



## PYA England Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 16 December 2020 @ Zoom

### Festive Gathering

<b>Present (26)</b>
Wendy Harris tutti frutti productions
Kate Cross the egg
Claire Summerfield Tandem Works
Emma Rees Theatre Centre
Alice Massey Unlimited
Deborah Palmer M6 Theatre Company
Natasha Holmes Tell Tale Hearts
Rob Watt Theatre Centre
Gilly Baskerfield M6 Theatre Company
Natalie Wilson Freelance
Pilar S
Zoe Pickering Z-arts
Cat Moore NIE
Filiz Ozcan Komola Collective
Katy Costigan Filskit Theatre Company
Sarah Argent Freelancer
Tina Williams Pied Piper Theatre
Gill Brave Bold Drama
Rachel Barnett-Jones Playwright and Creative Producer
Ruth Hill Knapsack Productions
Vicky Ireland A Thousand Cranes
Debbie Bandara Forest Tribe Dance Theatre
Michael Judge NIE
Tamsin Fessey Angel Exit Theatre
Victoria Dyson Filskit Theatre Company
Daniel Naddafy Freelancer
<b>Apologies</b>
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#### a) Wendy Harris Chair PYA England Introduction

Would like to reflect on the positive growth of this group this year and the new connections. This year has been enormously hard and we would like to celebrate the hard work and creative work of our sector this year. Would like to continue with the zoom meetings next year but be more strategic, so on the same day each month. We are also going to introduce new features to the meeting. As a network we are trying to collect more information about our sector, so please do complete the survey. If anyone wants to contribute and get involved in the different lobbying groups, steering groups, PR please just email us – [wendy@tutti-frutti.org.uk](mailto:wendy@tutti-frutti.org.uk). We would like to invite members to contribute more to the content and conversations in the zoom too.

PYA England (Performance for Young Audiences) is the England sub group of [ASSITEJ UK](http://ASSITEJ.UK), which is part of a global network, [ASSITEJ International](http://ASSITEJ International). The PYA England sub group welcomes its Irish, Welsh



and Scottish colleagues to the zoom café's. ASSITEJ UK is a membership organisation and we would be delighted if any people new to this network want to become members. We are doing a special deal at the moment because of the extraordinary circumstances with COVID and people's lack of income or funding. *[Information at the end of the minutes]*

### **b) Claire Lobbying Update**

Lobbying group is responsible to try and better understand the membership and how we can best represent your interests. What is the key messaging? The survey has been instrumental in getting snapshot. 35% of members have responded to the survey, we would like more! The survey will remain open, please complete it.

- If you are an individual member please click [here](#) to complete the survey
- If you are an organisational member please click [here](#) to complete the survey

We were inspired by the Freelance Task Force glow up moments. Why we do what we do, positive moments. Please put them in the chat – we will collate these to better demonstrate our impact.

#### GLOW MOMENTS FROM CHAT

From Natalie Wilson to Everyone: 02:16 PM Glow moment - the wonderful creativity (and eccentricity) of Theatre Centre/Theatre 503's ImagiNation Festival. Cultural democracy and the power of new writing IN ACTION.

From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone: 02:16 PM GLOW moment. Mentoring Angel Exit on their glorious production for babies, tooob. Or was that the end of last year, Tamsin?

From tamsin fessey (Angel Exit Theatre) to Everyone: 02:17 PM That was start of this year. We squeezed it in just pre-lockdown. Definitely a glow moment for us too.

From daniel.naddafy to Everyone: 02:17 PM GLOW moment 2018: Performing to a 4 week old baby, by far the youngest audience member I've ever performed for and they stayed awake for the whole show!

From Debbie Bandara to Everyone: 02:17 PM glow moment: delivered immersive digital experiences to special schools in their school "bubbles" using interactives, cast and crew.

From Katy Filskit to Everyone: 02:19 PM Glow moment this year... problem solving and delivering work to our audience despite the infinite hurdles.

From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone: 02:19 P GLOW moment. Creating Baby, Bird and Bee - a new outdoor show for babies with Theatr lolo. It was so wonderful to see parents and babies many of whom hadn't previously engaged in any communal creative activity as their babies were born during or just before lockdown - and the sun shone brightly all week!

