



PYA England Meeting Minutes

Thursday 28 January 2021 @ Zoom

Get on Board!

Present (23)
Wendy Harris tutti frutti productions
Mosa Mpetha tutti frutti productions
Ben Miles Full House Theatre
Bethan Screen Todos Teatro
Jane Crawshaw Freelance Task Force & Barmpot Theatre
Sarah Argent Freelancer
Filiz Ozcan Komola Collective
Hayley Byfield Skewbald Theatre
Katharina Rodda Theatre Centre
Victoria Dyson Filskit Theatre Company
Zoe Pickering Z-arts
Catherine Boot Can't Sit Still
Cat Moore NIE
Emma Rees Theatre Centre
Chris Elwell Half Moon Theatre
Nina Hajjianni Action Transport Theatre
Tina Williams Pied Piper Theatre Company
Daniel Naddafy Freelancer
Katy Costigan Filskit Theatre Company
Ruth Hill Knapsack Productions
Sean Hollands Theatre Director
Tamsin Fessey Angel Exit Theatre
Toby Ealden Zest
Apologies
Michael Judge NIE

a) Wendy Harris Chair PYA England Introduction & Zoom Protocol

Welcome to our first PYA Zoom meeting of the year! A bit of protocol:

- Turn your screen off if you want to
- Keep your sound on mute whilst others are talking
- We aren't resourced to facilitate access requirements every meeting, but do contact us if you need something and we can see what we can do

b) What is PYA England?

PYA England (Performance for Young Audiences) is the England sub group of [ASSITEJ UK](https://assitej.uk/), which is part of a global network, [ASSITEJ International](https://assitej.com/). 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]*

We have a PR subgroup and a Lobbying sub group. There is also a PYA England steering group. Let us know if you would like to get involved with anything. Everything that we do happens because you are a part of it. Get in touch! wendy@tutti-frutti.org.uk

The **ASSITEJ UK AGM** is on Thursday Feb 4, 2021 11:00 AM. Board of ASSITEJ UK will run the meeting, but you are all invited as members. Zoom details will follow on the newsletter.

c) ASSITEJ UK Members Survey

We would like to try and better understand the membership and how we can best represent your interests. 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 to complete the survey
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdjJcT6hGui2hPaHgQwYFiiRVQibyoKSSLjlaR6Y-3ftp_AnQ/viewform
- If you are an organisational member please click to complete the survey
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdwRIYWuLJemifDOGDMHv11872pKNXF0IOW8T8Q4N1uCPfDA/viewform?usp=sf_link

d) PR & Social Media update

A group of people are taking care of the twitter, facebook and Instagram account in a rota. 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

If you can volunteer to be a part of the social media rota please let us know.

- 10:09:51 From Zoe to Mosa tutti frutti(Direct Message) : We might be able to - Z-arts - can you send over what it entails zoe@z-arts.org
- 10:12:20 From Tamsin Angel Exit Theatre to Mosa tutti frutti(Direct Message) : Angel Exit could do a week of social media for you. info@angelexit.co.uk
- 10:12:43 From Victoria Dyson to Everyone : Mosa, I'm happy to put us Filskit Ladies forward to help with the social media rota. Will try and resist filling the PYA feed with cute puppy pics...! victoria@filskittheatre.com
- 10:13:35 From Katharina Rodda (Theatre Centre) to Everyone : I'd love to help with socials rota: Kat@theatre-centre.co.uk
- 10:15:40 From Cat Boot - Can't Sit Still to Everyone : Hi Most, we (Can't Sit Still) would be happy to help with the social media rota over the next couple of months.
contact@cantsitstill.net



e) Glow Moments

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 and it will help our lobbying.

