

York Theatre Royal: Report to the Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee

25 June 2019

York Theatre Royal Bi-annual Update

1. 2018-19 was an exciting year at York Theatre Royal – a year of change and development. The organisation:
 - Had a turnover of £4.98m (£4.19m in 2017-18)
 - Presented 127 different productions (of which 31 were specifically for Children / Young People), and had 505 performances in total of those productions (206 specifically for CYP).
 - Sold 130,784 tickets and issued 9481 tickets on a complimentary basis.
 - Ran 1333 Learning & Participations sessions, with total attendance of 19,311.
2. Major announcements included the retirement of Berwick Kaler as pantomime dame after 40 years, and the news that Artistic Director Damian Cruden, who has been in post since 1997, will leave the organisation in August 2019 to be Artistic Director of Shakespeare's Rose Theatre.
3. Recent achievements include:
4. The theatre had a record-breaking pantomime in 2018/19, welcoming 49,423 people to ***The Grand Old Dame of York***.
5. We also welcomed a record number of people – 3521 – to our Studio Christmas show for young children, ***The Elves and the Shoemakers***, and that production will transfer to Sheffield Theatres this winter.
6. We co-produced the extraordinary ***Wise Children with the Old Vic***, Oxford Playhouse and Belgrade Coventry, and that performance played to 4742 people over a fortnight in March 2019. The Wise Children company will return with ***Malory Towers*** in September 2019.

7. We facilitated a record number of **Arts Awards** – 101 – in the last financial year, and are about to launch a new participation scheme to replace the **Youth Theatre waiting list**.
8. We began preparations for a major new **community play** on the subject of flooding and how climate change affects our city.
9. Our production of *The Habit of Art* by Alan Bennett will **tour to New York** in May 2020.
10. Our **community programming group**, Visionari, programmed their own week in the YTR Studio and received excellent audience numbers. They will now programme a week in the main house in February 2019.
11. We have launched an **Equality & Diversity** Working Group, which has determined that the theatre will focus on three strands when diversifying programme: 1) York's Chinese community; 2) the D/deaf community and further access for those with a disability more generally; 3) areas of deprivation (socio-economic diversity).
12. We launched a refreshed brand and a **new website** thanks to a hugely generous private donation to the theatre in late 2018.
<https://www.yorktheatreroyal.co.uk> is transformed!
13. We continue to run an exceptional number of social initiatives to allow the people of York to benefit from access to arts and culture. These include: the **Access All Areas** project, a referral-only programme for young people who might not otherwise have access to arts and culture provision; and the **Driving Miss Daisy Community Drive**, which saw YTR partner with Age UK, Older Advocacy York and others to drive those who wouldn't normally be able to make it to the theatre into York for our production of the aforementioned Pulitzer Prize-winning play.
14. We launched the **Berwick Kaler Foundation** to raise money for all our community-focussed initiatives (such as the drive) in Berwick's name.
15. The tradition of York Theatre Royal's pantomime will be maintained with **Sleeping Beauty**, opening 7 December 2019, written by Berwick Kaler and starring David Leonard, Suzy Cooper, Martin Barrass and A.J Powell.

Report Author :

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York Theatre Royal

13 June 2019

Abbreviations

CYP- Children and Young People

YTR- York Theatre Royal