From Claire Summerfield to Everyone: 02:19 PM My G moment: working in partnership with Second Hand Dance we spent two weeks working in Great Ormond Street Hospital on long stay wards. The project explored Touch as a tool of communication. The children we were working with were all in



individual rooms, bed bound and reliant on machine intervention for their survival. Some had never left hospital. We visited each child with a 10 minute duet. Their joy and their parents joy at observing their child's joy is one of the most heart warming experiences I have had.

From Rachel Barnett-Jones to Everyone: 02:20 PM GLOW moment - yesterday speaking to a playwright who we commissioned to write one of our 12 Tiny Plays who told us that the process of working with us has helped to reignite her confidence and unlocked her creativity and she has subsequently applied for and been successful at a variety of other jobs. We just optioned her script for future development as well. It was such a warm glow-y feeling!

From tamsin fessey (Angel Exit Theatre) to Everyone: 02:20 P Glow moment, feb 2020, a tired mum of twin babies "I can't believe they both sat through that. They didn't take their eyes off you for the full 30 minutes. I've never seen them focus on anything like that before, and I got a chance to sit back too!"

From Gill (Brave Bold Drama) to Everyone: 02:24 PM Glow is every time I get to do a show for families. Because I'm a solo parent with no support there's so many logistical challenges to me working at all that it always feels like a total miracle when I'm actually doing a show.

From Gilly Baskeyfield to Everyone: 02:32 PM I think a GLOW moment has been able to work with The Linking Schools Network this year - creating a 'shared experience' for 2 classes from different schools to enjoy together. Much needed connection for our children.

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From Alice Massey Unlimited Theatre to Everyone: 02:58 PM Glow moment - Live Little Stories of Leeds. A real chink of light and positive energy at the end of a very intense lockdown. Shout out to Tutti Frutti particularly for this!

#### **c) Pilar PR & Social Media update**

A group of people are taking care of the twitter, facebook and Instagram account in a rota. Will extend this to the wider network in the new year. Please follow our social media accounts and share content.

- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/PYAEngland/>
- <https://www.instagram.com/pyaengland/>
- <https://twitter.com/PYAEngland>
- #PYAEngland

#### **d) Filiz Zoom Game**

#### **e) Break our groups – Positive Reflections**



### Alice's Group

Ability as small companies to be fleet of foot and respond quickly digitally whilst employing lots of freelancers. Expanded networks, made more connections with the sector that will continue. Can't ignore the important burning issues. This time made us reflect on the usefulness of what we do and reflecting on our purpose.

### Wendy's Group

Many mind bending things happened and we expanded our minds, many digital amazing occurrences. Eggs Assembly and digital theatre training. Celebrate PYA and the growth and strengthening of the membership. Also the freelance network. Better together. Wanted to congratulate the arts council, for saving those who received funding. Thanks to the zoom revolution saving on train costs and bringing us together. Constant reinvention was both exhausting and exhilarating. Claire thinks that they may have made the first dance film for children, and looking forward to cuddle her mum who has been vaccinated.

### Natalie Wilson's Group

Zoom revolution connecting people. How we use it to make work for young people. Making a show was a positive even though it isn't rolled out yet. Positives in having control over outcomes. Young people really enjoyed being together when it was possible. More valued than before. Hybrid experience of working intensively on zoom. Gilly hopefully opening a show this weekend, lots of obstacles overcome. Pilar working internationally enabled by zoom. Can also respond quickly.

### Cat Moore's Group

Small companies managing to continue on. Being able to be in rehearsal rooms again. Tina did some schools touring. NIE has a digital film that premieres this weekend. Forced us to go down a digital route.

### Rachel's Group

Hopes for new year - Vicky said children being valued more in the new year.

### **f) Michael Judge – Sir Ken Robinson**

There is an event next year commemorating Sir Ken Robinson on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Sadly he died earlier this year. His daughter Kate is keen to commemorate on 4 March, a festival called Imagine If. There is a call out to educators, creative practitioners to do something on 4 March but also 1-3 March. Kate Cross is currently working on the parameters of that. In essence it is a provocation, imagine if... then finish the sentence. Imagine if.. schools where different etc. It is quite open. It could be something you are already doing, it could be a direct response. Kate is keen to spread the word as far and wide as possible. Kate will send more information in mid January. Please put the dates in your diary and think if you would like to be involved. Sir Ken is someone we can all get behind. The spring could be a good moment to engage, especially with the vaccine.



