

Annex 1

York Theatre Royal: Service Level Agreement report

January 2013

This report will give an update of delivery against the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the City of York Council and York Citizens' Theatre Trust Ltd. The report covers the period from September 2012 to January 2013 with an update of delivery on quantitative measures from the start of the financial year in April 2012.

Total audience for April to December 2012 is 107,900. Target audience for full year is 160,000.

PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY 2012/2018

SLA conditions are noted in bold with the details of how the theatre has been working to achieve them underneath.

- 1. Provide a year round programme of work which shall include in-house productions, including a pantomime, youth theatre productions, touring drama productions, and hires to local amateur companies**

Over the period from September 2012 to January 2013 York Theatre Royal has presented 210 performances in its Main Theatre and Studio of 28 different productions.

York Theatre Royal produced 6 new productions over this period including **The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner**, **Rapunzel**, **The Guinea Pig Club** and the annual pantomime. The York Theatre Royal Youth Theatre produced a large scale production in the main theatre with over 70 young people of Philip Pullman's **His Dark Materials** and 2 local amateur companies **York Opera** and **York Shakespeare project** produced and presented **Iolanthe** and **Othello** respectively. Other work included the Royal Shakespeare Company with a production of **King Lear** for young people, Miriam Margolyes with **Dickens' Women** and a small scale production of **Les Miserables**.

- 2. Provide sign language interpreted and audio described performances and touch tours**

All of the York Theatre Royal productions in the main theatre have both sign interpreted and audio-described performances. In addition the theatre also offers captioned performances. All theatre productions that

tour to the theatre for a week in the main theatre offer audio-described performances. The theatre has a pool of dog sitters for guide dogs.

3. Provide a regular Youth Theatre for at least 250 young people annually

Between September and December (Autumn Term) 313 young people took part in the Youth Theatre at 14 different youth theatre groups from the ages of 5 to 18. They attended 11 weekly classes and 67 young people were involved in a production of *His Dark Materials*.

15 young people the ages of 8 to 18 took part in the Youth Theatre Forum and attended 5 Forum sessions across the Autumn Term.

5-7s - have been looking at Grimm Tales and developing storytelling skills linked with seeing **Rapunzel**.

8-10s - have had a term focusing on Shakespeare and **King Lear**, linked with their trip. Three out of the four groups have been participating in *Arts Award Explore*, with 30 of them being moderated at the end of the year (the fourth group was involved in the pilot scheme.) Two groups had the opportunity to participate in a workshop led by RSC actors and the creative team and all groups attended a post show discussion led by the RSC.

11-13s - These groups have been looking at Dickens' characters with a focus on **Dombey and Son**.

14-16s - All groups looked at **The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner** which then developed into work on youth justice in performance, looking at the issues from the play.

16+ - All were involved in the production of **His Dark Materials** in the main house for the first half of term. Project M have then been working on mask techniques and Project N are participating in a Holocaust project and will perform at the Holocaust Memorial Civic Event in January.

4. Provide educational activities related to each main house production, including special matinees, talks, teachers' packs, workshops and visits to schools

Early Years

Storymakers is a regular Wednesday morning activity at the theatre for under 5s. This is now regularly oversubscribed and will increase to two sessions in spring 2013. Alongside the Theatre-based sessions, we

have delivered **Storymaker** sessions in 4 Children's Centres: Haxby Road, Clifton, Tang Hall Community Centre and Knavesmire. We are also offering **Singamajigs**, a regular Tuesday morning session, which introduces rhythm and song to pre-schoolers

Children's University Passport Scheme

We have now completed our first six months as a Validated Learning Destination.

Schools

The theatre provided workshops to accompany most of its main and studio theatre productions in the autumn season. **Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner** offered open rehearsal days and workshops on contemporary writing to Key Stage 4/5 and A Level students. **Rapunzel** offered 6 Theatre Days for reception up to year 2 students, all of which were sold out. **The Guinea Pig Club** had an on stage event with director and cast and workshops on exploring body image. The new three year partnership with the **Royal Shakespeare Company** started in earnest with activity at the York High School which will be the hub school in York. Workshops and performances of **King Lear** were held for over 500 students at York High and at York Theatre Royal.