- 10:14:24 From Ruth Hill (She/Her) to Everyone : Glow Moment: We did two online sessions for a school this week and had brilliant feedback saying how amazed they were at how we'd kept the children so engaged via Zoom.
- 10:15:34 From Emma Rees (she/her) to Everyone : Glow moment: totally feels like over blowing our own trumpet but this quote from a teacher made us all tear up a bit:“(Continue) to provide these brilliant (CPD) workshops. I am so grateful for the extreme kindness & sense of community displayed by TC. Offering free CPD in a time where particularly the Arts are struggling is an act of selfless affection. Thank you” Teacher Jan 2021
- 10:16:48 From Nina Hajiyianni (Action Transport Theatre) to Everyone : Glow Mo - ATT have been working on some digital podcasts and also an AR storytelling experience - free online event tonight if anyone interested
<https://www.ticketignite.com/event/3842/launch-of-atom---luna---quest-for-old-mother-rebeard>
- 10:17:24 From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone : Glow moment. I was interviewed as part of Polka Theatre's 40th Birthday Oral History project. It was such a tonic recollecting so many productions seen - Polka commissions, work by visiting companies from the UK & beyond, fantastic staff, brilliant conversations and exercises at conferences and workshops - memories of 30 years of wonderful people/colleagues who have become life-long friends. As Wendy said - what a fantastic movement

f) Mosa explains 2021 Zoom Café Schedule

Good morning everyone and thanks for being here. I am Mosa the Operations Manager for tutti frutti and PYA England Steering Group member.

Over the last year, Wendy and I have been coming up with the topics for the monthly zoom cafes as we went along. This required quite a lot of last minute thinking and brainstorming. We wanted to make a schedule for 2021 of zoom meetings so:

1. You could see in advance what we are talking about so you can plan which ones you want to come to
2. You can get involved with helping us run these events. The zoom cafes are set up to be beneficial to the membership, and it runs best if we have your input, your ideas and if we can respond to your needs.
3. To make this monthly meeting format more sustainable and manageable for the steering group and chair.

To come up with these topics for the monthly zooms, we looked at the ASSITEJ manifesto for guidance, spoke to the PYA lobbying & steering group, and we chose topics that felt were fitting to our sector and our current concerns. The topics are very broad, and how we frame the discussion, or what we focus on is up for grabs.



If you haven't attended meetings before, the way previous meetings have worked is, Wendy opens the meeting, we go through normal business agenda items about ASSITEJ and PYA, then we introduce a guest or speaker who gives a topic run down and gives some provocations. So for example in our meeting that focused on Early Years, Sarah Argent and Janet Robertson talked about the early years sector as it stands then asked the membership questions like, what can artists do to support early years work and work in early years settings.

Or another example is we had a meeting about parents & carers working in the arts, and invited Matt Harper Hardcastle from PiPA to give some information and provocations. He asked the membership 'what are the main challenges of parents & carers working in the PYA sector' and what new or amended ways of working can we implement to support them.

So I am going to talk through each of these topics, after I have gone through them, we will go into breakout rooms to discuss the following:

1. Who might be good speakers on these topics, what kind of focus could the meeting have?
2. Who should we invite to hear and contribute to these discussions, this could mean inviting people outside of the membership – eg. headteachers to the schools zoom
3. Would you like to volunteer to manage any of these meetings? Wendy is happy to chair the overall meeting, but just like I am presenting this discussion part of this meeting, you could present the speaker and discussion points. Bear in mind the dates and if you are available.

Here are the monthly topics:

February (Tues 23 Feb 10.30am)

International Work & Relationships Topic

Kate Cross will also contribute to this as ASSITEJ UK Chair.

ASSITEJ World Congress 22-31 March

March (Tues 23 March 10.30am)

Schools

April (Tues 27 April 10.30am)

Environment & Climate Change/Justice (Earth Day 22 April)

May (Thurs 27 May 2pm)

Anti-Racism (May 1 year on from George Floyd's murder)

June (Tues 29 June 10.30am)

Graduates, those new into the sector

July (Tues 27 July 10.30am)

Working with venues



August MONTH OFF

September (Tues 28 Sept 10.30am)

Funding/Funders

October (Tues 26 Oct 10.30am)

Mental Health – (World mental health day 10 October)

November (Tues 30 Nov 10.30am)

Audiences

December (Tues 14 Dec 10.30am)

Light Seasonal Celebration

g) Break our groups – Contributions

Group 1 – February (International)

Some things to think about?

