebrate the Associations 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the centenary of one of ABTT's Founding Members - Stephen Joseph.

In September 2021 at the joint ABTT and PLASA Show, the ABTT curated four in-person seminars covering topics including 'Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment', 'The Backstage Mental Health Survey Report Findings', 'Working Again: What, When and How with HSE' and 'Sustainable Industry; Because this is Not a Rehearsal.'

All of these events were well attended and recordings were posted online as a public resource.

## **International Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference**

The International Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference (ITEAC) is a major event bringing

together those involved in the planning, design, construction, specification and operation of places of entertainment. It is held every 4 years and organised by the ABTT, Planning is underway for the next conference due in 2022, with programme curation being led by Paddy Dillon who has been appointed as Chair of the Editorial Board. (Early in 2022 the decision was made to reschedule the next edition of ITEAC for 2023)

## **ABTT THEATRE AWARDS 2021**

Due to the postponement of the ABTT Theatre Show, the Product and Stand of the Year Awards were not presented in 2021. However, it was decided that the ABTT should take the opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge those people making a difference to our Industry.

In addition to the established ABTT Technician of the Year Award and ABTT Award for Emerging Excellence, the new ABTT Stephen Joseph Award, created to honour Stephen in the centenary year of his birth as a founding father of the ABTT and to mark his wide-ranging legacy which still informs many aspects of contemporary theatre practice, was inaugurated to recognise *inclusive theatre excellence* in the present.

The ABTT was exceptionally pleased to present Sorcha Steele with the Award for ABTT Technician of the Year 2021, Jesse Caie with the ABTT Emerging Excellence Award 2021 and Persis Jadé Maravala with the Stephen Joseph Award at a ceremony held at the end of the first day of the joint ABTT Theatre Show and PLASA Show at London Olympia on the 5th September.

## **ABTT COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **ABTT SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Chairman	Michael Anderson
Vice Chairman	Mark White

The ABTT Safety Committee met 10 times in 2021 all meetings are now held online with a plan for 2022 for at least 4 hybrid meetings per year that allow attendance in person and via Zoom courtesy of the hosting locations wi-fi connection.

The Safety Committee membership list has increased to 116 persons, meetings online continue to host between 12 and 38 persons.

‘eMembers’ - those who read and actively comment on minutes have risen in number.

‘Listeners’ - are a new category where we find 2 or more members actively listening to the meeting whilst on mute and not on video and continuing with their busy day which suggests we could consider ‘podcasting’ in the future or otherwise recording meetings for others to hear later or at their convenience.

Safety Committee Members remain involved in several BSI Standards Committees. Additionally, the committee maintains representation within the SAGE, PLASA/NRAG, TSC and JACE industry groups. We continue to support and share the efforts of ESTA in the US. Karl Ruling and team providing updated manufacturing standards info on a regular basis.

The ABTT Safety Committee maintains its focus as a major contributor to Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment and continues to have many active members in common at December 2021.

The Spink Report – every month ABT Fellow Dave Spink continues to send a digest list of relevant British Standards, CEN and ISO standards for our attention and occasionally finds a gem that provides a welcome grin in the midst of some dour subject matter.

Correspondence and Advice continues to be provided by Safety Committee members as required and we have dealt with a wealth of odd enquiries to the enquirers' satisfaction. Notably, with ventilation being so vital under the cloud of COVID a small not-for-profit theatre in the west country asking for help in understanding ventilation needs to allow them to re-open was shocked to realise it had no incoming air other than the entrance and exit doors! Contact with a suitable ventilation engineer/consultant was identified as a likely next step.

Many of the core project activities listed at the beginning of the year continue to be listed at the end as we struggle to find people and places to meet including scheduling of convenient online meetings but we persevere and hope to conclude several of these projects in 2022.

We have produced further and updated guidance on COVID matters, we have received and shared a wealth of information on Ventilation courtesy of Nick Wells at Power-Plan and have identified draft guidance on naked flame and LPG effects and on the impact of CDM on Theatrical Contractors and how to best comply.

As Chair I extend my continuing thanks to those persons that continue to attend and support our goals – see you all next year! – Michael Anderson.

## **ABTT COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE**

Chairman and Editor    Mark White

The committee meets on an ad-hoc basis to prepare Guidance Notes and the like for inclusion in the ABTT Code of Practice. It is closely allied to and draws upon the expertise of the many members of the ABTT Safety Committee as well as the Standing Committee for the ABTT flagship publication Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment.

2021 saw a pause in the production of new publications. As the theatre sector began to re-commence operations much use was made of the suite of Guidance Notes that had been previously published in 2020. They were:

GN 101 Returning to Work Risk Assessment

GN 102 Returning to Work Supporting Information

GN 103 Production Departments Return to Work

GN 104 Performers, Rehearsals and Performance

GN 105 Audits and Inspections Checklists

GN 106 Fire Inspection Checklists.