We have five schools signed up already for our **Playhouse** project this year, and it's looking promising that we will be able to recruit the six schools we need. We are commissioning Brendan Murray to write our play this year – Brendan recently won the Writers' Guild Best Play for Children and Young People for **Hare & Tortoise** with our partners Tutti Frutti productions. The other plays are being commissioned by Plymouth Theatre Royal and Polka Theatre from Oladipo Agboluaje and Phil Porter.

Higher Education

York Theatre Royal has been delivering weekly Stanislavski sessions on the York St John University's **Acting to Performance** module this term. This has involved the first year drama students working and learning in a professional environment right at the start of their studies. We also supported and hosted an excellent showcase for the three graduate prize winners.

5. Provide a range of activities to engage older people in activities connected with the Theatre

A new organisation-wide group has been formed to develop our participatory work with older people. It has worked with the Friends of

York Theatre Royal as an advisory group for new ideas. As a result we have started a new pre-show discussion session called a *Spotlight*, which focuses on the director of a production and other members of the creative team, held before the midweek matinee. These have worked really well in reaching our older audiences.

We continue to offer the Adult Acting classes on a weekly basis. These groups are over-subscribed. In this term they produced a site specific piece of theatre that brought to life characters and incidents in the history of the theatre.

6. Develop The Studio programme promoting new and culturally diverse work: using the space to provide opportunities for local voluntary arts organisations and to develop the creative infrastructure of the city.

The Studio Theatre programme between Sept and December included 18 different productions. This included 3 storytelling shows including The Caribbean Spook Tales and Stories from the World and Speak of Me as I am about the 19th Century Black actor, Ira Aldridge. York Shakespeare Project produced Othello, its first show at York Theatre Royal. Other local events included a series of talks with York St John University with local artists, writers and theatre makers and the York St John Graduate Prize.

7. Provide student placements and careers advice to support the development of a strong local creative sector

York Theatre Royal had 61 people on work placement at the theatre between April and December 2012. This does not include any volunteer placements for York Mystery Plays. York Theatre Royal also started a new Creative Engagement paid internship, a full time position in partnership with York St John University.

We have attended two careers events at Huntington School in October and November to introduce theatre careers to young people, *Raising Aspirations* for 11-12 year olds and *Aspiring Enterprise* for 14-15 year olds. Another event for 14-19 year olds is planned for March 2013.

8. Develop the De Grey Complex, along with the Theatre, as a creative production hub for the city

The De Grey complex has been used by 17 different companies from September to December to rehearse, produce theatre and offer

workshops. The companies include Royal Shakespeare Company, Flanagan Collective, Snickleway Theatre Company, tutti frutti, Pilot Theatre Company, Trestle Theatre Company, Mud Pie Arts and Watershed Productions. In addition De Grey House houses a further two creative companies: Aesthetica and the Creative Arts Partnership.

The new Friends of the York Mystery Plays have held their inaugural meetings in the Rooms and continue to meet regularly in the Rooms.

In addition we have held three public dance events and 25 different functions from conferences to weddings.

9. Work with key stakeholders on the Cultural Quarter developments as well as other developments as appropriate

York Theatre Royal submitted a bid for £2.8 million to the Arts Council capital fund for a £4 million re-furbishment project that will add to the quality of experience at the theatre. York Theatre Royal's Chief Executive has joined a Cultural Quarter re-invigorate York group of partners to discuss and set the aims for the development of the area. York Theatre Royal's Chief Executive has also been working with the Better Bus Initiative to agree a partnership approach to the development of the Theatre Royal Bus Exchange in St. Leonard's Place.

The theatre is also working with Askham Bryan College and Re-invigorate York on improving the patio and garden between the main theatre building and the De Grey House. This project will be mostly funded through the Friends of York Theatre Royal and will open up the view to the Minster from St Leonard's Place and improve the landscaping in the Garden.

Liz Wilson Chief Executive

York Theatre Royal 16th January 2013