Vicky – We are hoping this is an annual event, so can start with small ideas this year.

**g) AOB**

The ASSITEJ UK AGM is on Thursday Feb 4, 2021 11:00 AM and you are all invited!

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95458630451?pwd=cUNQOStyR3ILR0R6Q0REcnc4Y3RQUT09>

Meeting ID: 954 5863 0451

Passcode: 364931

**h) Date of next meeting**

Date of next meeting is Thursday 28th January 10am

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83884774559?pwd=R2FNT05PSkI5TTJsdnRSRFPHQjQ0dz09>

Meeting ID: 838 8477 4559

Passcode: 076243

If you are receiving these minutes by email, then you are already on the newsletter list. If you would like to invite others to join these meetings. Please ask them to sign up to the ASSITEJ UK newsletter or join the network [here](#).

**i) Zoom Chat**

From Vicky Ireland to Everyone: 02:02 PM

Happy birthday Rachel Barnett-Jones !! XXXXXX

From Rachel Barnett-Jones to Everyone: 02:02 PM

Thank you Vicky! xxxx

From Vicky Ireland to Everyone: 02:02 PM

I love you!

From Filiz to Everyone: 02:02 PM

Happy Birthday!

From Mosa tutti frutti she/her to Everyone: 02:02 PM

Oh happy birthday Rachel!!!!

From Claire Summerfield to Me: (Direct Message) 02:03 PM

Love the dangles!



From Claire Summerfield to Everyone: 02:04 PM

is that the technical name Wendy?

From Natasha Holmes to Everyone: 02:06 PM

Sorry Wendy, will have to leave 3:15 for school run x thanks for letting me join today. x

From alicemassey to Everyone: 02:14 PM

Hello - I'm sorry I'm late. This is my first PYA meeting. Very good to be here.

From Mosa tutti frutti she/her to Everyone: 02:15 PM

Welcome Alice!

From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone: 02:15 PM

Claire - I am very conscious that I've run out of time and haven't yet shared the information I gathered. I feel extremely guilty that people took time to write wonderful, careful, passionate responses - maybe I can share these with you and they can feed into your lobbying?

From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone: 02:17 PM

xxxxx

From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone: 02:17 PM

Love this, Daniel!!! x

From kate.cross@theatreroyal.org.uk to Everyone: 02:19 PM

my colleague describes mince pies as the devils work

From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone: 02:21 PM

@tamsin! xxxxx

From Alice Massey Unlimited Theatre to Everyone: 02:21 PM

Lots of busy people who work in the arts here!

From Mosa tutti frutti she/her to Everyone: 02:25 PM

I cannot demonstrate how much I dsagree with this!]

From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone: 02:25 PM

Haven't watched it this year but I adore it

From Natasha - Tell Tale Hearts to Everyone: 02:25 PM

Im with you Mosa



From daniel.naddafy to Everyone: 02:25 PM

im sorry i have to go, internet engineer has just arrived! sorry. merry christmas everyone! see you in 2021

From Mosa tutti frutti she/her to Everyone: 02:25 PM

Merry xmas Daniel

From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone: 02:26 PM

Merry Christmas, Daniel xx

From Alice Massey Unlimited Theatre to Everyone: 02:27 PM

I'm feeling like a proper scrooge here!

From Victoria Dyson to Everyone: 02:27 PM

Just for the record that is excellent headwear Claire!

From Claire Summerfield to Everyone: 02:28 PM

No ENERGY

From Mosa tutti frutti she/her to Everyone: 02:28 PM

ZERO energy haha

From Claire Summerfield to Everyone: 02:29 PM

Thanks Victoria - my 10 year old isn't very happy !

From Gill (Brave Bold Drama) to Everyone: 02:54 PM

Very sorry have to duck out now to do the school run. Really great to meet you all. Good luck everyone! Over and out!

From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone: 02:55 PM

Bye Gill. Have a good Christmas and here's to hope in 2021!