Work in progress continued to include Flame Effects on Stage, Exit Signs in Places of Entertainment, updates of Weapons in Stage Productions, Working in Confined Spaces plus Theatrical Flying and Wire Ropes.

The following was prepared for inclusion in Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment:

## David Adams (1938-2020)

Anyone who is assisted by this publication, or the Code of Practice for the Theatre Industry in the UK of which this is part and which is produced by the Association of British Theatre Technicians with the support of the national Theatre Safety Committee, owes a profound debt of gratitude to David Adams. David was the founding editor of these Technical Standards, first published in 2001. Without his selfless contribution of personal energy, knowledge, experience, tenacity and diligence this publication would not exist in its current form; would not have been acknowledged by the Health and Safety Executive and would not provide the common source of reference for the safe operation of Places of Entertainment and the production of performance. All who were lucky enough to collaborate with David on the production and maintenance of this volume are in no doubt of the huge contribution he made to the theatre industry in the UK.

## ABTT TRAINING AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Chairman      Sebastian Barnes

### **Committee:**

This committee has met five times during the year, remotely by Zoom which has tended to improve our attendance.

We have 21 members coming from a range of theatre organisations including employers, education, training providers and freelance sector.

We meet during this unprecedented and difficult year to:

- Discuss and influence current training and education developments in Technical Theatre sector, including safety, qualifications, operating and legal standards
- Guide the development and delivery of our courses
- Advise Council on the training budget
- Help set and maintain our training standards
- Increase awareness of learning routes in our sector

### **Courses:**

In the last year we have continued the delivery of our training courses under the fluid Covid situation. We have continued to research potential venues and additional tutors, to respond to the varying demand for our courses.

We have continued to plan innovative ways to safely deliver our courses, including capping maximum numbers per course and rescheduling start times to account for travelling issues. Geoff Joyce has been key to delivering our courses with Covid Safe Risk Assessments and systems.

Despite the unusual situation we have successfully delivered our courses at a variety of locations including Manchester, Greenwich, Keswick, Chichester, London, Warwick Arts Centre, Cardiff, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Windermere. We are very grateful to the venue contacts and managements for working with us to enable these courses in their venues.

We're pleased that a significant number of Bronze courses were delivered to apprentices, on the Creative Venue Technician standard. We tailored our delivery to suit these apprentices, without changing the standard or content.

### **Safety Competence Standard:**

We were grateful to Peter Maccoy for connecting us with Chris Van Goethem of the ETTE (Expertise Centre Technical Theatre). He presented this basic safety training standard and assessment system developed and used by theatre sectors in several European countries. It is based on 10 ESCO practical competencies that theatre workers should attain. We believe there are very good links with our Bronze training content. This could be very valuable to our sector, drawing together several training standards into one basic safety competence, without replacing any current initiatives.

### **Articles and Documents:**

The committee collaborated and used its specialist knowledge and insight to create the ABTT Job Roles Matrix which is now publicly available on the ABTT Website. This working document: presents current Technical Theatre Job Titles and is intended to be reviewed and updated as job roles evolve.

As part of an ongoing commitment to the ABTT and its vision and mission, Anette Ollerearnshaw, on behalf of the committee, authored several Sightline articles, with the first 3 published throughout 2020 and written as a way to capture and reflect on the effects of C-19 on the industry, students and staff in the Higher Education sector. Building on the positive responses to these articles, in 2021 Anette has since taken on an irregular Sightline magazine feature titled 'Training and Education' including an article titled 'The Politics of Innovation'.

### **Future Developments:**

We're looking at developing online resources to supplement our Bronze course delivery.

We're actively looking for additional tutors for our courses. We believe the current employment situation is likely to increase demand for our courses, particularly the Bronze. We want to be able to respond to this potential increase.

We are preparing for a regular review of our accreditation, with the RCS, by reviewing the content and delivery of all our courses.

## **OISTAT ARCHITECTURE COMMISSION**

Vice Chair: Tim Foster

"The OISTAT Architecture Commission (AC) exists to facilitate communication and understanding about theatre buildings amongst architects, consultants, technicians and artists worldwide. Through communication about common interests, the commission provides forums for professional growth, develops projects and collects and disseminates information. It meets in order to exchange knowledge about theatre architecture and related technical topics. The commission welcomes participation by anyone with an interest in theatre buildings".

Having stood down as chair of the Architecture Commission in June 2020, having completed two four year terms, I am now serving as one of several vice chairs who assist the chair.