- * What can we do now and how do we prepare for the future? COVID/BREXIT
- * Where are we with international working?
- * Could we connect internationally in a new way in these extraordinary circumstances?
- * How do we collaborate digitally?
- * What are the advantages?

Some Potential guests:

- Jo @ 1927 (suggested by Rob Watt)
- Rebecca Gould - Head of Arts British Council Wales (Sarah Argent Suggested)

Potential Case Study:

- * Greta Clough - did the HIP festival in Iceland last year. Could have interesting insight. (Suggested by Jane Crawshaw)

10:49:38 From Daniel Naddafy to Everyone : should we have speaker who is making international work but not in the UK?

Kate Cross is inviting someone from ASSITEJ World Congress Japan.

Sarah Argent - Kevin was thinking Weibke would be really interesting for the International session: a performer born and raised in East Germany; married to an Irish musician; now also working as a theatre translator; has worked with Theatr Lolo and Theatre Co Blah, Blah, Blah; lives in Hebden Bridge; has split her time during lockdown between England and Germany both physically and digitally. Might also be interesting to hear from a freelancer performer/translator.

Group 1 – March (Schools)

What can we do now? And how do we prepare the future?



Theatre Centre to head up the provocations. At Theatre Centre we connect nationally with lots of teachers.

Unlimited Theatre Company

Invite a Welsh Teacher - Idea behind a Welsh teacher was because the arts are one of 6 key areas in the new curriculum and arts in schools is still a key commitment - Gavin Williamson does not feature in our world here.

Lots of Non PYA companies are focusing on children and schools because they can't use their venues.

Group 2 - April (Environment)

Climate Change. Great speakers at Lock Down:Green Up Festival (www.sustainablepractise.org) Run by Pigfoot theatre. Eco Scenography - The Living Stage (Set that can be eaten afterwards) - Tanja Beer - Australia Andrea Carr - UK also Kate Unwin is a set designer focusing on Sustainability. Julie's Bicycle, Arts Council. NPOs have to have environmental policies but what resources help is there for smaller companies? Venues that are actively involved in Climate Change Half Moon, Arcola, Greenhouse Theatre (Edinburgh first zero carbon theatre) HOME Manchester.

10:51:14 From Bethan- Todos Teatro (she/her) to Everyone : Pigfoot - Lockdown green festival was brilliant!!

10:51:17 From Bethan- Todos Teatro (she/her) to Everyone :
<https://www.thegreenhousetheatre.com/>

10:52:32 From Bethan- Todos Teatro (she/her) to Everyone :
<http://www.climatechangetheatreaction.com/>

10:53:24 From Emma Rees (she/her) Theatre Centre to Everyone : Climate justice: Farah from Julie's Bicycle would be a great to hear from on climate justice and working in our sector. They'd be really excited about it as well, I think.

10:53:33 From Katy Costigan to Everyone : Kate Unwin is wonderful!!!

10:53:50 From Victoria Dyson to Everyone : Kate Unwin is incredible. Set designer for our baby show, Kaleidoscope x

10:54:02 From Bethan- Todos Teatro (she/her) to Everyone : Someone from pigfoot would be great to invite <https://www.pigfoottheatre.com/>

10:55:02 From Emma Rees (she/her) Theatre Centre to Everyone : Lots of good practice on sustainability in the Festivals sector, again working with young people - Shambala Fest really good!

Group 2 May (Anti-Racism)



Anti-Racism – Amanda Parker, maybe not necessarily someone from our sector. Who is addressing racism within their work and how do we do that. How have your people been impacted? High Rise Theatre. Perhaps a sharing of resources, training & learning.

10:55:18 From Cat Moore - NIE to Everyone : Would also suggest Jay Crutchly - <https://www.culturecentral.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/More-Than-A-Moment-The-Pledge.pdf>

10:56:27 From Mosa tutti frutti to Everyone : <https://kidsofcolour.com/>

10:56:36 From Mosa tutti frutti to Everyone : <https://highrisetheatre.co.uk/>

10:56:43 From Bethan- Todos Teatro (she/her) to Everyone : Tony Cealy - would be a good guest for anti-racism in theatre. His work focuses on community projects and mental health <http://www.tonycealy.com/contact/>

10:56:48 From Cat Moore - NIE to Everyone : Carolyn Forsyth at Talawa (was at Unicorn?)