From tutti frutti to Everyone: 02:56 PM

I forgot to mention 'slow producing' making some thing of quality over more time

From Claire Summerfield to Everyone: 02:58 PM

love the idea of ad-hoc singing in the rain

From Natasha - Tell Tale Hearts to Everyone: 03:00 PM

I second that Alice - it was fab.



From Alice Massey Unlimited Theatre to Everyone: 03:04 PM

Thank you, Wendy!

From Katy Filskit to Everyone: 03:05 PM

Merry Christmas everyone!

From Vicky Ireland to Everyone: 03:05 PM

Thank you Wendy and Mosa xxx

From Natasha - Tell Tale Hearts to Everyone: 03:05 PM

Thanks Wendy, have a good one everyone x

From tamsin fessey (Angel Exit Theatre) to Everyone: 03:05 PM

Thanks everyone. Merry Christmas. x

From Rachel Barnett-Jones to Everyone: 03:05 PM

Seasons Greetings to all. xxx

From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone: 03:05 PM

Lots of love to you all. Stay safe. Stay well xxx

From Natalie Wilson to Everyone: 03:05 PM

Happy Festive season to all

From Claire Summerfield to Everyone: 03:05 PM

Thanks Wendy, and Merry Christmas folks!

From Cat (NIE) to Everyone: 03:05 PM

Festive Greetings!

From Filiz to Everyone: 03:05 PM

Happy Holidays Everyone

From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone: 03:06 PM

I love this man so much!!!

From Emma Rees (she/her) to Everyone: 03:07 PM

Beautiful! Thank you Wendy & Mosa. Happy Christmas / holidays all.

From Ruth Hill to Everyone: 03:08 PM



Thanks everyone and have a wonderful festive period.

From Victoria Dyson to Everyone: 03:08 PM

Thank you everyone! Ho! Ho! Ho! Stay safe and see you in 2021! xxx



### **ASSITEJ UK Membership**

This may seem like a weird time to be parting with cash, but please do read on....

Without support from our members, the PYA/TYA sector could have been cut adrift from one another and from our international colleagues. We may also have lost sight of our commitment and passion for high quality live performance for young audiences as being our sole and single-minded concern. On the Edge, Quality of Difference, Assitej regional showcases and countless opportunities for members to participate in Assitej International events would not have been made possible.

At a time when arts organisations are making tough choices and freelancers are facing an uncertain future. We understand how a membership fee is not going to be a number one spending priority.

And yet, since lockdown began at the end of March, here are some of the things the **Assitej UK** network has achieved:

- Welcomed 15 new paying members.
- PYA England has reconstituted, recruited a new, diverse steering group, set out a marketing campaign, and hosted 3 coffee mornings, to which more than 30 people have attended each time.
- Members across the UK have contributed to articles in national newspapers, such as the recent article by Lyn Gardner in The Stage
- Members have lobbied their respective Arts Councils regarding the special case for young audiences.
- We have secured £555 funding from Action for Children's Arts Emergency fund.
- Submitted two bespoke PYA letters to Oliver Dowden, Culture Secretary.

Meanwhile, **Assitej International**, of which all Assitej UK members are by default a member, has hosted a raft of global coffee mornings, at which there has been representation from all continents. This is something you could not safely say about international festivals that are largely populated by delegates from wealthier countries and organisations.

It is quite possible that Corona Virus and Zoom have changed our idea of what is possible as a networking organisation, and our capacity to both celebrate our unique characteristics as individuals whilst staying well connected is looking rosier than it ever did!

Could you consider joining the network at this time: for solidarity, a future facing approach, seizing the moment and making the next decade that of the child?

We have some sign-up choices for you in this first year:

You can join online [here](#) at the usual rate, that being £70 for organisations and £25 for individuals per year, or if as an organisation you cannot pay the usual rate this year, we are offering you the option to pay the individual rate of £25.

Alternatively, please contact us by emailing us at [info@tya-uk.org](mailto:info@tya-uk.org) if:

- the cost of membership is too much for you at this time but you wish to make a one-off donation in lieu of your membership fee
- you would like to join, but can't make payment this year
- you would like to remove yourself from our mailing list altogether

We very much hope that you will recognise the benefits of membership, and thank you in advance.