The Covid 19 pandemic had a considerable impact on OISTAT as an international organisation, which normally relies on people travelling to meetings. However OISTAT has embraced the online meeting, which for an international organisation makes complete sense, and there have been many meetings and webinars hosted by the various commissions, which have been well attended. This has opened up the opportunity for much wider participation in OISTAT events than previously, which is widely welcomed. An online Congress was held in October 2021, when a new chair and executive committee were elected. The next major live event will be World Stage design to be held in Calgary, Canada in August 2022.

One of the principal activities of the AC every 4 years is the organisation of the OISTAT Theatre Architecture Competition (TAC), which is aimed at architectural students and young practitioners, to encourage them to develop an understanding of the design elements which make a successful theatre. The competition is organised to coincide with World Stage Design (WSD). The next WSD has been postponed to August 2022 due to the global pandemic. The site for the competition is usually located in the country where the exhibition is taking place to encourage local participation we have prepared a brief for a site at The Banff Centre, close to Calgary, with its beautiful location in the Rocky Mountains. The competition is judged by an international jury of architects and theatre practitioners and significant cash prizes are awarded to the winners at World Stage Design.

## **THEATRE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Chairman: Tim Foster

The Theatre Planning Committee has not met during the year to review any theatre projects. Our main work has been preparation for the production of a revised edition of *Theatre Buildings: A Design Guide*.

*Theatre Buildings: A Design Guide* was published by the ABTT in 2010, as a successor to *Theatre Planning* edited by Roderick Ham, which first appeared in 1972 and was revised and updated in 1985. There was therefore 25 years between publications and much had changed during that period. The book was divided into nine sections which covered general planning principles and the key areas of a theatre building, from the auditorium to the foyers to backstage, as well as technical sections dealing with stage engineering, lighting and sound. It also included 28 reference projects, providing scale drawings, photographs and vital statistics for a range of theatre buildings, ranging from large scale new projects to smaller scale conversions and restorations of existing buildings. Each section of the book was assigned an editor, who in turn commissioned other experts to contribute specialist sections and the book as a whole was edited by Judith Strong.

Changes in theatrical presentation, building management, sustainability thinking and the technology which serves them has developed at an increasingly rapid rate and the book now needs to be updated to keep up with these developments. The ABTT is recognised as the leader in this field through its custodianship of the Technical Standards, which are constantly updated, whereas the design guidance provided by *Theatre Buildings* has remained static. It is therefore now time to update this publication to reflect current developments and new ways of doing things. The intention is that this will be substantially revised book, which seeks to keep what is still relevant, replace what is out-dated or inadequate and introduce new content on issues which were not covered previously.

A formal contract has now been agreed with the publishers Routledge and the text is well advanced, under the guidance of our editor Margaret Shewring. It is hoped to submit to Routledge in mid 2022 with an anticipated publication date in early 2023.

## **ABTT HISTORICAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

Chairman      Roger Fox

Again, the COVID-19 Pandemic has curtailed activity and this Committee has not met in person during the year.

Michael Hall, a long standing member of the Committee and former Managing Director of Rosco UK died in the autumn. His particular expertise on colour will be sadly missed.

As well as its role as the Association's expert group on historical matters, the Committee remains available to act in an advisory capacity to the Theatres Trust and other bodies on matters which may affect significant technical installations in theatres. Advice has been given on several queries relating to planning applications being commented upon by The Trust

Other regular Committee activity has been dormant with members handling external queries and following project mainly relating to personal collections. The Committee continues to contribute to the History of the Association project through the work of the ABTT Hon. Archivist, Jane Thornton. It continues to monitor theatre buildings which may be under threat or contain significant technical installations.

The Committee fronts the Association's membership of APAC, the Association of Performing Arts Collections, and its international equivalent SIBMAS, and is represented by Jane Thornton, Jason Barnes and Robin Townley.

## **ABTT NORTHNET COMMITTEE**

Chairman      Jean Shevelan

The main business of the committee is organising ABTT member's visits to theatres and other venues of special interest in the North of England. NorthNet also provides opportunities for networking in the North of England. The number of active members within the committee continues to shrink and ABTT NorthNet seeks new participants. The committee doesn't meet on a strictly regular basis but when members and venues to host meetings are available. Venue hosts and colleagues are encouraged to participate in committee meetings. The committee endeavours to meet east of the Pennines (around Leeds) and West (around Manchester) on alternate occasions.

The committee seeks to attract a new generation of members to its numbers. It also continues to recommend that there be an ABTT poster available for display in working venues (for example at stage doors) to help keep the ABTT at the forefront of potential members' minds.

The Chairman of NorthNet normally attends council meetings and reports on the activities of this committee to the council of the ABTT. The flow of information is a two-way process with a report to this committee of those proceedings of the council which are available for publication. However, because of the Covid pandemic and other difficulties the chairman has not been able to attend council meetings (which were on "Zoom") in 2021.

### **Visits**

As all venues were required to close because of the Covid 19 pandemic and because many staff had been furloughed it has not been possible to arrange any visits.