10:57:14 From Emma Rees (she/her) Theatre Centre to Everyone : Anti Racism: Artistic Director of the Future Simielia Hodge Dallaway - she also runs Beyond the Canon (looking at decolonialising the curriculum). Prema Mehta Stage Sight looking at D&I in offstage roles. Beatfrees - amazing!

10:59:03 From Katy Costigan to Everyone : Caz (Carolyn Forsyth) who used to be a producer at The Unicorn and LIFT is now exec director at Talawa.

11:05:39 From Katy Costigan to Everyone : I think for the BLM discussions a good question is how we can promote the sector with young black artists as well to improve the diversity of our community

11:06:22 From Hayley Byfield Skewbald Theatre to Everyone : May Ant Racism BAME OVER - Amanda Parker, Lucy Sheen. Companies Tara Arts, High Rise. Young Peoples Movements (Movement in Birmingham and how they were impacted). www.Kidsofcolour.com

10:36:50 From Zoe to Everyone : Also there is this small organisation <https://kidsofcolour.com/>

Group 3 June (Graduates)

Graduates month: Selina Busby CSSD, Thomas Wilson Rose Bru, Sarah Francom LAMDA (v London focused?), RYTDS Sue Emmas, Jerwood Lily G.

10:44:18 From Katy Costigan to Everyone : For Graduates - would Jeremy Harrison from Rose Bruford be helpful?

10:45:09 From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone : @KatyCostigan - Jeremy Harrison who runs both the musical theatre course and TYA MA at Rose Bruford would be fab!

10:46:16 From Katy Costigan to Everyone : Other thing about for Graduates - is how we can support smaller companies to work with Graduates when they don't have a base



10:45:10 From Katy Costigan to Everyone : Thomas Wilson is great

10:45:33 From Sean Hollands (He/Him) to Everyone : Agree Thomas Wilson

10:49:26 From Tamsin Angel Exit Theatre to Everyone : Yes, best practice for working with interns. would be useful. We often invite some graduates/ 3rd years into our rehearsal room and it would be good to have a think about how best to use/ support these graduates.

10:49:50 From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone : Rebecca Gould - is about to go on a year's sabbatical from British Council Wales to the Barbican. She has also worked in the NT Education Dept, RSC Ed Dept, Soho Theatre, Plymouth Theatre Royal and was chair of Theatr lolo for a number of years ... so a broad perspective

Group 3 - July (Venues)

Venues presently operate in such different ways due to COVID; we felt that it would be useful to have input from a small venue (maybe arts centre / local feel) and a large venue with a main space and studio: no names were suggested.

Group 4 - September (Funding/Fundraising/Funders)

Diversifying funding - will ACE be the best by that point - how to find funding if ACE are less well resourced by then. Local? British Council? Smaller funding pots - how to find and apply. Could talk to someone who works as a fundraiser for a venue - Polka or Unicorn? Perhaps someone from Stage One? Cressida Peever is now a consultant. Perhaps someone at Barn Theatre Cirencester is very successful.

Also address things like corporate funding, which can feel uncomfortable - how do you do it, and how do you reconcile it?

Kickstarter - is there a good way to do this and not 'just ask your friends'?

Perhaps talk to a producer?

Might be useful to split into groups (freelance/small company/venue) for discussions as people have very different needs.

Also worth thinking about how audience (esp social media) feeds into fundraising.

11:00:52 From Jane Crawshaw - She/Her to Everyone : My sister-in-law created the Vopera Project, which was an opera for children, and raised over £100k through corporate, crowdfunding and individual donors, so she might be/her producer might be a good person to get in to speak about new funding revenues? She's called Rachael Hower. My email is jane@barmpottheatre.com

Group 4 October (Mental Health)



Two strands - our mental health and how we can use our art to support our audience's mental health. Might be good to have an external professional in to talk to us/support us in our mental health as well as talking round how we can support our audiences - thinking about the changes to 'normal' and how lockdown etc has impacted on everyone's MH.