There is the possibility that grants proposed for the arts sector may produce significant refurbishments or redevelopments of venues, which may be of interest to the wider membership. This may produce the

opportunity to arrange visits for members.

Possible future member's visits, however, are a regular agenda item.

### **Meetings**

For various reasons including illness and the pandemic no formal meetings of the committee were possible in 2021, but members have kept in contact mostly by telephone. It is proposed to arrange some future meetings using the "Zoom" application.

Similarly, no presentation of the "Phil Windsor Spanner Award" was made in 2021 (a decision was taken some while ago to present it on an ad hoc basis so as not to devalue it by making routine presentations). The award is named in memory of a long-standing former member who gave much valued service to the committee and the association. The "Spanner" in the title refers to an occasion when he was in hospital in his latter days and asked his wife to bring him a spanner so he could tighten a loose reading lamp over his bed.

Declining committee membership makes the addition of "New Blood" ever pressing. It is encouraging that new interest has been shown keen to help with NorthNet. A target of the committee is to build on this renewed interest and rejuvenate NorthNet in 2022.

The NorthNet committee welcomes interest from any members in the North in order to continue the running of this longstanding committee.

### **ABTT CYMRU COMMITTEE**

Chairman      Martin Hunt

Venues in Wales started to re-open as soon as possible. Many of the large numbers of staff, both full time and freelance who had had to find work elsewhere in 2020 did not return to the sector. As a consequence, as throughout the rest of the United Kingdom, recruiting sufficient technical and production staff was a major challenge.

Meetings continued to be held online with Zoom

A new cohort of Apprentice Theatre Technician started in the summer and commenced their ABTT Bronze training in September.

We hope to recommence a more regular programme of the ABTT Cymru meetings in 2022.

### **ABTT SCHOOL THEATRE SUPPORT GROUP**

Chairman      Paul Durose

The ABTT School Theatre Support Group (STSG) is a network of professional theatre technicians and managers working in UK schools and colleges, established in 2005. As an affiliated committee of the ABTT since 2014, the primary aim is to offer a community of support in this specialist field, with members responsible for many professionally-equipped theatres and studios across the country, as well as training and facilitating the next generation of theatre practitioners in schools.

STSG maintained a steady membership of around 100 during 2021, despite the challenging times no doubt contributing to a decline in active interest. 29 ABTT members or affiliated organisations took up the free membership option, as the joint scheme settled into its second year.

The committee did not meet in-person during 2021 due to the COVID pandemic. However, as with the previous year, most business was able to continue by email, group chat and online meetings. Two formal committee meetings were held in May and November.

The annual STSG conference was able to continue in February, albeit virtually, complete with an online ‘pub quiz’ in the evening. Workshops and seminars were provided by our industry sponsors (including several ISG members), and the event was once again attended by Robin Townley of the ABTT. The online day allowed several members to attend who would not otherwise have been able to travel to the conference in normal circumstances, and therefore the event was relatively well attended.

During the year, STSG focused heavily on providing online training for its members, offering virtual courses in COVID compliance, COVID first aid, IOSH ‘working safely in theatre’, and working at height.

At the committee meeting in November, the long-time STSG chairperson, Paul Durose, announced his ‘retirement’ from the position for the following year. The committee set about the process of restructuring the committee and agreeing a new chairperson to take the rudder from June 2022 when Paul steps down.

## **THE STEPHEN JOSEPH ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE**

Chairman      Alistair Livingstone/ Henry Bell

The SJC was formed to support and celebrate the life work of Stephen Joseph as director and teacher, and as the pioneer of theatre-in-the-round in the UK. This year saw the official launch of the Stephen Joseph Committee, fully integrated with the ABTT, under the ongoing chairmanship of Alistair Livingstone. The committee met monthly, and in September 2021 the position of chair was taken over by Henry Bell, who lectures in theatre at the University of the West of Scotland. As Henry took over, tributes were paid to the hard work of Alistair and also of our first chair, Terry Lane.

This year’s activities have been focused on celebrating the centenary of Stephen Joseph, (born 13.06.1921). These include a social media campaign to promote the Committee and Stephen’s work via the ABTT’s channels, the development of online seminars around the work and ideas of Stephen Joseph, various publications, the launch of the first Stephen Joseph Award and the ongoing development of a project, aimed at developing young theatre making.

- A series of five online seminars was ably developed and led by Matthew Freeman and expertly chaired by Dave Wybrow, artistic director of the Cockpit Theatre. The committee is greatly indebted for all their work on this important project that brought ABTT members and others together online to discuss production practice at a time when the theatres were dark. The first seminar introduced the work of Stephen Joseph and subsequent seminars saw discussion of various aspects of working in the round, specifically directing, lighting design, site-specific production, architecture, and design. Contributions were made by a range of designers, directors, and industry specialists and the committee is indebted to all of the contributing professionals for giving their time and expertise to these seminars. The final seminar celebrated the 60th anniversary of the ABTT, Stephen Joseph being a founder member, and marking the centenary of his birth.
- The first Stephen Joseph Award was launched in January, inviting applications from theatres and individual practitioners developing new and innovative theatre practice. The winner, announced in September, was Persis Jadé Maravala, the Artistic Director of ZU-UK, a performer and teacher. A Lifetime Commendation was also made to Mike Pearson, in recognition of his work as a freelance practitioner, teacher and director of site-specific work. Special mention was also made for the work of

Big Telly Theatre, Contact Young Theatre, Manchester, Ink Festival and the Octagon Theatre, Bolton. The ABTT and the Stephen Joseph Committee were very impressed with the range and quality of work entered for the award at a time when many theatre practitioners were still locked down. It is hoped to relaunch the award in 2022.

- A special Zoom social event was organized in June to celebrate the actual Centenary Day of Stephen Joseph, which brought together a good number of SJC members and others who had known and worked with Stephen. At the centre of this happy reunion was the launch of the ABTT/SJC video: Stephen Joseph: A Pictorial Round-Up produced by Bob Millington, which skilfully told the story of Stephen's career and influence, as it displayed the surviving photos of his productions and other memorabilia in a striking montage. This video, together with all the seminars, is now permanently available online from the ABTT website.
- Various members of the committee have either delivered papers on the subject of the work of Stephen Joseph, and/or gone into print. Barbara Day had one article on Stephen Joseph published in the ABTT journal *Sightline* and a second published on the webpage of the Society for Theatre Research. Paul Roberts delivered an academic paper on the work of Stephen Joseph to the Theatre and Performance Research Association. Henry Bell and Tony Jackson had an article published in *Research in Drama Education*. Meanwhile Bob Millington and Terry Lane have cooperated in the digital version of Terry's book, *The Full Round*, which appeared in Amazon in June. Access to these various publications work can be found via the Stephen Joseph Committee Page on the ABTT website. Finally, Faynia Williams, as a panellist of the International Gilder Coigney Award, and also addressing her local Equity members in Brighton, put word of mouth around about the work of Stephen Joseph.
- Throughout the year Alistair Livingstone has been collaborating with the Playground and Cockpit theatres, to develop a new Stephen Joseph theatre making project, with the aim of inviting young people to develop and present their own work, and for their work to be mentored by established professional practitioner. Alistair has been working with Anthony Biggs, co-Artistic Director of Playground Theatre and Dave Wybrow, Artistic Director of The Cockpit theatre. This exciting project is still ongoing, not least in identifying sources of funding.
- Finally, the committee members have turned their attention to the various archives that exist of the work of Stephen Joseph. Alistair has been working hard to place the archive belonging to Rodney Wood, Stephen's stage manager. Rodney's thesis on Stephen's work has been published on the ABTT website. Faynia Williams is working on archiving her material from her time of working with Stephen, including daily detailed diaries from 1958 to 1960.

The committee has had a full year marking the centenary of Stephen Joseph, and members hope to continue the Stephen Joseph Award in 2022, and to further develop the New Theatre Makers Project.

## **CORE VALUES WORKING GROUP**

Chairwoman Nikki Scott

The ABTT has written a Core Values statement. There are now five Core Values:

- Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion
- Enabling excellence
- Acknowledging achievement
- Representing all
- Combating climate emergency

The statement of the Core Values is designed to be a toolkit by which the ABTT can address the issues it covers in all the activities it undertakes. The aim is that whenever any ABTT activities take place, the

Core Values are implemented whenever and wherever possible.

In 2021 the Core Values Committee met 6 times via Zoom to explore and challenge various aspects of the work of the Association. Key topics of discussion and progression include:

The creation and development of the ABTT Virtual Ideas Platform (previously named the Technical Innovation Award) alongside Guildhall School of Music and Drama with this being launched in May 2021.

Becoming members of Zero Suicide Alliance and their resources are now promoted on the ABTT Website on our Mental Health Resources page.

The development of the ABTT Job Roles Matrix alongside the Training and Education Committee to help demonstrate the wide range of roles available within the industry.

The development and distribution of the Theatre Green Book with the Theatres Trust and Buro Happold alongside a program of consultation and seminars of explanation to help identify problems that people may encounter when trying to become more sustainable and to find solutions to enable them to put these actions into practice for every performance.

Assisting the Stephen Joseph Committee with a series of seminars and social media to celebrate Stephen Joseph's centenary and the ABTT's 60th Birthday.

The development of a Mental Health and Wellbeing Working Group with Mig Burgess at the helm to update the Mental Health Survey for current information surrounding COVID's impact and create Guidance Notes about 'Mental Health and Returning to Work'.