Group 4 November (Audiences)

Social Media - an external expert?

Digital and Real Life audiences - however the world looks by then, digital is a new audience we have found and may wish to keep/grow. BUT still with an eye on digital poverty.

Could we have a focus group of parents/families to talk to us and tell us what they want/how they feel about theatre in the world we live in then?

Nonsuch theatre - Edward Boot as a possible speaker about social media

11:05:37 From Cat Boot - Can't Sit Still to Everyone : National Youth Theatre did a super interesting and successful TikTok campaign

11:02:33 From Jane Crawshaw - She/Her to Everyone : On social media, went to a great session with Rural Media on social media over summer, they would be a good speaker for that?

<https://www.ruralmedia.co.uk/>

December Seasonal Ideas!

11:04:59 From Sean Hollands (He/Him) to Everyone : Fishbowl-game.com for December. Also great for any zoom gaming time you may have.

11:03:49 From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone : As long as it's not a lonely mince pie with a hat by your computer .. the freelancers' usual Christmas party!

Final Points

More discussion required on Schools & BLM. Please email Wendy with any other contributions.

We require volunteers to support with facilitating the meetings to keep it sustainable. Please get in touch if you can help.

h) Date of next meeting

Date of next meeting is Tuesday 23 February 2021 10.30am – 12pm – TOPIC INTERNATIONAL

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84818877529?pwd=amxBVTJQV29jUFBjMUIMOEUrN2ZTZz09>

Meeting ID: 848 1887 7529

Passcode: 601829



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

10:02:49 From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone : Mosa does the most brilliant minutes!

10:03:03 From Mosa tutti frutti to Everyone : AW shucks Sarah :D

10:06:34 From Filiz to Mosa tutti frutti(Direct Message) : Hello Mosa, I will need to leave the meeting at 10.45am for another meeting.

10:07:19 From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone : Bore da. Greetings from Wales. Kevin Lewis is also here and listening in but off screen

10:10:24 From Cat Moore - NIE to Everyone : (Its also Pilar's birthday today!)

10:10:39 From Mosa tutti frutti to Everyone : HB Pilar!!

10:10:56 From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone : Penblywdd hapus, Pilar!!!

10:12:03 From Ginni Manning to Everyone : Hi everyone!

10:12:14 From Sarah Argent (she/her) to Everyone : Hi Ginni!

10:14:11 From Mosa tutti frutti to Everyone : Thanks for all your contributios everyone!

10:15:07 From Filskit Theatre to Everyone : Ruth - wonderful x

10:20:46 From Zoe to Everyone : I am totally here but have one eye on fractions, one eye on metals and their properties and my ears totally on you (as much as I can) Thanks for your patience x

10:48:03 From Filiz to Everyone : Lovely to see everyone. I am so sorry I need to leave to attend another meeting.

10:59:32 From Emma Rees (she/her) Theatre Centre to Everyone : Thanks all - have to dash but great conversations!

10:59:38 From Mosa tutti frutti to Everyone : Really like that idea of splitting the group Ruth

10:59:42 From Mosa tutti frutti to Everyone : Thanks Emma!

11:00:08 From Rob (he/him) Theatre Centre to Everyone : I also have to dash - super to catch up. See you all soon; Keep safe x

11:00:23 From Mosa tutti frutti to Everyone : See you Rob!

11:00:30 From Katharina Rodda (Theatre Centre) to Everyone : I have to go into another meeting but thanks all for a brilliant meeting

11:01:49 From Mosa tutti frutti to Everyone : Thanks!



11:03:03 From Cat Boot - Can't Sit Still to Everyone : The family focus group idea is great.

11:03:09 From Mosa tutti frutti to Everyone : Brilliant!

11:05:58 From Mosa tutti frutti to Everyone : Great thought Katy

11:06:06 From Bethan- Todos Teatro (she/her) to Everyone : Agree Katy

11:06:38 From Nina Hajjianni (Action Transport Theatre) to Everyone : Thanks Wendy and all

11:06:44 From Ruth Hill (She/Her) to Everyone : Thanks all

11:06:50 From Half Moon | Chris Elwell to Everyone : thanks as always

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 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.