Assisting with the development and refinement of the 8 seminars hosted online in lieu of the ABTT Theatre Show in June 2021.

## **ABTT APPRENTICESHIP NETWORK**

Chairwoman: Jessica Nicholls

Founded in July 2020 by ABTT Young Associate Representative Tamykha Patterson, a past apprentice herself, the UK Theatre & Live Events Apprenticeship Network was developed to create a space where apprentices can connect with one another and speak with those who have been through the same experiences.

Now known as the "ABTT Apprenticeship Network", it hosted a number of networking and Q&A events in 2021 including "Covid has affected my Apprenticeship – What now?" and "Create Britain – An Introduction and what it can do for you!" which were well attended.

Members of the ABTT Apprenticeship Network on LinkedIn also grew throughout 2021 enabling us to highlight relevant jobs, apprenticeships and resources which may be useful. Resources were also updated on the ABTT Apprenticeship Network Committee page and under "Backstage Apprenticeship Resources" where information on CV tips, training, apprenticeships, relevant organisations and mental health resources have been provided.

2021 also saw our newest Young Associate Representatives Jessica Nichols and Joshua Burnside become involved with the Network, creating and introducing the ABTT Apprenticeship Network Discord Server which is an exclusive space for apprentices to connect. The Network was founded to create a community and safe space for apprentices: past, present, and future to connect with each other and share their knowledge and experiences with their peers. Discord is free to use and keeps everyone's personal information private, all it requires is for people to have a discord account verified through an email address. Discord allows apprentices to keep talking to each other beyond the Zoom Network events.

## **ABTT AUTOMATION COMMITTEE**

Chairman: Nick Page

The activities of the Automation Committee have been severely curtailed by the demand upon the time and commitment of active members placed upon them by the amount of work in the industry when venues started to re-open and productions recommenced.

The main activity in which members of the committee were able to participate was the work of BSI Committee MHE/3/13-Lifting equipment for performance, broadcast and similar applications, and particular in the work being undertaken on BS EN 17795 Entertainment Technology-Code or Practice.

– Part 5: Lifting and motion Operations in the Event Industry. The document is intended to cover the use of machinery employed in the event industry including machinery defined in point j Article 1.2. of the Machinery Directive (2006/42/EC): “machinery intended to move performers during artistic performances”

In addition the committee continues to be concerned about ensuring appropriate training is available for automation technicians and that the tendency particularly prevalent at the moment, as the industry attempts to restart having lost a considerable proportion of the workforce during the pandemic, to ask individuals to “act-up” beyond the level of their competence and with too much responsibility is guarded against.

## **ABTT WIGS, HAIR AND MAKEUP COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: Annette Ollerearnshaw (she/her)

The ABTT Wigs, Hair & Make-up (WHAM) committee was proposed and accepted by council on Wednesday 5th May 2021.

The committee being in its early stages of existence, is still gaining traction in terms of numbers and engagement across the sector. The Covid-19 crisis hit our sector so immeasurably in 2020 and 2021, that the theatre industry has seen significant changes across the staffing economy. The resulted in many established crew having had opportunities open up in the film & TV industry with better pay.

In response to the movement of talent away from theatre and an unprecedented demand of production companies realising shows at pace, committee meetings throughout the year have been held via video chat and remained informal in structure.

Throughout 2021, the WHAM Committee produced and chaired the online seminar ‘Innovation in Action’ as part of the Theatre Show Seminars in June 2021. With an international panel of Wigs, Hair and Makeup professionals, it discussed the advances and positionality of our craft in relation to ‘hard technologies’. It is accessible on the ABTT website and viewable as a members privilege.

The committee also contributed specialist knowledge and insight towards the creation of the ABTT Job Roles Matrix and has been an active part of the ABTT Core Values working group, adding a WHAM perspective to discussions around topics based on the 5 highlighted guiding principles.

The ABTT WHAM Committee chair, Annette Ollerearnshaw has been crucial in creating the WHAM guidance for the Theatre Green Book, which includes a bi-annual review of the contribution, as it is intended as a live document that grows and flexes with the demands and drivers across the industry. The WHAM Committee would also like to extend their thanks for Annette’s ongoing hard work and commitment Chair in guiding the committee in its inaugural year.

The WHAM Committee continues to make the case to have our discipline viewed and positioned as a

stand-alone specialism, separate from the costume and wardrobe department. Colleagues across the wigs, hair & make-up world have commented on the need to address this, and the Committee will be focusing on addressing this and spreading awareness on behalf of wigs, hair and make-up professionals for 2022.

## **PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS**

The CEO will lead on continuing and developing the Association's work with a focus on four goals of:

- Supporting the sector
- Supporting the membership
- Financial and Organisational Security
- Vocational training

### **Supporting the sector**

The ABTT will continue to develop technical standards, codes of practice and guidance to support the Code of Practice for the Theatre Industry in the UK which it produces with the support of the national Theatre Safety Committee. The ABTT's work has become increasingly recognized in the UK as "soft law" defining the term "reasonably practicable" in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act within the context of the operation of a place of entertainment or in the production and presentation of live performance. The Code of Practice is now the primary instrument by which the sector achieves self-regulation.

We will organise the Theatre Show and International Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference as landmark National and Global events for social, business and professional networking and advancement of best practice, and to contribute to ABTT revenues to support other activities.

### **Supporting the membership**

The ABTT wishes to be identified for the promotion of technical excellence in live performance, to acknowledge this and linking to its organizational value of 'acknowledging achievement' the ABTT will promote associate membership of the Association as an important progression for personal and professional development and admission as a full Member as aspirational recognition by industry peers of successful relevant experience and practice. In turn the authority and validation of the ABTT and its work is reliant upon a broad representation of the industry. Awards will be used and developed to recognise outstanding contributions to the industry.

Meetings will provide members with opportunities to physically visit venues and to engage in face-to-face discussion, and debate. All of this in a sociable fashion with those who share similar interest and passions. Sightline will continue to be positioned as the Journal of Record for Theatre Technology and Design. Social media channels will be used to provide a rich and valued content about the Association's activities and news, events and groups of interest to our members.

### **Financial and Organisational Security**

To undertake its charitable aims the ABTT needs to be confident of its annual income and will look for opportunities for increasing that income to facilitate greater activity. In the short term, this is expected to be constrained by recovery of the wider industry following the COVID-19 pandemic. The ABTT is now a working from home organisation with no office accommodation. The transition from a physical office to a working-from-home structure was achieved without any significant disruption.

### **Vocational Training**

The ABTT has developed a good reputation for providing appropriate, fit-for-purpose vocational training in backstage production skills. The ABTT will continue to provide specific vocational training, ensuring an efficient provision to support career development at entrance/early career, intermediate and supervisory levels.

## Risk Management

The Council has addressed the risks that face the Association and seeks to establish procedures to mitigate those risks that have been identified. Council has considered the following potential problems and taken steps to address them as detailed below:

- The surplus from the Theatre Show accounts form 2/5 of annual income. Council made provision for collapse of the Theatre Show by establishing a Contingency Fund. This was called upon following cancellation of the 2020 show but there was a modest return from the joint event in 2021.
- Subscriptions from individual members, affiliate members and industry supporters account for 3/5 of annual income. It is considered less likely that subscription and contribution income could fail completely. However, there is uncertainty in the rate of recovery of income from all sources following the COVID-19 pandemic, and the council has agreed future budgets allowing for short term use of reserves. The Association seeks to build resilience by encouraging diverse membership across an increasing number of industry sectors and roles.
- The Association appointed a Chief Executive Officer to lead the organisation and split the governance from the management of its activities. The Trustees are keen to see the Association develop. Amongst other things the CEO takes responsibility for the financial planning of the Association.
- The Association continues to need the support of its voluntary Chairpersons and other Officers as the administration of the organisation is so small. The Officers act as senior ambassadors for the Association and through their industry contacts help to drive the Association forward. However, it is hoped that with the recovery of the organisation and more income over the next five-year cycle, the activities of the Association can be widened, and the time required of the Officers reduced.
- The activities of the Association depend upon relatively few members; however, there is a new generation of members who want to play a part in the running of the organisation. It is hoped that more national and regional committees can be formed to further the aims and ambitions of both the members and the theatre industry.
- It is recognised that the Association needs to constantly adapt itself to a fast-changing environment. Technological changes are frequent and sometimes industry-changing and the ABTT needs to ensure it is at the forefront of technical thinking. The committees that are the workhorse of the Association need to constantly attract new members.
- The greatest strength of the Association is its members and their participation for a common purpose. The responsibilities of Trustee-Directors and the time necessary to fulfil the role can make it unattractive to many busy people. This problem occurs with many charities. In practice it is only people controlling their own timetables who are really able to contribute; this is particularly the case given working patterns in the theatre industry. The Council is seeking to increase the pool of potential Trustee-Directors by actively encouraging more Associates to become Members and increase the Electoral College.
- The Association seeks to further develop its trading activities to raise extra funds for its charitable work and better serve its communities.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Trustee-Directors continue to monitor the financial position on a quarterly basis via the preparation and review of Management information, which, amongst other procedures, is discussed at ABTT Council meetings. The following year's activities for both the Charity and its trading subsidiaries are agreed during the process of setting detailed budgets in the autumn of the preceding year. Due to the uncertainties as a result of the pandemic, it was felt sensible to have better information about membership renewals before confirming the annual budget for 2021. The Budget for the 2021 financial year was therefore approved at the Council meeting held on 27th January 2021, and was subsequently reviewed by the Executive Management Team and Council at each of their meetings.

The Consolidated Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2021 together with the related Notes to the Financial Statements are annexed to this Report. The Trustee-Directors present Consolidated Financial Statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1st January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities shows a surplus for the year of £1,011 (2020: loss of £55,586). The budget for the year had an outcome of a loss of £89,139 so the final position was significantly better than expected. This was due to better performance in membership renewals of £36,000 more than had been budgeted, a return of £12,059 on the joint ABTT Theatre Show with the PLASA show and allocating a further £45,000 of ACE Culture Recovery Fund monies.

The Charity's wholly owned trading subsidiary, Theatrical Trading Limited made a surplus for the financial year of £69,438 (2020: loss of £20,386).

The charity's wholly owned trading subsidiary, Theatrical Events Limited made a loss for the financial year of £4,306 (2020: loss of £2,679). There was no significant business in the company in the year.

The principal funding source of the Charity, other than the trading activities of the subsidiaries, is membership subscriptions. Membership and subscription Revenues again for the second year fell slightly to £114,402 (2020: £120,265). As expected, revenues overall were less than 2020, due to a greatly reduced Theatre Show, being able to run only limited training courses and not receiving any further ACE CRF grant monies, at £277,798 (2020: £364,767).

## Investment powers and policy

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Association has the power to invest in any way the Trustee-Directors determine. The Council, having regard to the liquidity requirements of operating the Association and its policy regarding reserves has operated a policy of keeping available funds in interest-bearing deposit accounts.

## Reserves policy

The Trustee-Directors reconsider the level of unrestricted reserves on an annual basis. (Unrestricted reserves are funds that are freely available which the Association needs to pursue its objectives).

The unrestricted reserves at 31 December 2021 were £296,354 (2020: £295,343; 2019: £315,929; 2018: £314,725; 2017: £274,963; 2016: £270,720). The Trustee-Directors view this level of reserves as sufficient to meet the Charity's immediate objectives and to provide some degree of financial flexibility into the medium term and in the current economic conditions.

The General Fund stands at £156,355 (2020: £155,343; 2019: £175,929; 2018: £174,725; 2017: £144,963; 2016: £140,720;) (see Note 21). The Trustee-Directors established the General Fund at a level sufficient to ensure the financial viability necessary to provide the Association with working funds and for the generic development of the Association's activities. In broad terms, the fund represents 6 months' expenditure for the Charity, monitored on an ongoing basis.

The level of the General Fund is subject to annual review by the Trustee-Directors to ensure that it remains appropriate.

Charities SORP (FRS 102) requires the Trustee-Directors to consider the risks to which the Association is subject and to take steps to mitigate those risks. Further information on how this risk assessment and monitoring has been conducted is set out in the Risk Management section above. As part of their overall review of risks, the Trustee-Directors considered that provision should be made for contingencies, particularly in view of the Association's reliance upon the financial surplus arising from the activities of Theatrical Trading Limited and Theatrical Events Limited, which cannot be assured to continue at the same level from year to year. The activity of Theatrical Events Limited was to run the International Theatre Engineering and Architecture Conference, which was last held in June 2018. The next edition of ITEAC will be held in 2022 (RE-scheduled to 2023 in early 2022). The Theatre Show run by Theatrical Trading Limited is held every year. The Trustee-Directors have decided that the level of the Contingency Fund should remain at £95,000 (2020: £95,000) given the risks in the business and will continue to monitor this closely in future periods.

The Trustee-Directors have reviewed the level of each of the designated funds and have set the Publication Fund at £20,000 (2020: £20,000) and the Training Fund to £20,000 (2020: £20,000), to reflect expected expenditure on the planned activities of the Charity. Specifically the Publication fund will be used to revise the publication *Theatre Buildings: a design guide* which was last revised in 2010. The Training Fund will be used to support training particularly the increase in activities resulting from the Creative Venue Technician Apprenticeship and increasing requests for training from overseas.

The Technical Access Passport Fund is maintained at £5,000 (2020: £5,000) and this will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

The Trustee-Directors currently expect the designated funds to be used within one to two years and further detail on the movements in unrestricted funds is shown in the annexed financial statements.

## **Trustees responsibilities in relation to the financial statements**

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Association of British Theatre Technicians for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report 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 these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2015 (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures

disclosed and explained in the financial statements;

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and 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.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant examination information of which the charitable company's independent examiners are unaware, and
- that the Trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have to make themselves aware of any relevant examination information and to establish that the independent examiner is aware of that information.

## **Independent Examiners**

At the 2021 Annual General Meeting, MHA MacIntyre Hudson were re-appointed as Independent Examiners to the Association for the ensuing year.

By order of the Trustee-Directors

Nicola Scott  
Trustee-Director

Date: